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APPARATCHIK

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This is the **BoShish**, aka issue fifty-five of a bi-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper and Victor Gonzalez, member & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. See the back page for availability and trade information. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #250. Apparatchiki: Steve Green, Carl Juarez, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor & Pam Wells (British Address: 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, UK). "T'iss is ti vat houses where ti Guinness is stored . . ."

Issue # 55, March 14th, 1996

APH Here: I don't have a good Bob Shaw story to share for this memorial issue of Apak; more's the pity. I wish I'd had the opportunity to get to know the man better. I've sent him a few fanzines over the years, but never had any reply; I introduced myself a couple of times in Glasgow this past August, and he was pleasant and friendly, despite the obvious discomfort he was suffering, but it was not enough to go beyond mere acquaintance. And now I'll not have the chance to do so. My fault for being born in the sixties and then compounding my crime by failing to make contact with fandom until the age of 14 or so.

Memorials are odd things. As Steve Green observes later in the issue, there is a strong imperative to avoid saying anything less than glowing about the person thus eulogized, even if *everybody* knows that the person in question was a complete waste of carbon. And so, at first, we feel a little degree of self-congratulation at being able to write about a person so universally lauded as Bob Shaw was, and then we catch ourselves — what a drag, being able to write such an easy memorial! Why do we have to lose someone about which there are so many good things to say — why can't some sonofabitch who *deserves* it check out instead?

The other thing which a major loss in our community always inspires is the ongoing debate over the seeming lack of new fans entering the "trufannish continuum." Someone will no doubt come up with a new scheme to attract teen-age SF fans into the world of fanzines, somehow ignoring the high-pitched voice which always pipes up: "That trick never works!" Does anyone but me find anything creepy about a bunch of balding, forty-something bibliophiles, or worse still, former bibliophiles, trying to find a way to attract nubile teenage lads into their hip little fan club?

You know what the problem is with trying to attract younger SF fans into the fanzine world? The problem is that these kids are actually interested in SF — you know, robe and blaster, Babylon 5, nano-machines and cybernetic assassins with poisoned claws and a serious attitude problem. And we, as far as I can tell, are not especially interested in reading the literature itself, let alone the brilliant analysis and criticism that your average 16-year-old fan is likely to come up with in regard to the literature. Go take a look at the zines you've gotten in the past year — which ones don't seem to have very many eye-tracks on them? I'd rather not insult anyone, but you know which ones they are, the ones with the reviews of everything Lois McMaster Bujold ever wrote, the lengthy defenses of the

social theory of Orson Scott Card, the discussion of whether Mark Lenard was better as a Vulcan, a Romulan or a Klingon. Why are there no kids in contemporary SF fanzine fandom? We drove them out, because they were boring us all to death, and encouraged them to find more gainful employment for their time on Worldcon committees and the Internet.

I often shock people by pointing out that I have been involved in some capacity with fandom since I was 14 years old, since I still seem like something of a newcomer to the fannish scene. Well, that impression is perfectly valid — I didn't publish my first fanzine until 1985, and the first one worth reading was produced sometime in late 1994. It wasn't because I hadn't had contact with fanzines, either; I started reading fanzines sometime before I graduated from high school in 1979, and for years, they bewildered me with their self-referentiality (there's that non-word again), their dependence on anecdotes about people I'd never heard of, and their seeming hostility toward the genre with which they were ostensibly concerned. Actually, I'm kind of lucky there — when I got started in Madison fandom, there were a whole bunch of otherwise normal adults around who had some compulsion to go on and on about science fiction and its socio-political implications. This gave me some hook on which to hang my interest, until I developed the right mixture of disdain and detachment to join the more-evolved ranks of cafe fandom, or whatever epithet they were tarring us with back then.

So, I think we should just cut ourselves some slack on this "recruiting" issue. New fanzine fans are coming along all the time. They might not be as young as some of the fans that started up in the seventies and early eighties were, but they make up for it in utter weirdness. Scott Patri and his pathological hatred of trekkies? Who the hell could have dreamed this guy up? "E.B. Frohvet" and his third-person imperial editorial voice? I think he ought to fit right in.

What we need to do is continue to crank out the zines we like, put on conventions that appeal to us, do the things we enjoy — and I suspect we'll be rewarded by meeting people who like the things we do, in at least some measure. If we change the nature of our fandom in order to draw more people into it, haven't we lost the fandom we wanted to preserve anyway? Did Jophan reach the tower of trufandom and demand that it be repainted in a more exciting color? If you ask me, a good way to honor Bob Shaw is to go on being difficult, garrulous and imaginative fans — just like he was.

"Shaw! Stop Laughing!"

Wreath of Stars

by Dave Langford

IT'S STILL HARD TO BELIEVE and harder to write: Bob Shaw died on 11 February 1996.

The shockwaves of dismay that raced around the sf world (bad news travels too fast by Internet) signalled the hugeness of the loss. Bob was such a pillar of our universe, as a lifelong sf fan, admired writer, popular speaker, unflappably genial conversationalist and all-round good guy, that somehow we never thought he could leave the fannish party. Indeed, unless Barry Malzberg is still chafing a bit at Bob's negative review of *Beyond Apollo* in 1975, it's impossible to imagine anyone in or out of fandom not liking him.

Bob was born in Northern Ireland in 1931; by the end of the decade he'd fallen in love with sf as, he said, an escape from the dullness of suburban Belfast. In 1950 he discovered fandom and fanzines, and was soon famous in these inner circles — the Wheels of IF or Irish Fandom — as “BoSh”. As every fanzine fan knows, he and Walt Willis wrote *The Enchanted Duplicator* (1954), which is the *Pilgrim's Progress* of fandom; its Profan, the kindly pro author who also remains a fan, was modelled on Eric Frank Russell but might just as well have been Bob himself at any time after about 1970.

His own 1950s fanzine column (a staple of Hyphen from its first issue) was called “The Glass Bushel” because, belying his genuine modesty, Bob claimed this was the only kind of bushel he was prepared to hide his light under. These are still good funny columns, all the funnier because they're not afraid to be serious . . . it was Bob who advised aspiring fanwriters that if they wished to raise a laugh they should write in merciless detail about the most horrible, ghastly experience of their lives, whereupon fandom would fall about in appreciative hysterics.

Also in the 50s, Bob made some early fiction sales to sf magazines — and maturely decided that these early pieces weren't good enough, that he needed more real-life experience. Off he went to work in Canada and see the world. So the true beginning of Bob's professional career was the strong 1965 story “. . . And Isles Where Good Men Lie” in *New Worlds*, followed next year by “Light of Other Days” in *Analog* — rather astonishingly shortlisted for both Hugo and Nebula despite being only the third published story by the new Bob Shaw. 1967 saw his first novel *Night Walk*, a fast-moving sf thriller powered by a personal phobia which plenty of us share: the fear of losing one's sight and ability to read. The hero is blinded and discovers an eerie way to see through others' eyes by electronically reading the activity of their optic nerves....

I conducted a fanzine interview with Bob in the mid-70s, and questioned him rather ineptly about the special emotional charge attaching to eyes and vision in his work. It wasn't just that he once suffered a sight-threatening eye disease (which occasionally flared up again; he would appear in some hotel bar wearing dark glasses and observe, puzzling fans until the penny dropped, “I take a dim view of this convention.”). The nasty incident in his novel *Ground Zero Man* alias *The Peace Machine*, where a chap's eye is taken out by a steel reinforcing bar and he cradles it pathetically in his hand, actually happened to a boyhood friend and stuck in Bob's imagination all his life. The migraine-induced visual disturbances which I'd found so

fascinating in *The Two-Timers* were part of routine existence for Bob, who went through this subjective light-show (*hemisrania sine dolore*) about twice a year. I've never been so grateful to Bob and sf in general as when in the late 80s I started getting it myself, and was saved from abject panic by realizing this was the *harmless* phenomenon about which he'd been writing.

Further fine books followed, and the *SF Encyclopedia* will give you all the facts; the inventor of “slow glass” and author of (to pick some more favourites) *The Palace of Eternity*, *Vertigo* and *A Wreath of Stars* would be a notable sf figure even if he'd been a recluse living in a cave. But Bob still moved happily between sf's professional and fan circles, in a way that denied that they are really different circles or that one outranks the other. I unknowingly saw the birth of a legend at my own first Eastercon, Tynecon in 1974, where Bob was guest of honour and spoke hilariously on “The Need for Bad Science Fiction”. This led to his famed “Serious Scientific Talks” at convention after convention. Newcomers would be bewildered as the bars emptied and the entire membership crowded to hear a presentation called, say, “The Bermondsey Triangle Mystery”, replete with demented science and excruciating puns delivered in that mournful Irish voice . . . which conveyed mild surprise that these peculiar listeners should be laughing so hard that it hurt. The speeches have since been published in various editions, but you have to imagine the voice.

With slightly poisoned irony, it was these transcribed talks and other fanzine writing that brought Bob the acclaim deserved for his fiction: the 1979 and 1980 Hugo awards, but for Best Fan Writer rather than Best Novel. (*Orbitsville*, however, had deservedly won the 1976 British SF Award.) Privately he sometimes wearied of the speeches, which conventions tended to take for granted, and for which of course he asked no payment. There were times, he said wryly, when he dreaded registering for a con because by return of post the committee would send their draft programme with “Bob Shaw's Serious Scientific Talk” in a prime slot. Fandom can be thoughtlessly cruel to those it loves; we loved Bob a little too much. Some of the “serious scientific” humour also surfaced in less frenetic form in his funny 1977 sf novel *Who Goes Here?*, which remains pleasantly rereadable.

After a period of professional quiet in the early 1980s, Bob made a popular come-back with his biggest sf project: the trilogy of *The Ragged Astronauts* (1986; British SF Award winner; Hugo shortlist), *The Wooden Spaceships* (1988) and *The Fugitive Worlds* (1989), set in a universe of audaciously daft physics where π has an unfamiliar value, twin planets can share an atmosphere, inter-planetary balloon flight is feasible, and the gravitational constant is “whatever it needs to be to make my solar system work”. Things looked good as the 1990s began. There seemed every reason to expect sf gatherings to be gladdened for the foreseeable future by Bob's familiar bearded, heavy-eyed face: “Cartoons of me look like Ming the Merciless,” he would complain.

But then came the run of evil luck. Bob's wife of many years, Sarah (“Sadie” — herself a legendary figure of Irish Fandom), died with shocking unexpectedness in 1991. For a while Bob tried, as he put it, to drink the world dry. In late 1993 he suffered a grim cancer operation which left him unwell for a

From the direction of that last appalling detonation, borne on the rain-laden night air, there came faint piteous cries.

solid year. "At one stage of the surgery," he told me cheerfully, "they must have been able, literally, to look right through me and out the other side." Last year there were gleams of good cheer: Bob was on good conversational form at the 1995 Eastercon and declared himself to be writing again at last (he'd delivered part of a second sequel to *Who Goes Here* in 1994, but had abandoned it owing to poor health). True to his own maxim about extracting humour from bad experiences, he published a funny article about smuggling dope in the colostomy bag which he had once dreaded. His "serious scientific talk" at Intersection downplayed the traditional puns in favour of a moving appreciation of his 50-year association with sf and fandom: even before the dismal clarity of hindsight, many of the listeners felt that Bob was saying goodbye.

December saw his second marriage, to Nancy Tucker in the USA; but illness persisted. After returning to England this February, enjoying dinner with his son's family and Nancy, and paying a last visit to the Red Lion pub, Bob died peacefully in his sleep that night. The funeral took place on 19

February.

I still can't believe it. Goodbye, Bob.

A Footnote:

Bob Shaw's fanzine material is no longer easy to find, but the convention speeches up to 1988 are still in print as *A Load of Old BoSh* (1995) from Becon Publications, 75 Rosslyn Avenue, Harold Wood, Essex, England RM3 0RG ... Ukp5.50 post free in the UK, all profits to the Royal National Institute for the Blind "Talking Books" fund. If ordering from the USA I would suggest a \$10 cheque to Becon proprietor Roger Robinson, who has a dollar bank account. *The Best of the Bushel* (Inca Press 1979) assembled 13 Hyphen columns with an introduction by Walt Willis, but is probably now fairly rare.

I drafted this piece at half the length as a memorial appreciation for SFX magazine in Britain, and am grateful to Apparatchik for the chance to expand it with a few more personal reminiscences. Of course it isn't adequate. What could be?

A dimly seen object that I had taken to be a huge pile of dustbins painted in zig zag camouflage . . .

FANNISH MEMORY SYNDROME

by Steve Green

THERE'S A TENDENCY, WHEN eulogizing the recently deceased, to recall only that which portrays them in a favorable light, and to downplay the less commendable

facets of their personality or career. In the case of Bob Shaw, however, no such well-intentioned distortion is necessary; he was, quite simply, one of the nicest people whose company I have ever had the good fortune to share.

My first contact with Bob, more than twenty years ago, exemplifies his generosity and good nature. It was the spring of 1975, and I had learned of science fiction fanzines through the short-lived *World of Horror*; I'd already received several copies of the DR WHO Fan Club newsletter, but this (curiously) was sponsored by the BBC and had little or no contact with the fabulous fannish universe the *WoH* column hinted at. Within months, a friend and I were drawing up our own plans to enter the fray, with one of those dry-as-dust serconzines pretty much endemic at the time.

By coincidence, Marvel had recently added *Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction* to its black & white line, a surprisingly honest attempt to drag sf comics out of the 1950s EC vein and towards the New Wave occupied by the likes of Moorcock and Ellison (who were both represented in due course, along with adaptations of work by Wyndham, Silverberg, Weinbaum and Niven). More importantly to this tale, Marvel decided to lift Bob's "Slow Glass" concept from his Hugo-nominated "Light of Other Days" for use as a framing device to give each issue an overall cohesion; instead of EC's *Crypt Keeper*, shopkeeper Sandson Tyme would startle his customers with visions of distant worlds and strange futures.

Despite this peripheral involvement and the somewhat variable quality of the strips, Bob wrote to offer his congratulations and — apparently on an editorial whim — his address was published in full. I'm unaware as to whether he was sub-

sequently buried in fan mail, but I grabbed the chance to contact a Real Skiffy Writer and, surfing a wave of teenage chutzpah, even included a short questionnaire for use in our proposed first issue.

As it turned out, the fanzine took a further two years to materialize, by which time Bob had replied to this and several other letters, the "Interview" had turned up in another location entirely and, best of all, I'd had the opportunity to meet him in person. Better still, it was in a Novacon bar, which is on a parallel with joining John Huston on safari or Ernest Hemingway at a bullfight. He was entirely at ease, and within moments so was anyone who took an adjoining seat. As I swiftly learned, no matter how successful he became as a science fiction author, he never really evolved from the youngster who tapped at Walt Willis' front door a half-century ago and immediately boosted Irish Fandom by fifty per cent; at heart, he remained a fan.

It's difficult to put into words my admiration for Bob. I enjoyed and respected his sf novels, adored his fanwriting (frequently reprinting the lesser-known pieces in my own fanzines) and always valued our occasional chats at conventions, or on the telephone. Our final lengthy exchange was a short while before Novacon 25, concerning a less than favourable review I'd given *A Bit of BoSh* (entirely down to the editors, I must add); then as always, Bob was supportive, understanding and, above all, honest. In a sense, we ended as we began, fan talking to fan.

Despite his achievements in professional print, Bob's is a greater loss to fandom than to sf as a whole. I doubt he ever regretted that balance for a moment.



. . . turned out to be George Charters in his bulky tweed coat and cap.

A Remember of the Wedding

by Mike Glicksohn

BY THE TIME I FIRST MET Bob Shaw, in 1975, with my own first decade in fandom almost over, he was already a legend to me, a

writer whose wit and skill and seminal contributions to the world of fanzine fandom had me approaching that initial meeting with mild trepidation. Of course, I needn't have worried. Within minutes, Bob's quiet lilting voice, twinkling eyes and ever-present drink were the signs of an old friend.

If you'd told me at that party in Newcastle two decades ago that I'd see Bob perhaps half a dozen times more over the next twenty years, on either side of the Atlantic, and share drinks and tales with him I'd have thought that highly likely.

If you'd told me that twenty years later I'd be the Best Man at his wedding I'd have said you were crazy. But thereby hangs a tale . . .

Some eight years ago, in a fandom, far, far away, while on one of his periodic trans-Atlantic trips, internationally known fannish legend Bob "BoSh"/"Not Fake" Shaw met Midwesternly known Nancy Tucker (mother of Larry "FAANS" Tucker and close friend but unrelated to Bob "Smooooth" Tucker) at RIVERCON in Louisville.

They liked each other, enjoyed each other's company for the weekend and had no further contact for eight years.

In the late summer of 1995 Nancy Tucker flew over the Atlantic to attend INTERSECTION. There she met Bob "Real" Shaw for the second time.

I guess they hit it off because by the end of the con Nancy had been invited to attend NOVACON as Bob's guest.

She did so.

I guess they hit it off, because by the end of the con he had proposed and Nancy had accepted.

The wedding was set for December 16, 1995, just a few weeks away, in Ypsilanti, Michigan so Nancy came back to North America and started preparations for the wedding and Bob stayed in England and started preparations for moving to the US of A.

Attendees at WINDYCON were startled and delighted when an ebullient Nancy invited them all to her wedding and reactions of gob-smacked amazement and sheer joy quickly spread along the fannish grapevine. The news reached me in a letter from Elessar Tetramariner who was co-hosting the pre- and post-wedding parties and my astonished bellows of pleasure baffled my wife (who is a poet, not a fan) until I told her to imagine that a member of her local poetry group had suddenly announced she was marrying Robertson Davies.

I immediately phoned Elessar and demanded to be invited to the pre-wedding party (What's the use of being an ex-BNF if you can't be pushy once in a while?) and he delighted me by telling me I was invited to the wedding. We'd have to squeeze a trip to Michigan in between parties Friday night and Sunday afternoon, but some events are too special to miss!

Four days before the wedding, the phone rang. The first two words that followed my own "hello" were enough for me to recognize Bob Shaw's voice and I was delighted to have the chance to congratulate him personally. We chatted for a while as I asked in a torrent of questions and then Bob struck me dumb by asking one of his own. He'd just arrived in America, he'd seen the guest list for the wedding, and the only name on it he considered a friend was mine so would I do him

the honor of being his Best Man? When I recovered from the shock I accepted with delight and discussed details with the happy couple.

The next afternoon I bought a suit.

The wedding of Bob Shaw and Nancy Tucker took place at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Ypsilanti on December 16, 1995. Members of the Tucker family came from all over the States and fans attended from all around the Midwest. Unfortunately only one of Bob's many British fans, a delightful young lady from his local, was able to make it over for the ceremony but fans from as far away as Chicago and Cincinnati did their best to make Bob feel less of a stranger in a strange land as a con-like atmosphere descended on the Ann Arbor Days Inn the day before the wedding.

Susan and I arrived a couple of hours before the actual wedding ceremony; just time enough to exchange news and share a couple of drinks with the couple-to-be before changing and driving over to the church for a beautiful religious service. Nancy was lovely and her eyes sparkled with love for Bob. Bob was distinguished and did a remarkable job of hiding the fact that he was really quite ill. I didn't lose the ring.

As the service neared its conclusion, the wedding party knelt and took communion, to be followed by those of the attendees who wished to do likewise. I was first, followed by the groom, the bride and the Matron of Honour. And as the priest carried the wine cup away from Bob and towards Nancy, Bob leant slightly towards me and whispered softly — right into the microphone he had clipped to his jacket for the videotaping — "Actually, I'd rather have a pint", thus forever putting a typically Shavian stamp to a marvellous event!

Later that evening other members of the local science fiction community joined those already at the hotel for a celebration filled with songs and toasts and fine drink and fabulous food. "Big Hearted" Howard DeVore had typeset and reprinted Bob's classic *The Fanmanship Lectures* from Slant and he distributed copies to anyone who wanted one. One clever fan got the only copy autographed by all four members of the wedding party which should help ~~me~~ him when ~~I~~ he retires and starts selling ~~my~~ his collection.

And thus it came to pass that the very real (and very ill) Bob Shaw did marry the very nice Nancy Tucker amidst great joy and merriment and the assembled fans and pros did look upon the event and found it good.

Anyone want to buy a barely used suit pretty cheap?

Postscript:

My piece on the wedding of Bob Shaw and Nancy Tucker was mailed the morning of February 12th, the day I learned of Bob's death. When I mailed it, I still believed Bob was recovering from a stomach virus and he and I would have lots of opportunities to build a closer friendship while testing out the microbreweries and good bars in the area of his new home. (Bob probably never saw the letter I wrote discussing such possibilities for my next visit at the end of April.)

When first Elessar and then Larry Tucker called with the news, I was stunned. My initial reactions were those of shock, deep sorrow, and (selfishly) anger that such a truly good and decent man had finally been a short distance away for such a short time. I mourned the loss of one of the very best fandom has known. I mourned mostly for Nancy Tucker, some for myself, some for all those who had known and loved and been

touched by Bob, either directly or through his professional or fanish writing, and I mourned for those who would now never know his surprisingly quiet and lilting voice, his wealth of anecdotes, his deft dry wit, the twinkle in his eye, his ruddy cheeks and his obvious essential goodness.

If anything in my wedding article seems inappropriate

... somewhere under those ceaselessly pounding boots, my two little friends lie silent in the cindery soil.

Bob Shaw (1931-1996)

by Steve Jeffery

SAD NEWS TO START. BACK from two weeks in Virginia, and flicking through the Saturday morning newspapers at Acnecon in Folkestone over the weekend, I learn that Bob Shaw has died. I am saddened but not, I suppose, greatly shocked or surprised. Bob had been ill when I left. An Ansible 103 update had arrived just prior to my departure, saying that Bob had been taken into hospital in Michigan, where he had moved after marrying Nancy Tucker at the end of last year. He had suffered cardiac arrest, complicated by pneumonia and liver failure, and signs did not seem good. This was all I knew until I read John Clute's obituary column two weeks later.

Anybody who knew Bob (and can there be anyone who didn't, and regards himself as a fan?) will surely be saddened by his loss. He was liked by everyone who knew him, and loved by those who knew him well.

His death was perhaps not as much of a complete shock as that of John Brunner at Intersection. Bob had suffered severe depression following the death of his wife, Sadie. His return to fandom and conventions a few years ago was a welcome sign, but his health never seemed to fully recover.

Bob was as much a fan as a SF writer (and he was a good, and perhaps a great SF writer). His involvement in fandom goes back a long way, as I discovered when I was asked to help illustrate Ken Cheslin and Vince Clarke's reprints of the John Berry 'Goon Bleary' stories (these stories, with Atom's original illustrations of BoSh as startlingly young, baby-faced and constantly eating fan, often a little slow on the update,

now it is only because I expected and was anticipating many years of interaction with Bob. Now I'll have to settle for my memories. But at least I have them and I shall always consider myself privileged and blessed to have known and shared a few good times with one of the most talented and nicest people ever to call themselves a fan.

belle just how sharply astute Bob proved to be as a writer). The fanish fairy tale *The Enchanted Duplicator* (with Walt Willis) remains an abiding part of the mythology of fanzine fandom. He was deservedly honoured at the Confabulation Eastercon, with the Becon publication of his 'Serious Scientific Talks' as *A Load of Old Bosh*, and at Novacon 25, where news came of his forthcoming marriage to Nancy and his move to the States.

In several of those talks, Bob often made flippant comments to some of his early SF works, but they well crafted, entertaining SF. But it was with his 'Slow Glass' stories of *Other Days*, *Other Eyes* that something great shined through, and marked Bob as a fine and deeply compassionate writer. They take on James Blish's dictum about SF, "Who does this hurt?" Although the concept of Slow Glass will remain one of the great SF inventions, these stories are about real people, and their compassion marks them as special.

While I have not read the Nebula nominated "Light Of Other Days" for perhaps a dozen years, it remains firmly stuck in memory, and what SF could (and perhaps should) be about.

On a grander scale, Bob could outdo even Niven's *Ringworld*, completely enclosing the sun in a Dyson sphere in *Orbitsville* (which idea turns up in Stephen Baxter's *The Time-ships*). Bob's last series of novels, *The Ragged Astronauts* sequence, were a joyous and inventive romp of space exploration by balloon.

Inventive, funny, deeply generous and good natured. Bob Shaw will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

"The fools! The poor fools! They'll never reach the moon."

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH: Continuing the theme of this issue, we start the lettercolumn with a series of comments in remembrance or appreciation of Bob Shaw. First up is HARRY WARNER JR. (423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740):]

I was very sorry to learn from the latest Apparatchik about the death of Bob Shaw. He and I were together only once and very briefly, in the middle of a crowd at a Worldcon. But from that hasty encounter, I got the impression of a man with enormous energy and great enjoyment of life, and I don't think this reaction came from confusing the person with his fanzine writings. He somehow reminded me of Stanley Holloway, even though the latter wasn't to the best of my knowledge Irish.

'Incidentally, there is a minor mystery for me involved in Bob's passing. About a week ago, I was in the kitchen and the radio in the living room was playing. I wasn't particularly interested in the newscast from a network but I thought I caught the words "Shaw" and "writer" and "seventy". My first

thought was: could this be Bob Shaw, who I knew had been in bad health? Then I considered the fact that Bob isn't nearly the famous science fiction writer that Asimov and Heinlein and others whose passing got attention in mundane news areas, I don't think he was 70 years old, and I'm sure he didn't write 70 books and it must have been a journalist or someone in some other field who had died. Now I don't know if Bob made the United States five-minute radio summaries. Conceivably, he could have done so if there was someone in charge who liked to read science fiction, enjoyed Bob's fiction, and decided to include him in the script.'

[APH: One strong piece of evidence — the fact that Bob was only 65 years of age — points against the possibility that you heard his obit on the radio. But Bob does seem to have attracted some degree of mainstream media attention: we were surprised to see a brief obituary for him in *The Seattle Times* a few days after he died. Perhaps someone in the wire service really was a Shaw fan

Next, TED WHITE (1014 N. Tuckahoe, Falls Church, VA

22046) offers a memory of both the personal and the professional Bob Shaw:]

'The news of Bob Shaw's death was not welcomed in my house, but came late Sunday night (February 18th) in the form of a phone call from rich brown, who'd just gleaned it from the net moments earlier. Bob was one of my heroes from the days when I was a neofan and I read *The Enchanted Duplicate*. (*TED* was Bob's concept, and he wrote the beginning of it; Willis picked it up and finished it.) I met him back in 1958 at the Solacon; he'd been living in Canada for a couple of years and was on his way back to the UK, using the LA Worldcon as a stopover. John Champion, Boyd Raeburn and I took Bob out to sightsee. We went to Hollywood and Vine, and stopped off at a restaurant across the street from an establishment that had a live waterfall down its front. There Bob ate his first pizza. As I recall, we all enjoyed that pizza so much that we ordered a second, and eventually, a third. I once (circa 1970) wrote this up under the title, "How I met Bob Shaw, Ate Pizza, and Found Ghod," or something like that.

'I saw him again in 1965, when the Carrs and I visited Northern Ireland after the London Worldcon, staying with the Willises and socializing every evening (and for one day trip) with Jim and Peggy White, Bob and Sadie Shaw and George Charters. During that visit, Bob remarked that he'd like to emulate Jim's success as a professional sf writer, but the transatlantic lag was causing him problems. "I send John Campbell a story, and if he doesn't like it, he rejects it. Then I get the story back about six months later. It could take me *years* to sell a story." I told him he needed someone in the States (better, in New York City) to act in his behalf, submitting his stories for him. An agent, sorta. I volunteered.

"Thus, I became Bob's first agent. I sold for him everything he sent me, starting with "Light of Other Days," his first Slow Glass story, which Campbell did buy (although Bob didn't think he would) and *Night Walk*, his first novel (which I sold first to Banner Books — with a Frazetta cover! — which was a new imprint from Hearst/Avon; when Banner folded, the book was republished as an Avon book). I sold his first three books, up through his Ace Special, which I helped him plot. But I was not an ideal agent and I messed up. Bob forgave me, and we remained friends, but I got out of the agenting business. I got his professional career (in the States) started, and that was all I'd ever wished to do.

"The last time we had a chance to sit and talk at leisure was in 1985, in Melbourne, where I took him out one night for lobster thermidore and we enjoyed ourselves at length. I'm really, really sorry that there will not be another opportunity for something like that. One of the saddest things about growing older is that one's friends are also growing older, and some of them don't survive the experience.'

[APH: Too true. But I take some small comfort in the thought that when a person has as many friends as Bob did, the afterimage they leave behind them is very bright indeed.

JOHN DALLMAN (e-mail from jgd@cix.compulink.co.uk) offers a brief observation on Mr. Shaw's character:]

'I'd enjoyed Bob Shaw's writing and humour since I first heard of him, in 1977, but I'd always felt that there was something missing. It wasn't until 1990, and a digression in

his Serious Scientific Talk at that year's Eastercon, that I realised what it was.

'Cynicism.

'Bob caught the SF virus as a teenager, and as far as I've ever been able to tell, he maintained his faith in SF throughout his life. He never grew tired of SF or fans; he did all that he could in our strange little world.

'He kept the faith.'

[APH: Which is, I think, a point worth making. In an age where many of us who call ourselves trufen have left the genre entirely behind, Bob never lost his affection for and fascination with science fiction. His work always seemed remarkably pungent with the sense of wonder, and his books were plain fun to read. We need more like him.

That concludes the memorial portion of the fanzine; we move now into the realm of the genuinely daft, as personified by one PETER ROBERTS (e-mailing us from P.Roberts@rbgkew.org.uk) who, like many, finds himself bewildered by the pace of the mighty Apak Dynamo:]

'I get this terrible feeling of deja-vu. Is reality running ahead of itself? Have you already published this letter? Am I running behind myself?

'No matter. Let's talk about Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the man with the best name ever. He designed and built Bristol Temple Meads Railway Station, a cathedral to the Age of Steam which Taffboy Dan Steffan would have loved something rotten. One day, when I get a new Time Machine, I'll take Dan & Lynn back to Temple Meads in the 1950s to inhale all the wonderfully evocative smoke and steam. Then, after we've left the tea room, we can walk through the hiss and soot and wave at the engine driver. Terrific. Scared me to death as a kid. Don't forget to bring your trilby, Dan.

'Isambard Kingdom Brunel lived in Torquay, just over there behind those trees. In fact he planted those trees. In fact he died in Torquay, which is not uncommon. Now they've put up a totem pole to him in the garden. His garden that is, not mine. No, I don't know why either. Why they've put a totem pole up, that is...not why it isn't in my garden. I know that.

'The man with the second best name ever is Conrad Ritblat.

'Of course, if he'd been in a William Faulkner novel, his name would have been changed to Quentin just to confuse the issue. I've always been fond of Faulkner, but I'm not sure I should admit this, after reading Victor's essay. I confess to having been chased by cows several times in my life, but the feeling isn't mutual.

'I don't remember little plastic toys in cereal boxes. Perhaps I ate them? I do remember little plastic toys in toilet rolls. God's truth. Little blue trains that looked like shit.

'Sorry. This was a comment on the issue before last. Or the one after that. Or was it the next one before the one after?

'Go to bed, Peter.'

[VMG: I can remember chasing cows on a field or two — they're kind of fun to herd for no reason — but I can't remember having any goal of sexual fulfillment. But maybe I'm really a closet cow-fucker.]

[APH: I admit to being confused. Why would Isambard Brunel have changed his name to Quentin? And what were you eating that brought on shit that looked like little blue trains?

The famous Shaw gut adjusted to the antics of the ship immediately and I never felt better in my life.

Just what mushrooms have you been working with, Peter?

A similar degree of confusion is voiced by TOM BECKER (e-mailable at twb@apple.com) who probably speaks for many readers when he asks:]

'What's happening to the title? I thought the "R" was great, but now it looks like the stress on the dillithium crystals in your print engine may be reaching the danger point. Careful!

'Ted's comment about ELO and the Beatles was a good one; ELO had a very successful career mining the sound from just one Beatles album. I even like their stuff, and listened to it a lot when it was coming out. But the group I really loved was ELO's predecessor, the Move, a brilliantly creative, grungy, high-energy band that never got the recognition it deserved. ELO did a good job of commercializing the Move's music, but a lot was lost in the process.

'I wasn't really old enough to be buying my own albums when the Beatles were doing their best work, but I was fortunate to have a father who liked music and had eclectic tastes: Bach and Brahms came first, but he was seriously into Ellington when he was growing up, and from about '67 on I remember him always getting the latest Airplane, Stones and Beatles records as they came out. It's hard for me to explain the joy, without reservations, that was in those albums. These days are so cynical and fragmented; there's no way someone's going to make a record, and it becomes the music of the moment, and everyone likes it, because it is so good. But that's what the Beatles could do. Michael Moorcock writes about it in one of his Jerry Cornelius stories — it's in the 60's, and there are always new bands coming up, the music changes, the times change, Jerry changes, but then he Beatles come out with a new album and it is so different from what they did before, so perfectly capturing the moment, and so good, and Jerry realizes they're still his favorite band.

'I'm enjoying Dan's TAFF reports, but I thought there was a tradition that the candidates say in their platforms where they're planning to go if they win, and I don't remember Dan saying he was going to visit London in the 60's (or did he make it only as far as the early 70's? It's not totally clear). Anyway, Dan is to be congratulated on his quick and lively reports, and I look forward to reading about what fandom is like in Amsterdam.'

[APH: Thanks for the comments, Tom, but no time to stop now! We have to rush to catch a train with DAVID BRATMAN (d.bratman@genie.com):]

'It's always good to see a piece of a TAFF report, not least in this case because I, like Dan, have been riding the London Underground recently. I seem to have missed any of the strike days (though I thought I was going to hit one), and in general as a veteran of BART, whose mere two lines go nowhere useful outside of central San Francisco, Oakland & Berkeley, and whose trains arrive with mind-numbing infrequency, I am full of wonderment at the extensive coverage and frequency of the London tube trains. As for the underground culture, I can live with it. London has better buskers, and the tube stations smell of less piss than do the streets of San Francisco. (And as you said, they gotta go somewhere.)

'And I see that London is even extending one of its lines to Greenwich, surely a more desirable destination than

BART's latest addition (its first new station in over 20 years), Colma.'

[APH: Pardon me for climbing on a favorite hobby-horse here, but BART is a joke. Instead of undertaking to provide useful service for a relatively small area, BART has been designed to give inadequate coverage to the whole region. It helps if you think of it as being an inter-urban railway, instead of an urban subway system, but even then the schedule of trains speaks of a token effort to create mass transit and quiet critics of the bay area's tangled freeways rather than a real alternative to driving. Whenever I visit San Francisco and environs, I always end up with big blisters on my feet; even if I decide to take the bus, I end up walking half-way to my destination before one arrives. I'm sure things would be better if I lived there and knew the schedules, but tell that to my feet.

Now, here's our bi-weekly pocsarcd from DAVID THAYER (701 Regency Drive, Hurst, TX 76054-2307), who's having trouble deciding who to vote for:]

'You didn't like my idea of the contemporary 3-year retro-Hugos in the fan categories, eh? Except for a paragraph here and there in histories of sf, Diana and I are finding little tangible evidence fanzines existed in 1945. The fiction categories are a little better. Van Vogt's *The World of Null-A* is still in print and one Murray Leinster story has been reprinted in at least twenty anthologies.

'The founders of Pulphouse I think in the beginning were fooling themselves about its successes as much as they were fooling others at the end. Small presses must be a labor of love to survive. When the enterprise becomes labor, idealists often find something else to love.'

[APH: I could be wrong, of course, but I don't think Pulphouse was ever meant to be a traditional small press; its founders had hopes of turning at least a small profit from the very beginning, and even their most off-beat publications seemed to have considerable commercial potential. I think the point was mostly to create a publishing house outside the economic imperatives which the bigger houses have to follow, where writers could place material that didn't necessarily have block-buster potential, but which deserved to see the light of day. Plus, to echo Charles Foster Kane, they thought it might be fun to run an sf publishing house. In general, I think they were most successful in the latter regard.

Now that Arnie Katz has owned up to being "Paul Feller" (or was it "Keller"?), the puzzle which interests the Apparatchiki most is the identity of the mysterious E. B. FROHNET (4725 Dorsey Hall Drive, Suite A, Box 700 Ellicott City, MD 21042), who responds here to the coverage he received in Apak #54:]

'Thank you for sending Apparatchik #54. It is a source of wonder that you can put out even a small fanzine on this sort of schedule. The paper and postage costs alone seem prohibitive. We thought Twink's proposed three-times-a-year schedule was optimistic, in comparison to, for instance, Lan's Lantern (which we haven't received or heard from in a year and a half, but that's another subject . . .). Perhaps next year we will think seriously about going quarterly with Twink.

'We have to admit being less than 100% thrilled at having our fanzine referred to as a "crudzine"; although when one looks at your definition ("certain niceties of layout, design, [etc] have been suspended in favor of actually publishing something, instead of struggling to reach a higher level of

I think that the National Service that the English and Scots have to do does serious damage to their minds.

polish which might never see the light of day . . ."), that's really a pretty apt summation of what we had in mind. As to whether we will "grow beyond the artifice of a pseudonym", actually, well, um, the pseudonym is there for a *reason*.

'Since Mr. Steffan's point is clearly to be amusing rather than accurate, any attempt to parse his travelogue on logical grounds will make us look like the sort of humorless drone, immune to metaphor, that one encounters in so many writing workshops. However, Mr. Steffan refers to the Washington D.C. subway (with which we can claim some small familiarity) as "another colorless and odorless network of featureless, boring, subterranean cattle cars." And this is a bad thing? Give us boring and featureless any time if it means no tattooed thugs freebasing coke on the next seat. Mr. Steffan was on vacation at the time and therefore predisposed to enjoy everything. Some of us don't ride the subway for entertainment, we actually have somewhere to go.

'Note to Lesley Reece: We feel much the same way she does about both books and cats.'

[VMG: Hmmm. I think all of fandom must put its collective mind to the puzzle of figuring out who you are. There are some clues.

Not rich, therefore not able to publish too frequently. At one time you got Lan's Lantern. I'm sorry. There's a reason for a pseudonym. No kidding.

I've got it! You're actually Richard Bergeron and his evil twin Cesar Ignacio Ramos!

With a fanzine that looks like Twink?

Well, I guess not. But let's look at some more clues.

Writing workshops. Familiarity with the D.C subway. Books and cats.

We may not know who you are yet, but there's enough to figure out that you walk by a Crown Books, a Heavenly Ham and a Master Barber on your way to pick up your mail.

Bool]

[APH: While you may have very significant reasons for wishing to remain pseudonymous, I'm afraid you will find that a lot of fans have a very negative association with the idea. Over the past two decades, various fans have chosen to hide behind pseudonyms as they lobbed abusive fanzine reviews and other hostile material at people, often bringing about bad feelings and confusion which bordered on feud. So while you may have no malicious intentions in keeping your identity secret from your readers (although, it is difficult to imagine a completely *benign* reason for doing such a thing), you may find people somewhat less than totally receptive to the practice.

As for Victor's quest to unmask you, I can assume no responsibility. Personally, I'd rather have the FBI after me than a dedicated investigative journalist with a lizard in his car.

That's it for this issue, folks. We Also Heard From George Flynn and Joseph Nicholas; thanks to them and everyone who wrote. Next issue, we might have another installment of Dan Steffan's TAFF report. Or we might not. And, as a companion piece to Pam Well's profile of TAFF candidate Simo, we'll soon have the real dope on his opponent, the one-time Danish Middleweight champion, Martin Tudor.]



I closed my eyes tight and lay there without moving and, after a long, long time, the noise went away.

Stuff a Real Newszine would have in it

Compiled by Andy

ACCORDING TO VARIOUS internet sources, Elizabeth Anne "Betty" Hull, a leading member of SFRA and wife of Frederik Pohl, is standing for Congress in Illinois'

8th district, which includes a big chunk of the greater Chicago-land area, mostly in the northwest suburbs of the city. Her platform includes "women's rights, fair tax laws and gun control." Her opponent is long-time (Republican?) incumbent Philip Crane. Apparently, the Illinois Democratic party either lost a candidate or was unable to find a local party mechanic to stand for the seat, as Hull was asked to join the race at the eleventh hour, and will enter it as a write-in candidate. We'd be happy to get any further information on this we can, from any Chicago-area fans who may be reading this.

For the second time in the past four years, Dell Magazines, publisher of Asimov's and Analog, among numerous other titles, has been sold. The new owner is Penny Press, another New York-based publisher. No major changes in the editorial policy of either magazine is expected in the near future, although they are expected to move their offices to another location in Manhattan sometimes in June of this year.

You've probably seen this in a dozen places already, but I can't resist reporting it anyway: Mattel toys (the people who brought you the stock of the M-16 assault rifle) is planning to release new editions of Barbie and Ken dressed in original 1960's vintage Starfleet uniforms. Ken will be wearing the tasteful gold jersey, black pants and boots made famous by William Shatner on the Desilu lot, while Barbie will sport the short red minidress and deep taupe stockings favored by Grace Lee Whitney in her role a yeoman Janice Rand. Mattel is trying to conceal the

fundamentally exploitative tone of the set by referring to Barbie's uniform as that of an engineering officer, and hanging a tiny tricorder off her shoulder, but fans of the series, as well as the average Barbie enthusiast, are unlikely to be fooled. They know where Captain Ken really wants to boldly go . . .

Porry Ackerman, who recently left Famous Monsters of Filmland magazine, following a tiff over editorial direction with that title's new publisher, seems to have landed on his feet. He's already agreed to write a bi-weekly column entitled "4SJ's Sci-Fi Kaleidoscope," which will appear in The Dominion Web site, which is, appropriately enough, the official site of the Sci-Fi channel. Porry's column will consist of tales, anecdotes and "wisdom" which he has gleaned from his 70+ years association with fandom. He'll also answer questions and comment from fans. In other words, the same thing he's been doing since a few hours after the K-T comet struck the earth. Seems like a natural.

We offer our condolences to the family and friends of Brad Beason, a popular Wichita, Kansas fan who succumbed to a massive coronary on the 22nd of February. Beason began his fannish career as a gopher at the 1976 Worldcon, and had a twenty year record of service at fannish events.

From a variety of sources, we've received word that Elsie Wollheim, widow of DAW books and PAPA founder Donald A. Wollheim passed away on or around the 20th of February. It's sort of embarrassing that no further information seems to be available in regard to the circumstances of her death or even what she had been doing for the past several years. Her influence on the direction and editorship of DAW books was undeniable.

Correspondent Pam Wells favored us with a few choice images from MiS-Saigon, a small, somewhat brainy relaxicon held at the Royal Clarence Hotel in Burnham-On-Sea over the

weekend of 9 - 11 February. She says that this version of the con didn't have the same "spark" as the first two conventions mounted by the MiSPiTs, and that too many people showed up (over *seventy* members were listed on the convention program), but that everyone still seemed to have a good time. The undisputed high point of the weekend was the trial of Martin Tudor for witchcraft, under the auspices of Witchfinder General Mike Siddall. The convention program book featured numerous depositions from various convention attendees attesting to the guilt or innocence of Mr. Tudor. Martin's fate may have been sealed by the fact that his own betrothed, Helena Gough, offered lengthy testimony to his guilt, noting in particular the blasphemies he utters when either balancing his bank book or running the Critical Wave photocopier. Or, it might have been the tall, pointy hat he insisted on wearing.

As Pam put it, "The judges looked especially great, 'coz they all dressed up in these great costumes — and my favorite bit was when Ray Bradbury took a knife and carved a big chunk out of Martin's arm and the blood went everywhere." I hasten to point out that the Bradbury in question is an English fan with a penchant for magic tricks (there is apparently a shortage of original names in British fandom), and that Martin's arm — as well as the rest of him — seem to be none the worse for wear, despite being found guilty and sentenced to burning at the stake. This was greeted with such enthusiasm that "Burn the Witch!" became the catch-phrase of the weekend.

Oh, and a perusal of one of the convention's progress reports, kindly sent to me by the late Mr. Tudor, provided me with the answer to the popular question "Who the hell are the MiSPiTs, anyway?" The MiSPiTs are a group of fans drawn from the Birmingham Group who were willing to actually turn up and get drunk together from time to time, without the excuse of a guest speaker or formal program to guide them. Beginning in 1984, the group, including Paul Vincent, Martin Tudor, Tony Berry, Steve Green and others who have escaped indictment, began meeting in the General Wolfe, a pub in the Aston Arts Triangle, whatever that is. And since one could, if one were drunk enough, argue that the area was once part of the kingdom of Mercia, Tudor suggested that the group ought to be referred to as The Mercian Science Fiction Triangle, or MiSPiTs for short, not least because it would separate them geometrically from the London Circle, the Swindon Octagon and the Stranraer Parallelogram.

I know that Apak's readers will find this information the key to fulfillment that they've been missing all these years.

Speaking of Martin Tudor, he and Helena Gough have set the date and location for their wedding. We've received a lovely invitation to their nuptials, to be held on Thursday, the 4th of April at 3:30 pm, in the Dudley Registry Office, Priory Hall, Priory Park. I don't know where that is, but it certainly sounds nice. There will also be a reception, with a buffet and some manner of bar at the Fisherman's Ballroom, Mad O'Rourke's Kipper House in Willenhall. According to ancillary sources, this is conceived as a very small and intimate event, which may explain why Martin is inviting people that can't possibly attend, such as myself. Not that I don't appreciate having the opportunity, mind you . . .

The invitation closes by noting that Argos or Mark & Spencer Gift Vouchers, or, of course, cash, are the presents of choice. Cash, one is moved to observe, never goes out of style, and its color seems to go with everything. Carrie and I will be celebrating our tenth anniversary at the end of this month; anyone who regrets having failed to send a gift on the occasion of our marriage might keep the timeless quality of currency in mind.

Finally, although no further details in regard to his death have surfaced, we can confirm that Horace Gold, one of the most noted editors in Science Fiction history, passed away in early February. It's been a long time since Gold's tenure as the editor of *Galaxy* magazine, and I don't really have any idea what he did with his life thereafter, but his achievements there were remarkable enough that they seem worth recounting briefly here.

Galaxy debuted in 1950, only the second important sf magazine to begin publication in over a decade, and the first since Boucher and McComas' *F&SF*. While *Astounding/Analog* had the largest meat-and-potatoes SF audience, and *F&SF* was often credited with having the best prose, *Galaxy* did more than all other titles combined to advance the overall state-of-the-art in SF during the 1950s. In brief, Gold encouraged his writers — who included the likes of Leiber, Knight, Sheckley, William Tenn, Cordwainer Smith, Zenna Henderson, and Jerome Bixby, among so many others — to press themselves to consider what would happen beyond the scientific turning points which formed the climax of so many stories in the golden age. He bought what we might call second- and third-order stories, in which the social and personal implications of technical innovation are extrapolated beyond the obvious. In doing so, he laid the ground work for what would be known as the "new wave" a decade later, and gave a great boost to the careers of many of fandom's favorite writers.

Plus, *Galaxy* always had excellent "collateral" material — Willy Ley's fine science columns, book reviews by Groff Conklin, Gold's own brother Floyd, and Algys Budrys, and some screamingly funny "serious" pseudo-scientific material, just the antidote fandom needed in the wake of the Shaver mystery. Gold had his quirks and his agoraphobia often drove him to run the magazine from his bedroom, but he regularly dispatched me to the edge of imagination when I read collections from *Galaxy* in the Madison Public Library at the age of twelve or so. He seems to be little remembered today, but I, for one, will never forget him.

Victor here: Just a note to mention that I won't be at Corflu in Nashville because of the endless catastrophe that are my finances. I wish I could be there, and I'm sure the convention will provide a very cozy place for the telling of Bob Shaw stories.

Sigh. I hope that Andy properly distributes my greetings, and brings back many fanzines.

Although I haven't read all of it yet, I was also happy to see the *Wild Heirs* anniversary. Never has my name been mentioned so many times in one issue of any publication. I feel honored that my one-page screed several issues ago was able to create such apparent consternation.

As usual, the fanzine is very good. The "editorial jam" has been replaced by several separate editorials, and there is much discussion of "self-referentiality" within the zine.

I particularly liked the Tom Springer piece about editing the *Nine Lines* Each letters issue with John Hardin and Ken Forman. It might be the most truly revealing thing to come from Springer, and it's a far cry from his "plonker wars" series, which could only be understood as metaphor and allusion, not reality.

Springer's full-detail Silvercon report was also excellent and accurate.

And I'll never forget Murray Moore's comment on APAK in the lettercol: "Then I learned the cruel truth. APAK continues without me. I am denied 'Fanzine Countdown' Hooper, Gonzalez, and the best bi-weekly lettercol in sf fanzines."

Whoa. I'll make sure you're on the mailing list, or Andy's looking at a hard 30 years in the Russian Far East.

More next time, I hope.

Gritting my teeth to keep my heart from bouncing out onto the ground, I turned to witness the explosion of the hell-bomb.

FANZINE COUNTDOWN, February 29th to March 12

1.) Wild Heirs #13, edited by The Las Vegrants, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107: Wow, what a tome! This issue, the first anniversary, weighs in 100 pages — no wonder the Vegrants had to take a little nap before they pushed this one down the chute! Lots of Rotsler cartoons, and some very fine Ray Nelsons — but this Teddy Harvia caricature of me on page three is a slight disappointment. C'mon, Teddy, I haven't been clean-shaven since 1985! Written highlights include Rob Hansen's "Tales from the Yorkshire Grey," and rich brown's funny, and all too brief "The Midwestcon Open." Brevity is not among Tom Springer's faults; he offers 21 pages on his memories of Silvercon 4! Having been there myself, and finding my name on just about every page, I thought this was just right; others might have differing opinions. And Arnie offers another of his grand theoretical treatises on fandom, this time covering "The Philosophical Theory of Fanhistory." There's a lot of good stuff here, but I have to admit I haven't waded through all 26 pages of it yet; maybe on the plane to Nashville . . . Plus, the usual collection of snappy and topical editorials. What a jam! And who ever said that self-referentiality is a bad thing? You just have to be interesting enough to be worth referring to, which these fens seem to be in spades.

2.) Crawdaddy! #11, Winter 1996, edited by Paul Williams, Box 231155, Encinitas CA 92023: I find it hard to communicate just how superb this issue of Crawdaddy! is. From Andrew Sturm's opening meditation on Sonic Youth and other recent releases, to Paul's extended appreciation of several Patti Smith/Bob Dylan concerts, to Laurence Brauer's superb review of Bruce Springsteen's *The Ghost of Tom Joad* and Joe Grushecky's *American Babylon*, I don't think I've read any better writing about music in any magazine for months, years. Even the fiction, the first chapter of a rock and roll novel titled *Regards*, by Gary Abramson, was very well done and made me want to read the whole book. And throughout, Donna Nasser's truly beautiful eraser-carving prints complement the minimalist, almost stark layout of the magazine perfectly. Plus, the issue features some really good news, in that Paul Williams has been hired by the Bay-area audio magazine FI to be their pop music editor. This means that he'll be enjoying regular paychecks, which ought to help subsidize further issues of Crawdaddy! This seems to have been quite a year for Paul, since we saw him last at Corflu Vegas; from a terrible bike accident and a fractured skull to the first regular paycheck he's ever collected, and for doing something which he loves to do. Interesting times. I still feel some self-consciousness about calling this a fanzine, but let's get over it; after all, it enables me to say that this is the best music fanzine that I have ever seen, and might very well be the best ever published. Send Paul \$4.00 for a sample issue and see what I mean.

3.) Brum Group News # 292 & 293, edited by Martin Tudor for the BSGF, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX UK: A very useful list of events and things, especially if you happen to be a member of the Birmingham Science Fiction Group. A few book reviews tossed in to fill out the mix. Right now, the group is mostly concerned with the issue of finding a new meeting place, as their former pub hall is being turned into a restaurant. Here's wishing them good luck; I know what a struggle it can be to find a good place to meet that

doesn't balk at the prospect of a horde of scruffy fans on their premises.

4.) Situation Normal??, Vol. 7, #3, edited by Aileen Forman for SNAFFU, P.O. Box 95941, Las Vegas, NV 89193-5941: This clubzine appears to be taking a slightly different direction under new editor Aileen Forman; less trufannish history lessons, and more reviews of contemporary books and role-playing games. This may be looked on with dismay by some outsiders, but it probably addresses the interests of the club as a whole somewhat better. Plus, there's a preview of some upcoming SF discussion sessions scheduled for various club meetings, which makes it look like SNAFFU is really hitting on all cylinders now.

5.) Duff Talk-About #1, written and edited by Pat & Roger Sims, 34 Creekwood Square, Cincinnati, OH 45246-3811: This is the first issue of a newsletter from the current DUFF administrators. Lots of thanks to various people they met on their trip to Australia, and to various individuals and conventions that have contributed to the fund in the past year. The administrators say that they have so many fanzines on hand that they could sell for DUFF that it would be impossible to list them all; they encourage people with specific wants to mail them in, along with some note of what they would be willing to pay for them. Apparently, if you offer what they think is a fair price, the Sims will mail your choices straight out without entertaining any competing bid. This could certainly be of use to some fanzine collectors, who could no doubt save some money, but the vast majority of casual fan-fund supporters are unlikely to respond to this method. Why not list a small slice of the best stuff, you guys, and get the most money you can for them, and leave the rest of the pile for the first bidders?

Also Received:

MSfire Vol. 2, #2, edited by Sue Burke for Milwaukee Science Fiction Services. Wild Heirs also received by Victor.

—APH



APPARATCHIK is Otto Von Crankenschmidt of fandom, a noted philatelist and heavy construction-equipment operator famed from sea to shining sea, a fantastic Burbee-like character certain to place highly in the FAAA balloting, and only slightly hampered and/or handicapped by the fact that he is entirely imaginary. It's still available for the usual, but note that trades must now be sent to both Andy and Victor (Victor can be reached at 403½ Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and electronically at VXG@p.tribnet.com), and/or you can get Apparatchik for \$3.00 for a three month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a life-time subscription for \$19.73, or in exchange for a year's supply of hushaboom, the famous silent explosive. For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, see his address in the colophon on the front cover. Lifetime subscribers include Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Tracy Benton, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Scott Custis, Bruce Durocher, Don Fitch, Jill Flores, Ken Forman, Margaret Organ Kean, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Dale Speirs, Geri Sullivan, Steve Swartz, Michael Waite, Tom Whitmore and Art Widner. Ooh, I don't like that awful grinding sound...