

BULLZINE 71

NFFF

WELCOMMITTEE

JUNE 1970

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Jahzine #422.  
(I theenk)

Arthur Hayes,  
P.O.Box 1030,  
South Porcupine,  
Ontario,  
Canada.

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QUESTIONS??

What should the Welcommittee do about.....

Clubs & Organizations who are, or who may wish to affiliate with N3F?

Should the N3F encourage such affiliations and how should N3F make sure that such affiliation is mutually advantageous?

Improving the services of the Welcommittee?

Improving the mutuality of enjoyment for N3F and new members? Mutuality of use?

What should the N3F do about..... ( to improve)

Everything or anything? How?

What BENEFIT (service or publications) would best aid the above implied objectives?

What are your suggestions on anything? How could we putthem into action and effect?

What other questions should be asked?

Welcommittee.

Art. Hayes.

\*\*\* Michel Barnes has advised Stan Woolston that for personal reasons, he has to vacate his position as Hobby Bureau head. Therefore, the Bureau position, at this moment, is OPEN.

*Art Hayes*

## INFORMATION BUREAU

Dear New Member:-

Welcome to the National Fantasy Fan Federation. You are invited to make use of the NFFF Information Bureau, for any specific questions you may have on any aspect of science fiction or Fantasy.

This is a FREE service of the NFFF. Information is a cheap commodity to the giver but sometimes Priceless to the receiver, and one of the functions of the NFFF is to provide service of this kind to its members.

You may find that you can get satisfactory answers from the correspondents you contact in the Welcommittee. However, it is because no one fan has all the information anyone may want at his fingertips, and it is the business of THE INFORMATION BUREAU to provide this service, why not utilize it? (Conversely, it is NOT the business of THE INFORMATION BUREAU to carry on extended correspondence).

Make your questions brief and to the point, and restrict them to science fiction and/or fantasy. Any questions not in these categories cannot be included or considered, though I will stretch a point if necessary to include science and literature, when closely related to science fiction or fantasy. Please restrict your questions to no more than FIVE (5) at a time.

Allow a month or two for research, and for publication in the column of THE INFORMATION BUREAU which will appear regularly in an NFFF Publication distributed to all members. If a personal or prompt reply is absolutely essential, please so indicate. Otherwise, the question and its answer will appear in the column, and the submission of the question will imply permission to print it, together with your name unless initials or anonymity is requested.

Try to make the questions as clear as possible, but wording is not as important as that can be abridged or paraphrased for publication. Address your questions to:-

Donald Franson,  
6543 Babcock Ave.  
North Hollywood, Cal.  
U.S.A. 91606.

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The N.F.F.F. emblem was adopted in 1946. Jack Sloan, of Canada, Chairman of the Emblem Committee, explained the meaning of the various parts:-  
"Azure blue, the colour of the sky, for the field. On a Chevron argent are three botany gules, a cross symbolizing leadership. Three red crosses "botony", or budded at the tip, symbolizes both leadership and growth. In chief, two estoiles, or golden stars appealed as the aptest way in which to recognize the scientifiction element in the NFFF. In the base a skull of silver completes the blazon with an easily understandable representation of the Fantast and weirdests belonging to the club."

## TAPING - CASSETTES.

Good and bad Cassettes? Basically it is the reliability of the cassette and the tape. The cassette is mainly a mechanical transport mechanism. Within a C120 cassette we have about 600 feet of quarter mil tape which has to be transported at the proper speed without jamming, without slowing down, and without causing flutter or wow which is unacceptable to the listener. We also have the problem of interchangeability so that any cassette can work in any of the players ranging from less than \$20 to over \$200. The mechanical tolerances in the cassette are therefore very important so that they will fit all machines. The fully configured cassette was originally developed by Philips in Holland and contains 17 components.

By components, it is meant the moving and static parts. First the two halves that make up the cassette body dimensionally must be such as to fit any of the machines on the market. Then dimensions of the holes for the guide pins and the dimensions for the bearing surfaces must be carefully controlled. Incorrect dimensions can cause a lot of trouble and are in fact the very first reason for customer complaints. At worst the cassette will not fit in the player even if the mechanical properties of the player are out of tolerance -- the customer will blame the cassette in the first place.

Apart from the outside dimensions of the cassette a minor detail such as the size, thickness and location of the label can cause a cassette to be improperly aligned in the recorder and cause drop-out on one channel. A number of basic points within the cassette have very critical tolerances. First, the guide rollers in the corner must be as friction-free as possible so as not to generate static electricity. These guide rollers must also be as free as possible of eccentricity so as not to mechanically cause flutter and wow. They must also be completely perpendicular to the plane of the cassette to prevent any physical distortion or stretching of the tape. After all, we are talking at the best in a C60 cassette of a halfmil tape and in the C120 of a quarter mil tape which is quite sensitive and does tend to stretch. It is easy to understand that when a tape is stretched, especially on one edge, that there would be different frequency response on the track recorded at that edge. The other six bearing surfaces within the cassette must also be as friction-free as possible and also completely perpendicular to the reference plane of the cassette to ensure a correct path for the tape. We must remember that we have four channels of recording on a tape only 0.150 of an inch wide.

Any distortion of the tape will cause a cup-forming of the tape stack where the tape stack tries to assume a dimension greater than the inside dimensions of the cassette. This causes a physical jamming or a slowing down of the cassette, both of which are totally unacceptable. One of the major complaints that the customer has is that he believes his machine is no good because the tape came out and wound itself around the drive pin. Sometimes this may be the fault of the machine -- they are not perfect -- but only too often it is caused by a faulty cassette.

If the plastic tape rubs against any of the other plastic parts within the cassette it will obviously generate a good deal of static electricity. This will cause the tape to stick to itself, not take up on the take up reel, and possibly spew out of the cassette until we have something like spaghetti wound around the drive pin. The only way to make sure of this not occurring is to provide facilities for draining the static off the tape stack. The method we use is a graphite-coated slip sheet inside the cassette with the resistivity carefully controlled to enable the static build-up to dissipate. This also reduces the friction of the tape stack against the cassette. The other way we make sure that this does not occur is by using absolute quality control to ensure a free running cassette so that any slack is taken up by the takeup reel of the recorder. The mating of the two cassette halves, especially at the front tape path, is also critical. A mechanical interlock ensures an absolutely mated, trouble free tape path.

Another problem which occurs, strictly mechanical, is in the method of anchoring the leader tape. Philips' specifications call for a minimum withdrawal force of the leader tape attachment of one kilogram or 2.2 pounds. Especially when one is in fast-forward or fast rewind it is quite possible, if this is not carefully controlled or not properly designed, that the tape will just pull right out of the hub. This leaves you with a totally non-functioning cassette although the tape itself is still there.

There is no way of repairing a cassette. There is a popular misconception that the cassettes which are held together by 5 or 6 screws may be opened up and repaired. The chances of having a proper functioning cassette by trying this type of repair are very slim, since uneven tightening of the screws on reassembly must result in a loss of plan parallelity of the cassette. Plan parallelity means that all critical surfaces of the cassette are parallel to the design reference plane which also applies to the cassette recorder or player. Any deviation from this plan parallelity can cause an incorrect fit into the machine or incorrect tracking. Another item which mechanically causes malfunction is either the lack of a window, or a window which is so flexible that the tape stack itself may be damaged, or a window which is glued into the cassette from the inside so that it can, by accident, be dislodged and fall inside the cassette thus jamming it again.

The last mechanical factor that affects the functioning of a cassette really affects the frequency response in recording and playback. This is the pressure of the spring pad which is the only thing that can ensure proper intimacy of contact between the tape and the head. Philips specification calls for a pad pressure of between 1 and 1.5 grams per square mm at a specified head penetration into the cassette of .122 to .149 distance to prime reference line. In examining random samples of cassettes on the market it is amazing that probably no more than 30% of the cassettes manufactured meet these specifications.

There are just as many variations in the type of tape being put into cassettes as there are variations in the type of tape that is available in reel-to-reel. Possibly the tape must be judged under slightly different criteria from tape in a reel-to-reel recorder. The problem with the cassette playing at  $7/8$  ips is that one must find the right compromise between getting the lowest noise tape available and making sure that one gets the correct saturability of the tape at that speed. Some cheap machines even use uncalendared tape, tape on which the oxide coating has not been polished or calendared. This tape will have the tendency of actually wearing the record and playback head quite severely after only possibly 100 hours of use. Uncalendared tape also prevents proper intimacy of contact of tape to head. Most reputable manufacturers have gone towards a tape which gives them a satisfactory compromise between low noise and saturability.

The majority of machines sold today are still in the \$30. and \$40 and \$50. price brackets. The response characteristics of these machines are such that they provide at least as good a playback response as the \$25. and \$35. phonograph record player. However, since they really have no capability of reproducing the 20 Hertz on the one hand and the 15 kiloHertz on the other hand the major problem these machines encounter is mechanical.

Unfortunately it is possible to find cassettes which will not fit a player properly or won't reproduce properly. There are cassettes which may play the first or second or third time but by the time the cassette has seen any sort of use it will have distorted or deteriorated to the point that it just will not work any more. The chances are that it is this type of cassette which really gives cassettes a bad name.

Since all cassettes basically look the same there is really no way of telling the quality by looking at it. The buyer will really have to evaluate for himself, either on the advice of a pro who should know, or try a few for himself and then staying with the most reliable. Not even the price is much of a guide. The cassettes retailing for 99¢ is very unlikely to have the same quality as that selling for \$2.25 or \$2.95 but the price cannot be a good guide. One must go and evaluate for himself which cassette gives the greatest reliability from a mechanical point of view and then staying with a reliable manufacturer.

Editor: The above is a slightly condensed version originally appearing in a Canadian magazine, ELECTRON, May 1970. Based on an interview with Herb Goldstein, President of Sarex Canada, Ltd.

## CHOOSING TAPE.

If you go to buy tape for your new recorder you'll make an immediate discovery -- there's more than one kind. You'll be faced with an array of names like standard play, long play, low noise and so on. Probably all of them will work on your machine, but it is wise to know what features you are buying because they do differ.

There are two basic parts to magnetic tape -- the material which makes the tape (the backing) and the oxide coating which does the recording job. All of the tape types you will run across are made up of different combinations of backing and coating.

The major variations in backing are material and thickness. The material has to have high tensile strength, uniformity, flexibility and dimensional stability. It also needs to be resistant to humidity and ageing. The most popular backing is polyester film, sometimes known by its Du Pont trade name of Mylar. Some tapes are available on acetate which was the earliest backing material but this has some disadvantages and is no longer widely used. It does cost less however.

Thickness of the tape is measured in mils or thousandths of an inch. Many tapes are nominally  $\frac{1}{2}$ , 1 or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  mil thickness. One manufacturer quotes four tapes as approximately 1.9, 1.4, 1.0 and 0.7 mil thickness. The thicker tape is referred to as Standard Play and the thinner tapes are called Extended Play -- often specified as Double or Triple Play. These names derive from the simple arithmetic of being able to wind more of the tape on the reel. If for example a 7" reel takes 1200 feet of Standard Play it will take 2400 of Double Play. But you don't get the extra tape footage free! Current price list is about \$5.25 for 7" Standard Play tape and \$10.00 for the 7" Double Play tape.

There are some points to consider about using the thinner tape. While it is ideal for long uninterrupted recording periods it is less tolerant in handling and can be stretched. Also as the tape becomes thinner it is more prone to "print-through" if stored for any length of time. On the other hand a supple tape provides better head contact and better high frequency response.

The oxide coating varies in thickness but is about a quarter the thickness of the backing. Unless specified in the tape name the magnetic properties are usually uniform, at least within one manufacturer's range of tapes. However special oxide formulations are made to provide low print through, low noise, high output, etc. High output tape is useful where the recorded signal has a very wide range and low noise tapes provide the best possible signal to noise ratio. (Noise is generated on the tape by the erase current and by the magnetic bias). Until recently low noise performance was only achieved at the expense of output but there are now several low noise/high output tapes available.

One manufacturer claims that this new tape offers a dynamic range at a tape speed of  $3\frac{3}{4}$  ips better than can be achieved with a standard tape at  $7\frac{1}{2}$  ips. A 7" reel of this tape costs \$1. more than the corresponding reel of standard tape.

(Editor: While this article, and that on cassettes, are modified versions of the original in ELECTRON, May 1970, and presumably intended as authoritative, I don't make such claims for what they stated. If I've succeeded in confusing you more than you are normally, then I've achieved the purpose I had in mind when I decided to reprint an edited version. While submitted as intending support of the NBF Tape Bureau, the articles were not submitted to said Bureau for comments and therefore, the Tape Bureau is NOT to be held responsible for what information is in these pages.)

Mr. Cole, a Washington attorney, at a recent hearing, "Your agency (the FCC) is also particularly endowed with an ability to take reasonably simple matters and to artfully and skillfully complicate them beyond ordinary comprehension."

## WHAT IS SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM?

(By Al Ashley, Acting President 1942 - 43.)

What is Science Fiction Fandom? How, when and where did it begin? Who comprises it?

Frankly there are nearly as many answers to those questions as there are fans in Fandom, for each one views it in his own particular light.

However, we have tried in this little pamphlet to give you some of the most popular answers to those questions, for we believe you will be interested in them.

Fandom is a peculiar thing in many ways. But to those who are the kind who want to belong to it, it is a very precious thing. And who are these people? They are, as Norman Stanley said; "Those who have a distinct 'sense of fantasy'. They are, in the first analysis, people who like to read Science, Fantasy or Weird Fiction. But it goes further than that, for thousands who like to read this type of literature will never become fans."

In the second analysis they are people who, Heinlein said, are "Time Binders" who can see the past, the present, and the future as one continuous scroll; as one picture. They are those with vivid imaginations which enable them to visualize the future of mankind, his lives and his actions, by extrapolating from the past.

To those people Fandom is what E.E. EVANS, "The Grand Old Neffer" called; "Not a thing, but a state of mind". They are what Rosenblum of England termed; "Citizens of Tomorrow in the World Of Today."

Fandom is primarily a hobby -- the most satisfying hobby anyone could have.

Probably the greatest fact about Fandom is the chance to so greatly broaden your life and your outlook on life.

Through the fan magazines, personal correspondence, conventions and fan gatherings, and personal visits back and forth, you will make dozens of new splendid friendships--- man's most prized possession.

All these people will bring you new and varied information, concepts, and experiences. They will open up new vistas of thought and imagination. They will contribute greatly to your enjoyment and your cultural background.

Best of all, YOU will be similarly enriching THEIR lives.

Yes, Fandom has many facets, many angles, from which you may choose the one or ones that best suit your own particular fancies.

We hope that you will want to become a fan along with the rest of us. (Originally appearing in the NFFF WELCOMMITTEE BOOKLET --first published in 1944-1945. Later reprinted in WELCOME FAN by Ralph Holland, then again in BULLZINE Aug 1965. So, it can be seen that the WELCOMMITTEE has been active in publishing booklets, might even be compared with the FANBOOKS for many years. True, the current Wc does not have the jurisdiction it once had. At one time, during the early days of N3F, the Wc was in full charge of all recruiting as well as welcoming. The Wc Chairman was the VICE PRESIDENT of the N3F, but this additional responsibility was done away with many years ago. But, the Welcommittee has always been in the forefront of the N3F's activities, something which the current publishing in the BULLZINE is trying to continue.)

RULES FOR 1970 STORY CONTEST

Sponsored by The National Fantasy Fan Federation.

1. The contest is open to all amateur writers in this field. We define an amateur as one who has sold no more than two stories to the professional fiction and fantasy publications.
2. Stories must be the original unpublished work of the entrant, must be less than 5,000 words in length, and must come within the field of science fiction and/or fantasy in the opinion of the final judge, who for 1970 is Mr. Edward L. Ferman, Editor of THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION.
3. Stories should be typed on 8½ x 11 sheets of white paper, double-spaced, with the title on every page but the name of the author omitted to insure impartiality.
4. Contestants may enter any number of stories. Each should be accompanied by a stamped self-addressed return envelope and the entry blank. A fee of 50¢ should accompany each entry, unless the contestant is a member in good standing of NFFF or BSFA, in which case no fee is required.
5. Contestants are expected to retain one or more copies of each story entered. The NFFF undertakes to use all possible care, but cannot, of course, guarantee against accidental loss in the mail.
6. First prize is \$15; second prize is \$10; third prize is \$5. Other prizes may be awarded if in the opinion of the final judge any other stories merit them.
7. Final judging begins November 1, 1970. Stories must be in before that date.
8. Results of this Contest are to be announced to the winners as soon as possible after the judging is completed, and announced to the membership in the first issue of TNFF to appear in 1971.

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DO NOT DETACH THIS SECTION

Application for entry of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Title of story)

I have read and agree to the above rules \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of author)

(Address) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

Received date \_\_\_\_\_ Identifying number \_\_\_\_\_ Acknowledged by \_\_\_\_\_

Judge's rating \_\_\_\_\_

Send entries to:-

Dannie Plachta, Contest Manager,  
9147 Roselawn  
Detroit, Michigan, 48204. U.S.A.

NEW MEMBERS

From Janie Lamb.

June 2, 1970

Judith M. Brownlee  
1556 Detroit #1  
Denver, Colorado.  
U.S.A. 80206.

Birth date? Library Worker. Sponsor: Doris Beetem, Sr.  
PH:- 303-399-2971. Editor, DASFA Newsletter. Member of Denver area stf assoc. Read stf 16 yrs. Has typer, mimeo, Ditto & taper. Will write for pubs, pub cr correspondence. Interests:- writing, collecting, tapes. read stf 16 yrs.

Mike R. Ramage,  
P. O. Box 750,  
Huntsville, Texas,  
U.S.A. 77340.

BD:- 1-26-49. College Student. PH:- 295-7818. Has typer. Interested in stf 10 yrs, collecting, willing to be active. Likes fanzines.

Stanley R. Blair,  
4324 St. Johns Ave.  
Dayton, Ohio.  
U.S.A. 45406.

BD:- 3-21. Pro Publisher. PH:- 275-6866. Pubs "Stan's Weekly Express". Has typer, mimeo & taper. Sponsor: Kaymar. Writer, Editor, Publisher (listed also in Pro field). Will write for pubs or publish, correspondintoo.

Thaddeus Olszewski,  
P. O. Box 241,  
APO San Francisco, Cal.  
U.S.A. 96501.

Age 23 (Birthdate ?) Serviceman. Sponsor, Art Wilson. Has taper. Never active before. Interested in correspondence, stf 10 yrs, NOT interested in fanzines. Will correspond.

Anita N. Kovalick,  
2302 Cherrywood Lane,  
Orlando, Fla.  
U.S.A. 32601.

No Information. Phyrne Bacon,  
3101 N.W. 2nd Ave.  
Gainesville, Fla.  
U.S.A. 32803.

No information.

Rick Stoker,  
1205 Logan St.  
Alton, Ill. U.S.A. 62002.

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C.O.A.:-

A. F. Lopez, P. O. Box 601, Bingham, Maine, USA. 04920.

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IDIOTORIAL.

Events here, after mailing out TNFF suddenly became rather hectic (personal matters) and so, the result is that the cutting of additional matters of informational nature had to be stopped... for now. More will appear with next Bullzine. The idea of compiling these additional sheets for information purposes will be continued and in as much as possible, kept in print. There will NOT be, however, a printing for full membership distribution.

The new members in the last Bullzine, will NOT get THIS issue of the BULLZINE. The new members in THIS issue, WILL get a copy of the last BULLZINE as well as this issue. However, requests for copies will result in my mailing copies to any who make such requests.

All in the Wc, and any in charge of Bureaus, get all issues of the Bullzine. I am pleased that this form of distribution has brought in a few (wish there were more) suggestions as to what to include in these information services.

I will not be assigning names of new members to members of the Welcommittee as long as the number of new members is rather small. This month we have seven and while this may be too many for some, all should be able to communicate with most of these new members. I hope that Kovalick, Bacon & Stoker, will write in letting us know more about their interests.

Art. Hayes.



