

Bruce Pelz

**Librarian, Archivist, Institutional Memory,
Worldcon Chair and Guest, SFPAn
11 August 1936 – 9 May 2002**



The sad news reaches us that Bruce Pelz passed away on the evening of May 9th.

He chaired a Worldcon (one by title and I'd argue at least one other in practice) and was fan guest of honor at another; he invented Bouchercon. He chaired and worked on other conventions too numerous to count. He rode herd on the WSFS business meeting more often than some would have liked. He was a fixture and leading light at the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society.

Bruce arrived in the pages of SFPA at the twenty-fourth mailing, in May 1967. He finished his stint here two years later acting as emergency office for OE Lon Atkins on the thirty-second mailing.

As the head librarian in the Boelter Hall Engineering Library at the University of California at Los Angeles, Bruce was held in awe by several generations of students. He was Past President of the Librarians Association at the University of California.

It is not exaggeration to claim that Bruce was fandom's institutional memory and archivist. It was a matter of some amusement to more than one fan to visit the Pelz manse in Granada Hills and discover that the identically-bound volumes on the shelves surrounding the poker table were APA mailings.

Bruce had little patience with fools, and I guess I passed muster because he only turned his piercing frustration toward me at the card table – one of the skills I seem constitutionally incapable of learning. More than once I heard, "No, dammit, don't play by rote! Look at the cards!" But he took my money more than happily. Wit and ridicule were often his weapons and he wielded them spectacularly. He was also a master of the pun. (A favorite example: invitation for a dinner party featuring Szechuan and Hunan cuisine headed "Acid Wok.")

Bruce was the model for the character of Gregory Pelton in some of Larry Niven's Known Space stories – you'll notice they're both nicknamed Elephant. And, when Bruce discovered at Confederation in Atlanta that elephants were Allie's favorite animal (she was a year-and-a-half old at the time), he spent ten minutes doing elephant imitations for her to her alternating horror and delight.

— Jeffrey Copeland, 13 May 2002, for SFPA 227