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APPARATCHIK



This is the sixty-ninth issue of a tri-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper, Carl Juarez and Victor Gonzalez, members & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. Correspondence for Victor should be sent to 403 1/2 Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and at VXG@p.tribnet.com. See the back page for availability and trade info, including the addresses of our British and Australian mailing agents. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #276. **Apparatchiki:** Greg Benford, Randy Byers, D.B. Cooper, Steve Green, Irwin Hirsh, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor, Pam Wells, and Ted White.

Issue #69, November 1st, 1996

TAFF Funds Missing as 1997 Race Approaches

by Andy Hooper and Victor M. Gonzalez

It is unclear how much money will be available to the winner of the 1997 North America to Britain Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund race. Funds held by previous British administrator Abi Frost are no longer available, and it is unknown whether they will be recovered.

Nevertheless, nominations are now open for the 1997 TAFF election, to send a North American fan to Great Britain for the Eastercon national convention, to be held the final weekend of March, 1997. Voting will begin on December 2nd, 1996 and conclude February 8th, 1997.

To explain, we offer this "press release," issued on behalf of TAFF, with the approval of administrators Martin Tudor and Dan Steffan, by various past administrators: Rob Hansen, Dave Langford (who drafted the text and accepts responsibility for infelicities), Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Greg Pickersgill, and Pam Wells:

"As has been the subject of extensive recent gossip in fandom (especially UK fandom), the TransAtlantic Fan Fund in Europe has suffered a major financial setback. The European fund has not been passed on to the 1996 TAFF winner and current UK administrator, Martin Tudor.

"Thanks to general fannish goodwill, it was assumed that pass-on delays following Tudor's victory in early May were the result of simple disorganization on the part of former administrator Abigail Frost. Frost has additionally failed to publish the usual detailed voting figures and list of European voters, which are still not known. In late June, after repeated urgent enquiries, Frost responded indirectly by informing a non-involved person that no money was available; that person passed the news to Tudor.

"The missing sum is assumed to be some £2,600, based on the amount known to be held by Frost at the end of 1994 (in

her first and last TAFF newsletter she gave the then balance as £1,933.06), plus subsequent identifiable donations, estimated income from voting fees, etc. Expenses in the same period are thought to have been minimal. Frost has not directly responded to any TAFF-related letters or phone calls to her answering machine since the announcement of Tudor's win, nor made her usual appearances at London pub meetings since early June.

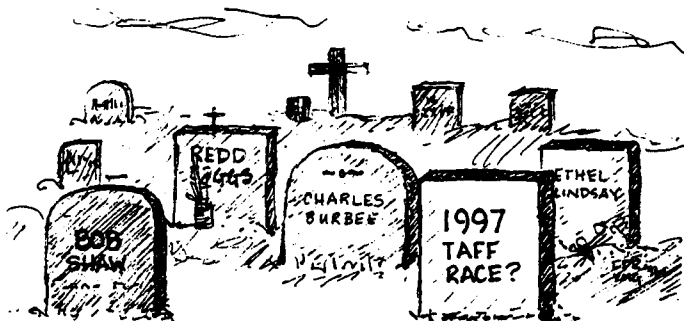
"TAFF traditionally has no secrets, except of course for individual voters' choices in the balloting. But it was felt that Martin Tudor's 1996 US trip — made possible only by personal loans, anonymous contributions, American TAFF funds, the Mexican Hat, and other donations — would be ruined by endless argument and recrimination if all of the above, and its implications, were publicly discussed at that time. The matter was therefore kept confidential until Tudor had returned and recovered from his travels.

"Unfortunately, despite Tudor's determination to release the full facts immediately on return to England, this announcement was delayed for several weeks by unavoidable personal crises — including illness. All those involved would like to apologize to fandom for the unintended and most regrettable delay.

"The position remains unclear in several areas, including the possibility of TAFF's representatives taking legal action. What is certain is that the European TAFF fund is desperately short of cash, and that Martin Tudor's difficulties in performing (and performing well) as the 1996 TAFF delegate were an order of magnitude worse than those faced by virtually any previous winner."

The editors of Apparatchik feel it is in the best interest of those who participate in TAFF on any level to have the whole story before voting for the 1997 race begins on December 2nd. As yet, no one has been officially nominated, or even publicly expressed an intention to stand for the honor, but because there

continued on next page



IN THIS ISSUE: The TAFF story continues to page two, where Victor expresses his frustration with the delay in revealing the loss. Then, Andy has some ideas as to what we all can do to help make things right. The Lake of Fire features some thoughts from Carl on the realities of putting our fanzine on the Net. Ted White continues to explore driving concerns, while Randy Byers tell us he was at the founding of fwa, but didn't take very good notes. Steve Green has some dour thoughts on the future of Midlands fandom and genre fiction. Your kind letters help lighten the gloom. And the issue finishes up with Andy's countdown of fanzines received since our last issue. *Cartoons and art: Page one and two by Lesley Reece, page five and six by Carl Juarez.*

The campaign, however, counters that it is "one happy family."

has been no official announcement of the race to date, this is not surprising. There is still time for American fans to offer themselves as TAFF delegates providing they 1) secure the nomination of two American and three European fans, 2) post a nominal \$20 bond promising to make the trip should they win, and 3) submit a 100-word platform detailing their interest and qualifications for being a representative of American fandom at the British national convention.

Frost's actions are the latest in a series of intermittent problems that have hit the fund since it was established in 1952 to help fans cross the Atlantic Ocean and meet their foreign compatriots. Although discussions of TAFF's value and procedures have frequently come up over the years, the last significant conflict was "Topic A," in which fan Richard Bergeron accused now-London fan Avedon Carol of fixing the vote so that Rob Hansen would win the 1984 race. While the conflict over these allegations raged for several years, those charges were never proven and are generally considered to have been without merit.

Frost has been a largely silent administrator since she won the race in 1993 and travelled to six U.S. cities on a notoriously unhappy trip. That was her second attempt to win TAFF; Pam Wells defeated her by a wide margin in the 1991 race. Frost published three issues of Election Special, a one-page fanzine, during the 1991 race, and a single issue of In Progress during her trip in 1993. British fans report that she published a statement of British TAFF assets sometime in 1994.

Traditionally, two sets of numbers have been kept, one in Britain and one in the U.S. Reports of fund totals have been offered in past years, but there have never been separate accounts established solely to administer the money, which is gathered through auctions and other fundraising, and by a \$2 (or £2) fee charged to people who vote in the contest.

During the 1993 trip, Frost repeatedly asked that the 1994 U.S. to U.K. race be delayed by a year to allow an extra year of fund-raising. She did not explain why the extra fund-raising

was needed, but the race was delayed. Dan Steffan won the 1995 race, and went to the Glasgow world convention. Steffan had this to say about financial conditions imposed on his trip:

"Despite her long-standing record of inertia, nobody saw it coming. I know I certainly didn't. Though now, in retrospect, I see that the tell-tale signs were there as early as my own TAFF trip in 1995. During the planning stages for the trip I had been quite surprised by Ms. Frost's intense nationalism about the sovereignty of the British fund and her insistence that my trip to the UK be paid for strictly from American TAFF funds. My argument that TAFF was an international organization and that it was all just one big pot was met with stern condemnation from my British counterpart. It was a battle I didn't want to fight — TAFF is about unity to me, *not* segregation — and bowed to Ms. Frost's wishes.

"Any suspicions I *might* have had were displaced on my arrival to the UK when Ms. Frost generously paid for my room at Precursor and offered me a small stipend for spending money during my visit. I assumed at the time that her generosity was something she was doing against her better judgment, but that she was trying to be a good host despite her nationalism, which was further reinforced by her ardent demands that the promised money for Rob Hansen's TAFF report go directly to her, and not become part of the American fund. I never conceived of the notion that TAFF UK was bankrupt. But it was, and, apparently, so was Ms. Frost."

Dan's conjecture as to Abi Frost's own financial solvency cannot be confirmed: there has been so little direct contact between Abi and fandom for the past four months that there is really no way of knowing what her abilities or intentions may be in regard to the fund. While we urge concerned parties in British fandom to do what they can to recover the missing money, our energies and those of other North American fans would probably be best spent in the effort to build the American fund, the current sum of all TAFF assets at \$1,700, back up in anticipation of the upcoming 1997 trip.

A lawyer would be especially good for this, because lawyers are ruled by Jupiter.

Fancy That

by Victor M. Gonzalez
StaffWriter

To some people, the fact that a large sum TAFF money has vanished might not be as significant as the fact that a group of people — a cabal, if

you will — kept that information to themselves for months. Even many former administrators — Hansen and Carol, the Nielsen Haydens — have only recently been told.

Most of us have some connection to TAFF. We have given it attention and money, and we want to know how the races come out and how the trips went. I think that's what trip reports are supposed to do: show fans who support TAFF what their time and money has achieved.

And in the mostly anarchic world of fanzine fandom, TAFF is something that brings us together in an election supposed to give a deserving fan a reward more significant than a certificate or even a big rocket with electric lights.

In my opinion, those who contribute are among those who should know when something bad or good happens to this fannish institution. That didn't happen this time around. Auctions were held, parties thrown and donations freely accepted by Martin Tudor as he travelled the United States.

I, for one, spent what is to me a considerable sum on several vintage fanzines at a Seattle auction, believing that the money would go to next year's race. I also conversed with Martin about the possibility of running for TAFF. He encouraged me to do so.

Obviously, not knowing that anything had happened to the British funds, an intelligent decision about such a move couldn't be made.

But no one told me.

That bit of whining aside, I must admit that I understand the reasons Martin and others kept the news to themselves. Martin's trip would have been compromised; Abi would have had no incentive to come up with the cash. They are reasonable reasons.

Ultimately such policies foster distrust of TAFF and everyone in this particular crew of secret-keepers. Twelve years ago, a fan few had ever met managed to gain enough allies to tear fandom in half with considerably less evidence of a cover-up. This isn't Topic A, but such secrecy gives ammunition to every enemy one might have, and reinforces the already prevalent feelings of many new and fringe fans that the inner core is a clique uninterested in the feelings of those outside.

Thank goodness it all came out *before* the 1997 America to Britain race starts, less than a month from now.



What Can You Do to Help TAFF?

by Andy Hooper

First of all, vote. When the ballot for the next TAFF race reaches you, don't put it aside and save it for the last minute before the deadline. Fill it out and send it in right away, with perhaps a little extra money over the two dollar/pound voting fee. If you do delay sending in your ballot, use the time to make extra copies and make them available to local friends in fandom. If they don't have sufficient knowledge or familiarity with fandom to be good voters, give them some fanzines, especially TAFF trip reports, and let them know that the fund is all about. If you publish a fanzine yourself, be sure to send ballots out with one or more of your issues. Talk the fund up at conventions and fannish gatherings, and do what you can to make people aware of TAFF's mission.

Fill in some holes in your fanzine collection by purchasing items offered in the upcoming TAFF mail auctions. Even if you aren't a fanzine collector, there promise to be some items — books, T-shirts, etc. — of interest to most science fiction fans. Buy a copy of Rob Hansen's trip report, it's very good. I still have some copies of Martin Tudor's special TAFF fanzine, *The Tudor Dynasty*, on hand for \$5.00 a copy.

If you're a former administrator who hasn't published a trip report, there's never been a better time for you to finish

one. Even if you've had chapters published in various fanzines, assembling them in a new special edition would put them in front of a new group of fans. Your opinions on the current TAFF crisis will be sought frequently in the near future — try to help people remember that the failure of one administrator doesn't mean that the fund isn't still an important tool for fostering contact between different fandoms.

If you've ever thought of standing for TAFF, and haven't just been across the Atlantic for Intersection, there'll never be a better time to go. Think about it — although the next American administrator may be facing more work than any in the past, they'll also be hailed as a hero for volunteering to take it on. Despite obvious concerns about the future safety of the fund assets, I expect fund-raising for TAFF may turn out to be surprisingly easy. Dan Steffan reports that the Magicon committee have already offered a generous donation to match that offered by LACon for finished trip reports. Other fannish groups may offer similar grants. No doubt there will be some calls for abolition of the fund as well — but a large slate of candidates and an eagerly contested race will do a lot to invalidate such negative assessments of the TAFF tradition.

And above all, write to Dan Steffan at 3804 S. 9th St., Arlington, VA 22204, to be sure you're on the TAFF mailing list, to be kept up to date with this and future races.

I had food poisoning in New York, and it was even good on food poisoning.

The Lake of Fire: Locotorp protocol

by carl juarez

We were 90 miles out of — hold it, wrong page.

I think we ought to get down in "print" some details about paper v web

issues as they've been developing, to ensure we're all working from the same page.

The issues that most shamelessly thrust themselves forward are two: loc protocol and bowdlerizing content for the Web (browserdlerization?).

I think we're all cognizant of the difference between two hundred and fifty selected readers (and anyone they may meet) and several hundred million anonymous beings spread thinly across the globe (and anyone *they* may meet). The question I think is this: Is publishing on the Web so significantly different from print that it is no longer covered by the standard fannish correspondence/publishing contract, sometimes called "the usual"? If it is, wouldn't we be violating at least the spirit of that practice by taking our correspondents' and contributors' works and adding them to the Web without offering them the opportunity to opt out or alter their remarks?

Some may ask why this should really matter. Some have, in fact. (Optional topical political reference goes here.) When you drop that letter in the mailbox, or click on that e-mail form, you've surrendered most of your control over where those words go, and I'm sure we can all think of good examples, of varying degrees of disasterhood. But others have spoken up, and that's why our Web version is different from the printed one.

The chief concerns offered are exposure to one's co-workers and sercon references, with I suppose one's parents somewhere down in there but unmentioned. Very few of us are able to choose our co-workers.* The centripetal vortex formerly known as our economy moreover currently impels more of us to work in corporations or in small teams that themselves associate with other small teams, and in these places the evils of "Dilbert" dwell. Most of our correspondents write about their lives, of which working hours are — let's face it — the major-

* (Even fewer choose their parents, but we usually get some quality time to work on that.)

ity, and just about everybody gets around to describing their work at some point.

For most of us fanzine fandom is a refuge of somewhat like-minded people with whom we enjoy communicating, and we value the opportunity to write for an audience that values accounts of life as it is lived. (The best writing that fandom offers I think lies in this, in the form of fannish memoir and short essays, with conreports and reviews mere sub-forms of necessity.) If this sense of community is overwhelmed by the pragmatic concerns of working hours our tradition of plain speaking will be imperiled. (*Abolition of Work*, anyone?)

So to the options of Do Not Print and Do Not Quote, we now add Do Not Web. Our correspondents are invited to indicate, if desired, portions of their missives that should be deleted or revised when put on the Web. Comrades, towards the Ludic Revolution!

Andy notes: While we're on the subject of electronic communication, please note that Victor has been forced to change his e-mail address once again, back to vxg@p.tribnet.com. Maintenance and alleged improvements to the system at the News Tribune have so far taken about four weeks, and there is no indication that they will be done in our lifetimes. Please amend your address books accordingly.

Although it's likely to get lost in the general TAFF shuffle, we want to offer our condolences to the friends and family of longtime midwestern fan and collector Lynn Hickman, who died the morning of October 30th in Cincinnati after a long battle with lung cancer. Lynn was a pulp enthusiast noted for a wide knowledge of science fiction and fantasy's golden age. He will be missed.

I want to encourage our readers to take the time to fill out those egoboo poll ballots we sent out in the last issue. As Arnie Katz points out in *Wild Heirs* #18, this is 25th anniversary of the great 1971 Focal Point egoboo poll, which drew 130 responses, making it a definitive measure of the age. If we could do as well with this new poll, I'd be very impressed.



Dr. Fandom shifts on the fly

by Ted White

Writing — last issue — about “aggressive driving” made me think about some associated phenomena.

This is a topic that can excite a certain amount of passion, particularly once you see where it is going, so I want to put a disclaimer up front: These are thoughts, feelings, and to some extent assumptions, but not hard-and-fast rules, and I hesitate to generalize beyond myself. But . . .

Among drivers, it is my experience that the specific phenomenon I am about to describe is one known more or better to men than to women; but I can't say it is known only to men. It may be that the range of people with whom I've discussed this is too narrow — too small a sample, if you will. I don't want to get into gender biases here, but my suspicion is that this is a brain hard-wiring thing, something determined by gender hormones before birth. But that's only a theory, and not one to which I am strongly wedded. That said, let's get on to it.

When I drive a car — any car — I operate largely on “instinct.” By which I mean that I've internalized as reflexes most of the driving skills I've acquired. This means that in emergency situations I do not pause to think and consider the best course of action; I simply react immediately.

But my “instincts” go well beyond the internalization of acquired skills. Some are innate, and have been with me since birth, coming into play only when I started driving.

The first of these “instincts” of which I became aware (as a teenager) has to do with the perception of speed-rate and distance changes. Imagine you are driving down a highway which has only one lane in each direction. You are cruising along at, say, 45 or 50 mph when a car pulls out of a side road maybe a quarter mile ahead, turning into your lane. My mother (who taught me to drive) would immediately slow until she saw that the car ahead had gotten up to speed, at which time she would resume her speed. But I didn't do that. I watched the car pull out ahead, watched it pick up speed, and adjusted my speed only so that I wouldn't overrun it.

“You're going to hit that car!” my mother would exclaim.

“No I'm not!” I'd reply in exasperation. “By the time I get to him, he'll have speeded up and won't be there any longer.” My mother treated it as a static situation; I saw it as a dynamic situation, continually changing.

In more recent situations, I've been waiting for a break in traffic so I could make a left turn (in Britain, the equivalent would be a right turn), and when I saw a suitable break, I'd make my turn. And my wife would blanch, clutch the door handle, and mutter, “You're trying to kill me!”

I'd snort and insist that I had “plenty of room” to turn in

front of the oncoming car. Which I obviously did — I've never been involved in an accident under such circumstances. But where I saw an opportunity she did not. (We'll ignore the fact that most drivers will slow down when someone turns in front of them; we'll presume that the oncoming car will maintain its speed even after I've turned in front of it.) It's a matter of perception. I could gauge the speed of the oncoming car, the distance it was from me, and know exactly whether I should turn in front of it or wait.

Thinking about this, I realized that I possessed a “sense” lacking in my mother and my wife. While they had to consciously consider what has going on, I had an immediate “feel” for it. I knew without thinking what I could and should do.

Carrying this to the next step, I realized that I often “feel” the road conditions in which I am driving. Since I drive around 100 miles a day on weekdays, I have plenty of opportunity to do this and, since I became conscious of it, to observe it happening.

I'm driving on an Interstate highway at or above the speed limit (absurdly set 40 mph below the speeds for which the highway was engineered), cruising along a quarter mile behind the car ahead in my lane. If that car slows or speeds up, I experience it first as a visceral feeling. If the car speeds up, it's like the relief of a pressure. If it slows, the “pressure” increases until I slow my car to match the other's pace.

It is a sense not only of change, but of the rate of change occurring. It is more basic than acquired driving skills. I believe I was born with it. And I believe it is why I enjoy driving as much as I do. It is in some inextricable way akin to the basic senses employed in athletic sports and activities, derived in some manner from basic body-awareness — with the car an exoskeletal extension of my body.

It occurs to me as I write this that I first experienced this “sense” when I was a very new driver and still learning the peripheries of my car. If I came closer on the right to something (like a parked car) than I wanted to, I felt it in my right leg — a sensation almost as if I had thrust my leg out to the right of the car and expected momentarily for it to be hit or broken off . . . as if I was riding a bike, say.

I have discussed this with a variety of people. No woman with whom I have discussed it has ever felt it. Some men have. But, as I said earlier, I haven't really discussed it with very many folks: this discussion here is the first with a group this large — and I'm curious to know what the rest of you think about it.

In the meantime, I've talked about it with Lynda, and I don't make turns I know to be safe, but which scare her, when she's in the car. I am not, after all, trying to give her a heart attack.

Mrs. Smith finds skull of a young woman wrapped in paper.

Founding Member: ffw

by Randy Byers

“Enjoyed Randy's ‘Worldcon Snapshots’ and thanks for the note later that he was also one of the original fwa founders.”

So wrote Robert Lichtman in APAK 68.

It's true that I was at the party where fwa was founded at the '84 Worldcon. It's less accurate to call me one of the founders. After all, I have a reputation to maintain—if only with myself.

A year or so ago, Lesley wrote a piece for APAK about reading *The Enchanted Duplicator* and feeling intimidated by how much fannish history there was to learn. I considered writing a response in which I would extol the role of the fringe

fan. (Or is that fake fan? I'm too much of one or the other to know which is which.)

I would've told her that I've never read *The Enchanted Duplicator* and don't plan to — not because I have anything against it, but because it has never seemed important to me. I would've explained that I've been hanging out in or around fandom for nigh on twenty years and that the majority of my friends are people I've met through fandom, but that it's mostly a social thing for me. I don't read many fanzines, and I've only pubbed one ish of my own. I go to maybe one convention a year, and I've never worked on a convention. I've laughed at Degler references for nigh on twenty years, but it was only recently that I asked Hooper just who the hell Degler was. (I

don't remember his answer very well.)

Sometime in the very late 80s, Jerry Kaufman categorized m-m-my g-generation of fans. He called us the New Fen: folks who went directly from neo to gafia. It wasn't really a whole generation. He was referring to a group of West Coasters who were recruited by Fabulous Seattle Fandom in the late-70's and early-80s. The names that spring to mind are Ole and Neil Kvern, John Carl, paul lemman, Chuck Spear, Tami Vining, carl, me (nice name!), Tom Weber, and Victor. Although she was actually recruited by Controversial Edmonton Fandom, I'll throw in Sharee Carton, because she belonged and I longed for her. By the end of the 80s, we had all dropped out of fandom or ceased serious fanac before anything of lasting fannish importance had been produced. So, Jerry joked about a lost generation, and for a moment I dreamed that I could've been a contender.

As Luke "Maguffin" McGuff would say, Hah!

carl introduced me to Fabulous Seattle Fandom at the Norwescon in '79. Over the next few years, I went to a bunch of regional cons and got to know some of the Vanguard crowd pretty well. That was one of the reasons I moved to

Seattle in '84. I moved in with two fans: Denys Howard and paul lemman. Later that year, Denys, Jane Hawkins, and I drove my Ford Fiesta to the Worldcon in LA.

I was just getting to know Victor at the time. In fact, the Worldcon was probably the breakthrough event in our friendship. What I really wanted to do at the con was to, um, hang out with Sharee, but she was having none of me. Ted White was cultivating Victor, and thus he had an in to the good parties. I glommed onto Victor. I got into the good parties.

What I did at the good parties was smoke killer bud and listen. I listened to a lot of BNFs (some of whom I knew) talk about Topic A. I didn't understand it. There were sheaves of paper purported to explain it all. Victor read assiduously and took part in the discussion. I was put off by the earnest hostility in the air. It intimidated me. I had nothing to say. I listened.

Likewise, at the fwa founding party, I sat on the side of the bed nearest the windows, smoked joints (such joints as have never again been seen in our time), and listened. I found this discussion much more entertaining. Wit flowed like wine, and wine flowed very much like bheer. I laughed a lot. I took part in the voting for the first Past President. (I want to say that I voted for Teresa Nielsen Hayden, but, you know, I'm not sure she was even on the ballot. I don't believe she won. Who was it? Avedon Carol? I don't remember.) I didn't say anything. I was meek.

Mind you, I wanted to be a part of the fun. I was a part of it, in the sense that I was there and following (however stonedly) what was going on and enjoying it. But I was on the sidelines, as it were. On the fringe.

Not long after the convention, Allyn Cadogan, Sharee, and Lucy Huntzinger published the first issue of *Convention Girls' Digest*, which was about that Worldcon. My copy has a note from Allyn written at the top: "Well, all right, if you *must* have your own copy . . . Were you at that party? Why can't we remember you?"

At the time, it hurt that they didn't remember my presence. At this distance, it all makes a lot more sense.

On a psychosocial level, the reason I cannot be considered a founder of fwa is that I was not actively participating in the discussion — or, for that matter, in the flow of wit. That's what made me more or less invisible, too. However, the more important reason is that I was not a fan writer. I hadn't even pubbed

my one and only ish yet, so I barely even qualified as a neo. I was a fringe fan.

It's interesting that of the New Fen I named, three of us are involved with Apparatchik. Victor is beavering his way toward BNFdom. carl is neither fan nor fowl. I — oblivious to *The Enchanted Duplicator* and fresh from another Worldcon where I sometimes sat, smoked dope, and listened silently to BNFs — am still a fringe fan.

However, I am now writing semi-regularly for a fanzine. In honor of my presence on that hallowed night twelve years ago, I propose another organization: ffwa.

Past presidents, anyone?

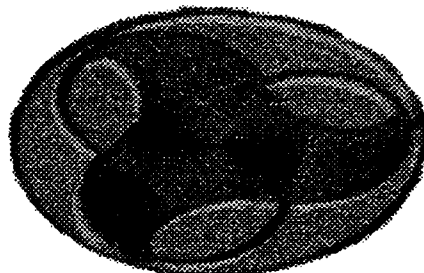


carl adds: Randy has kindly allowed me an opportunity to append the following from our correspondence. Consider it a non-fan non-fowl response:

"It strikes me that deep communion with TED as a requirement of non-fake-non-fringe fandom is pretty stiff. I haven't read it myself, and despite my fringeness I've been reading old fmz (Pongs, Izzard/Teloses, Space Junk, Spanish Inquisition, Science Fiction Review) for years and indeed in this year's FAAN awards I was that lone vote for Elmer Perdue for Best Fan Writer. I consider myself something like a fringe-fan, in almost direct proportion to the degree to which I consider sf important work.

"Otherhandedly, in fandom as everywhere else there will always be people who do things and people who write about them, and an overlap between those two groups that makes those things public/published via print or on the Web. (You yourself completely elide the apazines we were doing, or perhaps that's a comment hook.) I'm not sure being part of the former group makes one any less a fanzine fan than being primarily a member of an alternative sf fandom like furry animals or anime.* You're there, you're there repeatedly (celebrating 12-16 year anniversaries), people in the local fandom recognize you, you know the current customs. Well, you *might* be an anthropologist I suppose."

* Take a look here, for example: <http://www.access.digex.net/~electro/electro.html>



Reverend Smith buries it in the churchyard.

Fannish Memory Syndrome

by Steve Green

To Birmingham, for the October gathering of the city's long-established science fiction group, this month playing host to Ken MacLeod, whose novel *The Star Fraction* has proven one of the hottest genre debuts this decade (and would have, even without the boost given by his Edinburgh drinking buddy, Iain Banks).

I first crossed paths with the Brum Group back in February 1977, when it was just six years old and arguably at the height of its powers; the guest that month was Brian Aldiss, with Chris Priest and Bob Shaw scheduled for March and April, and the group was about to run its sixth Novacon. Although we kind of drifted apart after I chaired Novacon 14 in 1984, memories of those heady days still coloured my expectations when I decided earlier this autumn to show some more support for my Critical Wave partner Martin Tudor (this year's chair) and rejoin Britain's longest-running regional club.

Which made my disappointment all the more palpable. Granted, MacLeod may not be as surefire a draw as, say, Isaac Asimov (who once interrupted a 1970s ocean cruise to assure the BSFG of his only UK gig) or Terry Pratchett, but to see a mere sixteen sf fans turn out for his first public speech was pretty disheartening, especially as I could so easily flashback to a time when membership was into three figures and at least half of those would monthly cram into a city centre hotel suite. To place matters in an even darker context, turnout at the Black Lodge — the informal hangout for local horror fans, held at an arts centre bar a couple of miles away — is regularly at least half that number, and doesn't even have a guest speaker up its sleeve.

Later, I ponder the group's slide from prominence in the company of Peter Weston, acclaimed anthologist and alleged millionaire (he denies the latter appellation), who co-founded the current BSFG in 1971, hammering it together from memories of the short-lived 1960s incarnation and a written constitution stolen from a local branch of the Conservative Party. More than any other member present, Peter recognizes the dark abyss the Brum Group now faces — and realizes the evangelical drive he launched as 1983 chair to create greater links with general fandom (setting up an internal apa, hosting parties at other cons) can't save the day this time. Looking around the room as the meeting closes, I spot only two other fans with regular links to organized fandom, one a gamer, and neither actively publishing (although one is about to join the new horror apa, Halloween); if you're going to build, you at least need the foundations.

The Mac memory image slowly disappears, eroded by the constant infusion of vibrant new BeOS code.

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH: We start with a response to Murray Moore's questions about Lee Hoffman's western novels in last issue, from WILSON TUCKER (2516H East Washington St., Bloomington, IL 61704):]

Murray Moore asks about Lee Hoffman's westerns, her best westerns. I'm glad he did that for I have a collection of them and a copy of her bibliography, pubbed by her in 1974. (If you or Moore wishes to borrow the bibliography for copying, I'd be pleased to loan it to you. It is six pages, mimeographed.)

My very favorite Hoffman western, and one of her best, is *The Legend of Blackjack Sam* (Ace Books, 1966, 35 cents.) Try to find the original edition which has a Gray Morrow wrap-around cover. This is a comic western featuring that mighty gunfight at the O'Shea corral, and featuring some oddball characters who often wear fannish names. The Morrow cover

Maybe the answer would be to let the Brum Group die, with Novacon freed to become a fully independent event, leaving the fannish ground to lie fallow till a true need arises again. Alternatively, the committee might consider switching its allegiances to focus upon media sf, in which case it would face the twin hurdles of targeting sufficient speakers and meanwhile persuading potential new members to leave their videos behind in order to attend. Neither appeals, and the grim truth remains that it'll be a miracle if the UK's most famous sf group survives into the next century in its present form.

No, there isn't a zippy punchline. You want humour in despair, tune into *The Larry Sanders Show*. This, sadly, is Real Life.

Speaking of which, those gallant few attending the MacLeod meeting also included Peter's co-founder, Roger "Rog" Peyton, whose Andromeda Bookshop was established the same year as the Brum Group. The truth is, Rog loves selling books (unlike those purveyors of musty secondhand volumes who seem to equate purchases with extracting their wisdom teeth); it's just the customers he has difficulties with. If ever a system was devised by which he could each evening leave his latest delivery of hardbacks on the doorstep, returning each morning to collect the assorted currency thrust through his letterbox, I'm certain Rog would be much happier.

But at least he supports the British sf industry, which is more than most of his contemporaries bother to pretend. Our conversation turns to Christ Priest's *The Prestige*, recent winner of the James Tait literary award and the only one of his books yet to grace my lounge in hardback. How many copies, he asks, do I reckon were sold by W H Smith, the vast network of UK outlets which also incorporates the once-independent Waterstones chain. (Quick mental calculation, given several hundred sites.) "Two thousand?" "Lower." "One thousand?" "Lower." "Five hundred?" (I'm getting desperate, both for myself and Chris, an author I respect to the extent I actually go out and buy his books rather than scrounge them from the publishers.) "Lower." "One hundred?" "Lower." "Fifty?" (For the love of . . .) "Lower." "None?" A manic glint appears in Roger's eye. "Correct!" Bugger.

Straight afterwards, we replay the game, substituting Forbidden Planet, the self-promoted leading sf chain in Britain; the solution's unchanged. Even when Priest strolled off with the Tait, it was left to the independent retailers to crack the bubbly. Please excuse me if I don't feel like doing the same.



continued the comic theme. Terry Carr was the editor and it was Lee's first published novel, although one or two other novels were written earlier and published later.

A few years later Ace republished this book with a straight western cover, the rifleman riding atop the stagecoach. The price had jumped to 90 cents and the publication year was 1972, although I couldn't find that date in the second edition. The saddest part is that the glorious old Gray Morrow cover is gone: all those looney characters in the original are nowhere to be seen.

And there is one more reason why this is my favorite: the book is dedicated to Bob Bloch and me.

I can also recommend *Valdez Horses*, sometimes called *The Valdez Horses*. A solid, serious story that eventually sold to the movies and probably appeared under a different title. First edition by Doubleday 1967, Ace reprints 1968, 1969, 1973. This

novel won her the Spur award as the best western of 1967.

'In her bibliography Lee says that she wrote five books in her first year, 1965, and she sold them all.'

[APH: I have a copy of *The Legend of Blackjack Sam* here. It's an Ace paperback, with no indication of what printing it might be, but it makes reference to *The Valdez Horses* on the back. The cover is a generic cowboy with a Winchester rifle. There's a frontispiece illustration without a signature, but it looks a lot like Gray Morrow's style.

I'm not really a fan of westerns, so it is hard for me to make any informed criticism, but it strikes me as a pretty funny book. There are a number of — forgive me — Tuckerisms in the text, references to Grennell's livery stable, and the like. Even more striking is the inclusion of a character named "Wild Bill Bridgeport," who is clearly based on P.T. Bridgeport, the impresario bear from Walt Kelly's Pogo comic strip. And at one point, a character exclaims "Rowrbazzle!", further emphasizing Lee's affection for Pogo. I don't know if this is among the best things Lee wrote, but it's certainly representative of her style.

Now, GEORGE FLYNN (P.O. Bo 1069, Kendail Sq. Str., Cambridge, MA 02142) starts off the reaction to my editorial and Ted White's article on driving in #68:]

'Thanks for Apparatchik #68 (It usually doesn't come this late in the week). Hey, the other day someone pleaded not guilty on the grounds that violence in the neighborhood warped his mind. Why *not* aliens?

'The problem with Ted's argument is that the real danger is the combination of aggressive and non-aggressive drivers on the same road. And as long as society is organized so most people *have* to drive to make a living, the roads will be full of people who are "basically afraid to drive" but have no choice. (I don't drive, which in my judgement is just as well for all concerned.)'

[VMG: About Ted's column: You may be right in a way. One thing that drives me crazy is a disrespect for "the fast lane" (the inside lane) by drivers abiding by the speed limit on the freeway. Some people will always drive the speed limit; others will always drive over the speed limit. If the slower drivers kept to the outside lanes, more traffic would move faster, and probably with fewer accidents. The trick is an even flow of vehicles.

In general, I think Ted is indicating that alert, experienced and confident drivers are more capable of responding to life-and-death situations where quick and accurate choices are paramount.]

[APH: Just for the record, we've changed the routine by which we publish Apak, and you'll be getting it a few days later from now on. All the editors get together for a final typo-hunting session on Friday night, followed by a midnight run to the all-night copy shop and lots of folding and envelope-licking at one in the morning. Given how we feel when we're done, you should be glad it ever gets to you . . .]

DALE SPEIRS (Box 6830 Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E7 Canada) covers some of the same ground:]

'Apak #68 received. Your commentary about UFO beliefs and such reminds me of Chesterton's remark that if people no longer believe in God, then they will believe in anything. You write ". . . if a theory is repeated often enough it will attract a certain number of adherents." Might this explain the delusion of SF fandom that they are somehow superior to mundanes?

I've always said that the difference between an SF fan is that the mundane is less reactionary, and better able to deal with the future shock.

'Aggressive drivers: My favourite tactic on a Calgary freeway is to come up alongside a driver doing the speed limit and maintain the same speed, thus blocking both lanes to speeders behind us. Of course, Canada has fairly strict gun control laws, so this a safer sport than it might be elsewhere. Alternatively, I drive at the speed limit in the left lane approaching a photo radar unit; a speeder will be busy passing me at the right he doesn't see the camera until too late. Driving is such fun if you know how to do it.

'Query: Did any graduate student ever do a genealogical study of Huck Finn to see if he was from Suomi? Did Mark Twain have a reason to pick Huck's name? Did he have any Finlanders among his friends?'

[APH: My impression was that Finn is an Irish name, which would fit nicely with the mid-nineteenth century American image of German and Irish immigrants as bumpkins and louts.

I must have missed something, Dale; when were private citizens empowered to enforce speed limits regardless of the danger they might put themselves and other drivers in? I too find it scary when people blow by me at 25 or more miles above the speed limit, but getting in their way strikes me as a foolhardy way to express my displeasure. If you were just joking, forgive me for failing to notice.

ROBERT LICHTMAN (PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442) also reacted to my piece on the proliferation of alien-related media:]

'While it's true that this season has seen an increase in the number of sfnal/paranormal exploitation shows, I don't think it's the case that "people have become quite comfortable with the ideas of an alien presence on the earth." Of course, we sf-nists have always been comfortable with that idea, at least so far as the friendly and perhaps cuddly sort of aliens were concerned, though I at least have the usual apprehension about body snatchers, puppet masters and the like. I think the modern wave of acceptance of aliens on earth began with the *Star Wars* movies back in the 70s. While some of the aliens were undeniably hostile, others were presented as just regular folks. The bar scene in the first *Star Wars* movie set the tone in a way. Later there were Ewoks and, from another producer, E.T. and the little creatures in *Batteries Not Included*. Aliens, you gotta love 'em! (Or else, no doubt.)

'By Ted's definition (and also by having been a passenger in his car) I'm also an aggressive driver in that I seek ways through traffic and tend when possible to drive faster than most of the people around me. I had all my accidents in one of my cars (a '61 Chevy Biscayne) and in a fairly tight time period (1968/69). Several of them were rear-enders while I was stopped at a red light (or stop sign) and was hit by someone from the rear. None of them were serious enough that the Chevy had to be repaired in order to be operable, and eventually I collected enough insurance money that I got rid of it and bought a Volvo. (Which turned out to be the worst lemon in my car-owning experience, but that's another story.) I haven't had any accidents since, and like Ted I've had my share of successful avoidance maneuvers to keep out of accidents, though nothing as spectacular as his 1965 turnpike incident.

'I agree with the niece's teacher (in Victor's article) that Huckleberry Finn is *not* a racist book, and that Twain wrote the

book, at least in part, to challenge the racist notions of the time. I haven't read it myself in many years, and don't have a copy around to check, but it's my memory that the times Nigger Jim was portrayed as something of an idiot were the exception, that the incidents were largely cultural (lack of education, confused values), and that he's by and large a sympathetic character. As a graduate English major, I remember that *Huckleberry Finn* was regarded as one of the seminal books of 19th century American literature, that it's one of the earliest of the "American road" books, although the river substitutes for the road, and that it introduced a lot of the archetypes of American literature that endure to this day.

The novel has been the target of book banners for many years: the linguistically pure condemn it for the word "nigger," while racists condemn it for its positive look at race relations. (As Victor points out, Huck's racist feelings evaporate.) Damn, I may have to get a copy; writing about it turns me on to reading it again (properly preceded by re-reading *Tom Sawyer*, of course — not doing so would be like reading Tolkien's trilogy without first reading *The Hobbit*).

"Thanks for mentioning Lesley Reece as a potential best new fan of the year. In fact, I included her in one of the three available positions. Don't forget Tom Springer!

'Glad to see Dave Hicks commending you for continuing to publish mailing addresses for those who send their comments via e-mail, and I entirely agree. If someone becomes just an e-mail address without a valid mail address, they will no longer be reachable by me in my present situation, and even when I do eventually go on-line I will *not* be creating a Trap Door web page, or any Web pages for that matter. As for his finding it startling that Dan enjoyed British Rail, I encountered that attitude somewhat while I was there; but to me having a BritRail pass and being able to go wherever I wanted without having to drive there was like science fiction. I could see the things which made the natives use the system as a metaphor for decline, but it was so far beyond any transportation system that I've ever known that I found it utterly awesome and delicious.

'I know what you mean about Paul Williams, except I knew him before he became Paul Williams, when he was a neofan who turned out *Within*, a promising fanzine. But he didn't "basically invent the music fanzine," just the rock fanzine. And let's not forget Greg Shaw (P.O. Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510), who did the same thing more or less simultaneously on the other side of the country. Like you I enjoyed Paul's account of his trip to Toronto and the tape of "Give Peace a Chance" as sung there. At the time, Paul sent me a copy of that tape. I was working for Columbia records in San Francisco and was calling on the "underground" radio stations of the day, KSAN and KMPX. I took the tape around not long after I received it and got airplay immediately — well before the single came out. I remember being able to pick out Tim and Paul's voices on the tape. I was also involved in a weird way in the first day's of Tim's campaign to become governor of California. Paul mentions that Tim "departed the next day for lectures at a California university." That was Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, and Paul and I took Tim and Rosemary from where they were staying in Berkeley to San Francisco airport, where it turned out that Tim had no money and I ended up paying for their tickets on a credit card. Tim paid me back months later, handing me cash the morning after the celestial synapse in front of City Lights Bookstore. "I'll bet this looks like a dope deal to anyone watching," he said, and we both laughed. But no one was, and we parted amicably. That was the last time I saw Tim until

the early '80s when I ran into him at a book fair in Los Angeles. (The same book fair where we saw Sturgeon for what turned out to be the last time.)'

[VMG: An update: The school board has upheld a decision by the superintendent to uphold a district committee's decision to keep Huck Finn in the classroom. The aunt now threatens a federal civil rights lawsuit.

I found rereading the book a very entertaining experience, although I detested the ending this time around.]

[APH: The distinction between music fanzines and rock fanzines is valid, of course, but I think the success of *Crawdaddy!*'s original run did a lot to popularize both. And you're right, we ought to remember Greg Shaw's fairly titanic achievements with *Who Put the Bomp* in the same breath, if only for being the first editor to give the world Lester Bangs' "James Taylor Marked for Death." But Paul had more impact on me, because it was running across a small heap of decade-old *Crawdaddy!*s in a lounge at Madison's alternative City High School that communicated the heights to which amateur publications could climb. Where did they come from? I've wondered to this day.

Now, RICHARD BRANDT (4740 N Mesa #111, El Paso, TX 79912) has one take on the tabloids:]

'Like Lesley, I am not immune to the charms of the tabloids. One of my roommates in college got a gift subscription to the *National Enquirer* (who do you know who would be that thoughtful?) and we would put out stacks of the thing as party favors. Yes, the psychic predictions were always something special. Who will ever forget when Liz married that KGB agent, or when De Niro packed it in and ran off to join the Foreign Legion—leaving Woody Allen to star in the movie-of-the-week of the Bernhard Goetz story. And when they predicted *Charlie's Angels* would be lost when filming an episode in the Bermuda Triangle—God, the papers gave you something to look forward to in those days.'

[APH: While BERNI PHILLIPS (1161 Huntingdon Dr., San Jose, CA 95129, e-mail bernip@ix.netcom.com) has another:]

'Lesley's article was amusing. My problem with these supermarket tabloids is the pain they cause celebrities when they make up hurtful articles. If they would just stick to alien encounters and Jeanne Dixon's predictions, I would embrace them wholeheartedly. I just feel really sorry for the people who get trashed in their stories.'

'Aliens and all the *X-Files* rip-offs are really hot now, that's fer darn tootin'! I am amused by how they all operate off the same set of assumptions: government conspiracy, same style alien, etc. None of them seem to assume that the government has been acting on our behalf in this matter. (That would probably be nowhere near as entertaining.)

I enjoy seeing *Apparatchik* on the net now. For those of us with a tendency to misplace our fanzines (read: they disappear into the dungeon of our spouses), it's actually nice to be able to bookmark it with the software and call it up again to re-read.

'Ted's article on aggressive driving is intriguing, but there's a distinction he fails to make. The reason aggressive drivers get such a bad name is because they are not necessarily very good drivers. Ted is obviously a very competent driver; many others are not.

'Out here in Silicon Valley, too many people are driving while talking on the phone, putting on their makeup, eating breakfast, etc. My college choral conductor works on her music while she's driving down the freeway. She's an aggressive driv-

Make perfect ear canals in less than thirty seconds!

er and a very scary one to boot. There have been sad news reports of people having bad accidents because they were fussing with their tape player instead of watching the road.

'People also tend to leave insufficient following space out here. I know from talking to some people that some of them don't like to leave much of a gap between their car and the one in front because someone may cut in front of them. (This is also the excuse given for not using their turn signals: it invites people to cut in first.) Yes, this happens, but so what? Who cares if the person who cuts in gets two seconds ahead of you?'

[VMG: Following distance is a key factor in accidents, for obvious reasons. Doing a number of things while driving is becoming a way of life, though; I've had to talk on the phone while taking notes, all while zipping along at 75 mph in the rain. The key is keeping my priorities straight.

Now, BILL HUMPHRIES (2700 Del Medio Ct. # 322 Mountain View, CA 94040, e-mail bill.humphries@whump.com) has some thoughts on Andy's sad Alien fixation:]

'I have considered a different interpretation of the Alien Invasion fad: a conservative/libertarian or even an anti-technological view. The Aliens use invasive and unpleasant techniques (why do Aliens who can do something between beaming or tractoring-up need to use a rectal probe?) On the X-Files, they are in league with the Social Security Administration and seem to have everyone's DNA on file. Maybe it's not the trailer trash on Ricki Lake who are blaming the Greys for their crack addiction, but a reaction to all the data on us out there, the server logs, the credit card receipts, and medical files and our fear that someone's started indexing them on a common key field.

'How do our fears about abductions get added to the mix? The Rapture? Maybe the kids on the milk cartons. We don't have the sinister state terror with grown adults vanishing all over the place as with the juntas in Chile and Argentina. Maybe it's a fear of the potential, and I'm reading my fears into it. The Alien meme can be read many ways, so it's successful in getting everywhere in the culture.

'Before there were all these TV shows and films, there was Schwa: a guy in Nevada making comics, decals and zines based on the alien and abduction stories. His stuff is very political, about media control and how people are used by big culture. The Aliens have gone from the culty Schwa, to trendy and now pop. Maybe someone else has the Aliens as pawns in their own sinister plot.'

[APH: I can always trust you to take something I'm having fun with and make me see the horror behind it, Bill. But I think your right: abduction experiences are a superb allegory for the invasions which we all feel are commonplace in contemporary life. And people obsessed with their experiences aboard the mothership usually don't have the time for explicit acts of civil disobedience.

Now, shrinking violet BRUCE TOWNLEY (1732 Washington St. #8, San Francisco, CA 94109-3625, e-mail SF1.BAT@orrick.com) acknowledges a review:]

'Hey, thanks a bunch for the swell review of Oblong in ish #67 of your very fine zine with the tiny printing. Well, I'm grateful that the redoubtable Ms. Strecker recommended your zine to me with words to the effect that you're the best writer in sci-fi fandom that she's aware of. Rich Coad opined similarly. Not much chance that Oblong will ever become a "genzine" as that sounds too much like work. Used to be fairly active in sci-fi fandom myself about 20 years ago. No fooling, ask Irwin Hirsh, Ted White, Lucy Huntzinger and SCADS of others if you

wish. Should I send my zines to carl juarez and Victor Gonzalez as well? Anyhow, thanks again for the kind (but absolutely true) words.'

[APH: Hey, Bruce, I don't need to ask anyone to know you used to be quite the stfnal fanhack — you left a good-sized paper-trail behind you, you know. And yes, carl and Victor would definitely like to get your fine fanzine. Hope you can work those self-esteem problems out soon, too.

Witness the return of E.B. FROHVET (4725 Dorsey Dr, Suite A, Bx 700, Ellicott City, MD 21042):]

'The problem both you and Lesley are concerned with is called *consensus gentium*: the tendency of large numbers of people to believe something regardless of its objective reality. I'm not sure it's necessarily a bad thing that people are becoming more open-minded concerning possible extra-terrestrial intelligence. (Keeping in mind the difference between "Open-minded" and "gullible".)

'I'm sorry that nothing I do seems to please you or Victor. I'm beginning to wonder if the problem is all on my side, or if you guys are just determined to focus on my inadequacies. How long does it take before I get to stop apologizing for being new at this? Is a year long enough? You might want to reflect on whether this sort of approach is likely to encourage new fans to get involved with fanzines.'

[APH: E.B., I think we've said just as many things to praise you as we have to criticize you. When you do something fuggheaded and then try to equivocate your way out of it, your should expect more of the latter sort of feedback. The decision whether or not to apologize for things we find fault with in your fanzine is yours alone. I'd as soon you stopped, and worked on doing what you wanted to with it. And if new fans require unalloyed praise as a condition of their participation in fanzine fandom, they should find another hobby.

To finish, comments from KIM HUETT (P.O. Box 679, Woden, ACT 2606 Australia) on things merely nine issues old:]

'I thought your points in reply to Bill Donaho (Apparatchik #59) very good Andy. I've read that the main reason for dropping the bomb was to speed up the Japanese surrender in the hopes the Pacific war could be ended before the USSR had a chance to invade Manchuria/Korea. If they had been able to do this the region could have been divided up according to US/UK interests without giving any consideration to the USSR.

'It's interesting to note the amount of time and energy the Allies spent on their post-war plans from late 1942 onwards. In Australia, for example, there was a race for patronage between the old-empire men who wanted to maintain links with the British Empire and new-worlders who felt Australia now had more in common with the USA. Interestingly the much weaker pro-US side eventually won the upper hand. Due mostly it would seem to Churchill's refusal to consider Australia (or any of the British Dominions, except perhaps Canada) as anything but natural resource to be used as he saw fit.

'Jeez that Steffan is a wimp, I spent nearly six weeks in the US with only two small bags. Then again I know how to plan ahead, a practise Dan doesn't appear to be familiar with. I, for example, would take the advice of my guide book and use the black taxi service from the start. Any reliable guide will tell you mini-cabs are a real lottery. You can rely on the black cabs, if it does cost. I mean Dan's black cab driver had a broken arm and he still provided pretty good service.'

[WAHF: Gary Farber, Eric Mayer, Murray Moore, and Ben Yalow.]

Love to laugh. Let's have some pie!

1.) **Stairway to Cleveland #3**, for Anzapa by Marc Ortlieb, P.O. Box 215, Forest Hill 3131 Australia: Australian fanzine fandom has rather eluded my understanding over the 14-odd years I have been reading fanzines. There is only a tiny box of Oz fmz in my vast collection, largely because I have been willing to part with them over the years. Australian fanzines had rather dodgy reputation when I entered fanzine fandom, and I remember great slabs of Weberwoman's Wrevenge and Thyme left on the freebie tables at Brighton in '87, rejected by a whole Worldcon full of fanzine fans. Oh, if I could get my hands on them now! Anyway, I am finally beginning to attack this problem, and have been discovering that I really enjoy certain Australian fan writers, including Mr. Marc Ortlieb. While this is an apazine, and apparently reaching, what, 50 people?, it's the best thing I've read this month. Marc discusses the chaotic operations of his desk, encounters with children, in both his capacity as a teacher, and in changing his daughter's nappies, and offers a nifty piece of fan-fiction with actual stfnal content. Very good stuff, and the kind of thing that makes you lament that so much fine fan-writing is contributed to apas, and therefore read by far fewer readers than the work deserves.

2.) **Wild Heirs #18**, edited by Arnie Katz and his weltanschauung, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107: The lead-off editorial implies that the issue rather fell between great Las Vegrant sidereal cycles, as if they were so many bar stools, but I actually found that #18 had a little more zest than the lumbering and hefty post-Toner tome that was #17 (see below). Arnie offers an appreciation of the 1971 Egoboo poll on fanzine excellence that kick-started my enthusiasm for his current poll, a ballot for which you should have received with the last issue (e-mail them at WildHeirs@aol.com for a copy if you're reading this without the benefit of paper). Tammy Funk continues to show that she seems to intend to follow in her patootie Tom Springer's footsteps as most notable new fanwriter of the lustrum, with an article that weaves together hard-boiled eggs with the search for the better bartenders in Las Vegas. Hard to believe that the editorial horde had not seen fit to reprint Greg Benford's fine GoH speech from SilverCon III until now, but it was a great pleasure to read. My only criticism of this fanzine continues to be the overzealous studding of art, mostly Rotsler's, throughout the zine. Having up to three cartoons per page tends to make them all blur together in the reader's eye, minimizing the impact of the individual toons.

3.) **Opuntia #29**, Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E7, Canada: Dale continues to be obsessed with the historical methodologies of fanzine fandom. This issue features a brief lament for the demise of microfilm, and a preliminary history of fannish Round Robins. (Round Robins are circulating packets of letters or fanzines, each participant in which adds a new contribution each time it reaches them, concurrently removing the contribution they made on the previous cycle.) The issue wraps up with a brief letter-column, largely featuring writers with the same curmudgeonly attitudes which Dale professes. The fanzine equivalent of a box of Lemonheads candy.

4.) **Wild Heirs #17**, Yon Las Vegas Mob, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107: These people continually shoot themselves in the foot by reprinting old fan articles (in this case, Elmer Perdue's "Elmurmurings # 4 or 5 or possible 7") which are so redolent of history and pathetic (that's not a pejorative, guys) that contemporary writing pales by compari-

son. Forty years from now, Ben Wilson's account of making wine for Toner (I tasted some of it Ben; I swear I'll remember it forty years from now), and Joyce Katz' descriptions of the programming at that con may inspire equally-paroxysmic tremors of remembrance, but for now, it's hard to compete. All this being said, there's other good stuff here — Ken Forman's notes on Toner and LACon, Ross Chamberlain's con-going memoirs, and the first two chapters of Martin Tudor's TAFF report, to name some of it — all presented in an extra-chunky fifty-four Rotsler-studded pages. An extremely filling meal, that suffers only slightly from being served from the same envelope as brought the bravura issue #18. Burp.

5.) **Lan's Lantern #44**, George "Lan" Laskowski, PO Box 801, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48301-0801: Is it still a nickname if you yourself print it in quotes between your first and last names? I have such quizzical reactions to reading Lan's Lantern, which in addition to being a Hugo winner, must now be acknowledged as one of the more tenacious survivors in the field. George notes that he's gone through a divorce, explaining why this issue, a special tribute to Hal Clement, is late. Financial woes assail him, yet he remains committed to publication; who can avoid admiring this? I note that aside from Poul Anderson, who offers brief but glowing comments on Clement, there is no one here that I would particularly seek contributions from, yet many of the articles here emphasize the *amo* part of amateur, which most fans can easily relate to. Still, the design is simply not very good, with a dissonant selection of fonts, and not enough good art stuck in with some very bland fillos. The best thing in the issue is a great letter from Barnaby Rapoport, back before he began his career as a depressive hermit and gafiante. Lan knows what he likes, and has hardware to prove that his methods appeal to many, but I feel like there is a really good 20-page fanzine stuck in the body of this 30-pager.

Also Received: Thyme #11, Alan Stewart; Sempervivum # 2.1 & The Canadian Journal of Detournement #13, Dale Speirs; Door Knob #52, Robert Lichtman; Situation Normal?? V.7, #10, Aileen Forman for SNAFFU; Pinkette #15e, Karen Pender Gunn; Fannish Free Press Vol. 1, #2, from Bob Tucker; DeProfundis #242, Tim Merrigan for the LASFS.

— Andy Hooper

APPARATCHIK is the Conqueror Worm of fandom. The ones that go in (*urp*) are lean and thin, the ones that come out are fat and stout. Be merry, my friends, be merry. Apak is still available for the usual, but note that trades must be sent to both Andy and Victor (carl just wants the good ones, sent care of Andy — see the front page for our addresses), and/or you can get Apparatchik for \$3.00 for a 3 month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a lifetime subscription for \$19.73, or in exchange for a big plate of fried Promethean liver with onions. /-/ For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, from 24 Ravensbourne Grove, Off Clarke's Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, UK. Australian readers can subscribe through Irwin Hirsh, 26 Jessamine Ave. East Prahran, Victoria 3181 Australia, for \$4.50, \$17.00 and \$28.09 Australian. Lifetime subscribers: John Bangsund, Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Tracy Benton, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Chris Bzdawka, Vince Clarke, Scott Custis, John Dallman, Bruce Durocher, Don Fitch, Jill Flores, Ken Forman, Margaret Organ Kean, John Hertz, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Mark Plummer, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Dale Speirs, Geri Sullivan, Alva Svoboda, Steve Swartz, David Thayer, Tom Whitmore and Art Widner.

But who cares — Madonna had her baby!