

*Eureka!*  
a Doctor Who fangine

# EUREKA!

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A TIMECON REPORT by Robbie Cantor

((\* Robbie Cantor is a Canadian fan who currently lives in California. She is active in fandom in general and co-edits a Doctor Who fanzine called TIME MEDDLER. The following review is culled from several zines what appeared in the Los Angeles area weekly apa, APA-L, and fandom's oldest apa, FAPA.\*))

I flew up Friday morning, VERY EARLY, and was picked up at the airport by Mary Lee (the friend who had arranged my membership and was planning to pay for my meals). She dropped me off at the St. Clair Hilton, so that I could dump my stuff while she parked the car. Since Barbara Hambly, my roomie-to-be, wasn't due to arrive until later, I left my stuff in Con Ops and headed for the Pre-registered Registration table over at the Civic Center. Foul-up number one was rapidly approaching, thought I wasn't aware of it. Get in line, wait my turn, wait while they try to find my card. No card. So...they made me a new one which didn't show my volunteer status, but which at least got me into the convention. And, yes, I DID volunteer to be a gopher. I CAN be EXCEEDINGLY silly when I choose to be.

There was a quick Gopher Lieutenant meeting and they split up the Civic Center and assigned the various gophers and sent us off to our duties. Mine was guarding the door leading to the New Registrations table. It was lots of fun keeping the pre-registered people out and letting the new registrations in only long enough to fork over their money. This first stuff ran until 12 noon. One hour keepin' 'em out, and one hour letting only those with badges or going directly to the Registration table in.

Once my shift was over, I found Barbara, got my key, picked up a VIP Guest badge which would allow me onto the sixth floor (which was the Guest of Honour and Con Committee floor) to get to the room, and headed off to put my stuff away. Afterwards, I briefly considered eating and went to the Gopher Hole in the hotel. But it was going to take too long so I headed back to the Civic Center for my next shift.

Just as a note for anyone who thinks I spent the whole weekend guarding doors, I should explain something. Last year (when I wasn't a volunteer), Clarissa (who was a volunteer) and I did a lot of work on the Masquerade, but it was a case of too little, too late. We did not have the power to take over when we saw how badly things were going. That costume competition ran five hours and only had 35 entries. This year, we both decided, independently of each other, that we would stage a coup, if needed, to ensure that it ran better -- a LOT better. Clarissa had managed to get herself and her squad assigned to handle the Cabarets and the masquerade, but we still were needed for some duties during the day. So we guarded doors. We were sort of marking time until the Masquerade and plotting our moves for overthrowing whoever was in charge if there weren't MASSIVE changes in the way things were done from the way they had been done the year before.

And, like I said, she got us the Cabaret duty.

The Cabaret is something that "Doctor Who" conventions in this country have been turning into a tradition. It is a show put on by the Guests of Honour which resembles a British Music Hall performance (Vaudeville to you Yanks) with



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songs, skits, comedy bits and even dancing. The members of the convention usually have to pay extra for the show, but it's well worth it.

At this year's first Cabaret, John Levene, who played Sgt. Benton on the show, was our MC. He mostly told some wonderfully godawful jokes and puns between introducing the acts. Pretty well all the "Doctor Who" GoHs were in the show: the other actors who played members of U.N.I.T. (Nicholas Courtenay-the Brig; Richard Franklin-Capt. Yates; and Ian Marter-Lt. Harry Sullivan); Sarah Sutton, who was one of the companions in recent years; John Nathan-Turner, the show's Producer; Colin Baker, the present Doctor; Gary Downie, a BBC Drama Department Production Manager and former choreographer; Barbara Hambly, an s.f. author; and Eric Hoffman, an L.A. fan, who accompanied them all on the piano.

John Nathan-Turner sang a song, did a skit with Nicholas Courtenay and did a comedy bit with Colin Baker. The song was something like "I'm in Love with Me" and he did a great job with it. The skit with Nick Courtenay had JNT playing a fellow who's been and done everything against Nick's CPA from South Croydon. It was lots of fun, but I can't remember enough of it to tell you all the details.

The sketch with Colin, on the other hand, I do remember. JNT was supposedly about to start in on something serious and "important", when Colin interrupted him from the audience with a demand to know when he was getting paid for last year. So JNT told him to come up and they would figure it out right then. First, how many days in a year. 365. No, 366, because 1984 was a leap year. Yes, but you didn't REALLY work ALL day. You only worked eight hours of each day. Yes, but it felt like a lot more! No, just eight hours, so divide the total by three. You worked 122 days. Right, pay me now. Ah, but you didn't work Sundays. Well, no, but I THOUGHT about work. Doesn't count. Subtract 52.

Anyway, the gist was that after subtracting Sundays, Saturdays, 14 days for Colin's two week vacation, and all statutory holidays, Colin ended owing JNT and JNT said he'd be in touch with his lawyer. The downcast look on Colin's face as the total kept going down and the way he fled the stage when JNT said Colin owed JNT! Priceless!

Richard Franklin, who played Captain Yates during the Pertwee era, did several songs. Two had him dressed as a British schoolboy: "Has Anybody Seem My Dog?" and "Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me A Bow-Wow". In the latter, he got to beat up on a stuffed pussycat during the chorus, and pet it nicely for the verse.

There was a sketch done by Nick Courtenay and Ian Marter in which two elderly men meet on New Year's Day, 2000 A.D. As they sit on park bench and talk, it becomes clear to the audience that it's a meeting between the Brig and Harry only THEY don't know it! It was delightful fun to listen to them sort of tell each other about their encounters with the Doctor but shy away at the last moment -- "top secret" after all.

My personal high-point was John Levene singing "House of the Rising Sun" with guitar accompaniment provided by his son, George. It happens to be a favourite tune of mine and he did a really nice job with it.

I got to turn the pages of the music on the piano which gave me a nice position close to the stage, but it meant more standing and I'd been doing THAT all day it seemed. The show ended around 11:00 p.m. and, after a short stop in the bar for a good stiff drink, I headed off for sleep -- hoping that sleep would stop short the migraine that was developing.

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However, since I was really silly and work up at my usual workday wakeup hour of 5:30 a.m., that hope was easily dashed. \*phooey futz\* Migraine and all, I headed for the restaurant downstairs and scarfed down some food, most particularly something with salt on it, to start the day off right. By the time I was done, it was time to head for Gopher Central and the new day's assignments.

As previously mentioned, the squad I was on had gotten assigned to the costume competition which was, therefore, to be our only "official" assignment for the day, starting with the 9:00 a.m. "rehearsal" and ending when the masquerade itself ended at whatever hour of the evening. Clarissa, I and the others were there on time, as were about half the entrants. The Masquerade Director, on t'other hand was not. She showed up about twenty minutes late. Not good, but better than the production staff, who were in charge of the technical side of things; they showed up after 10:00, when we had less than an hour left in which we could use the room.

The planned rehearsal turned out to be merely an opportunity for Amy, the Masquerade Director, to reiterate the previously pubbed rules and enunciate a few new ones. She would make a great dictator if all she had to do was make rules. One of these new rules was that no one would be allowed to speak on stage. This was because there was no microphone planned for the stage. But a lot of the contestants felt that they should have been allowed the right to decide if they were up to belting it out loud enough to be heard.

Clarissa and I raised bloody hell with the Con Chair Steve Mann, and got him to give us a proper rehearsal time slot in which to have a REAL dry run of the competition. He basically left us in charge of all backstage aspects with Amy keeping the title and being left in control of the judges. It was assumed that, since the judging had worked well last year, it would this year. This was not a wise assumption.

But we were blissfully unaware of this as we worked on fixing up the dry run with ALL contestants required to attend and actually go through the motions on stage that they would be doing that night at the speed they were planning on. We also made it clear that if they wanted to talk on stage they could. We just couldn't guarantee anyone hearing them. They were MUCH happier after we finished the dry run.

And they were totally ready when 8:00 p.m. rolled around; in the right order, knowing what they wanted to do, their tapes ready to begin in the proper sequence, the whole bit. Unfortunately, the same could not be said for the judges.

The problem with the judges was a prime example of the airheadedness of some of the "staff" people. Amy, technically in charge of the masquerade, was supposed to have lined up judges before the convention began. She had not. She only got around to it on the day of the masquerade itself. Not that the guests HADN'T been contacted. They had. They all got a letter formally inviting them to be guests and setting down the conditions if they accepted, which also asked if they would consent to judge the masquerade. 90% of them said they would love to be judges -- and promptly never heard back from the convention. On the Saturday of the event, the Masquerade Director, at noon hour, was talking to some of the lesser lights among the guests about being judges. She didn't approach the main guests who were anxious to have a chance at being judges.



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That evening at 7:45 p.m. the guest liaison people pulled in Colin Baker, John Nathan-Turner, Sarah Sutton, John Levene, Gary Downie, and our own Barbara Hambly, and held them in the Green Room waiting for someone to come up and say they were needed to judge the masquerade. Meantime, WE were told at the Masquerade itself that the judges were having supper and would be down at 8:30. They did indeed show up at 8:30, just in time to be told that, except for Barbara and Gary, they were NOT required as judges! This sort of astounded me and the Gopher Lieutenant who had been doing all the backstage preparations for the show, not to mention everyone within hearing distance. Your guests show up eager and willing to be judges, you give them seats. I thought everyone understood this kind of diplomacy. Especially when you are NOT over-crowded in the judging department and THOSE you DO have are relatively unknown compared to those who have just offered themselves up. The best-known of the planned for judges was Barbara Hambly, and that was because she had been at the convention last year.

Anyway, the Con Chair and us Gophers were able to straighten it out and all six of them came in to judge (making a grand total of 7 judges -- only 2 more than originally planned as 2 of the original 5 never showed up at all). So the actual masquerade didn't start until 8:50 and ended, prize-giving and all, at 10:30! The contestants were very happy that they had some of the major stars to be judges and it was EVEN more appreciated by the female winners when they each got a kiss on the cheek from Colin Baker! They were also pleased by how smoothly things went once the show began.

The next day was considerably quieter in many ways. More guarding of the video room, some fetching of drinks, a little page-turning at the Cabaret; a fairly "good" day. Except that I was VERY tired and still had a migraine building its way towards an explosion. I wasn't the only one to be under the weather as Richard Franklin, one of the GoHs, went on stage for the Cabaret even though he should have been in hospital (and did, in fact, end the night there). However silly person that I am, I insisted on continuing on and even tried to come back down for the Dead Dog party which was after the Cabaret.

I did feel much better in the morning, fortunately. I wandered around for a bit and helped out whenever possible. By the time I left, the Con Chair had asked me back for next year to be on the staff. For some obscure reason that I cannot fathom, I said yes.

I enjoyed Timecon, in SPITE of some of the idiots who though they were in charge, and, unfortunately, had the staff badge to prove it. Not all of their staff were competent to tie their own shoelaces much less help run a con. But, there were compensations: talking at length to Richard Franklin about his writing, scrounging cigarillos off Nick Courtenay, being presented with a complete set of "Who" autographs from the con (thank you, Eric), being invited back next year to take a more senior staff position and help them run things, conning John Nathan-Turner into parting with one of his infamous Hawaiian shirts so that I could auction it in Australia, getting to watch both Cabaret shows from a ring-side spot - for free. Lots of little things as well. The low point, for me, was losing consciousness on the Sunday night just before the Dead Dog party for the workers. Ah, well! Maybe next year I'll get to the damned party!

((\*TIMECON was held on July 26-28 in San Jose, CA. Next year they will be doing a combined STAR TREK/DOCTOR WHO celebration. \*))

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### THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN COMPANIONS

by  
Debbie Grisham

It's a pity choice of companions has to be tailored to the ratings. The following people are radical departures from the usual. Neither is young enough for audience identification. Professor Rumsford certainly isn't sexy, altho' Richard Mace has an earthy quality which could be once he bathed.

Professor Rumsford is slightly comic and would have been a delight; I think she and the Doctor could have had some hilarious dialogue. Richard Mace is mercenary and his desires vs the Doctor's could have resulted in great conflicts.

(Beatrix Lehmann played Professor Amelia Rumsford in The Stones of Blood.)

She's a cheerful, unpretentious old woman with a face like a pan full of worms. Although she does display a bit of feminine hysteria when concerned about Romana and Vivian Fey, Amelia seems to be able to keep her wits in a stressful situation.

Among the characteristics of a companion is curiosity. Professor Rumsford has a measure of that, but her desire to be helpful is what leads her into the most unusual adventure with the Doctor and Romana. She noses through Vivian's cottage, (minimally) helps the Doctor construct the hyperspace projector, beams him into hyperspace, and eventually repairs the projector, with K-9's guidance, of course. Amelia and K-9 get along quite well.

Professor Rumsford has the ability to like a person in spite of his faults. (This may or may not have something to do with her being a geologist.) She has loyalty to the woman she'd known as Vivian Fay even after the creature is revealed to be someone else entirely.

The woman is observant, realising the Doctor is no ordinary man. (Personally, I think she deserved a more forthright answer than the one she got.) Amelia seems to have been somewhat bemused by the whole thing.

(Michael Robbins played Richard Mace in The Visitation.)

Richard Mace described himself as "...a noted Thespian forced into rural exile...a gentleman of the road." His love of words is obvious, which has more than a little to do with my wish that he'd accepted the Doctor's offer to come along.

The man meets qualifications: he's intelligent, inquisitive, and possesses considerable adaptability. His courage is balanced by a healthy sense of self-preservation.

Although definitely a product of his own time - interpreting the Terileptil's space srafft as a comet and their android as the Grim Reaper - he is much less possessed by superstition than his contemporaries. He also demonstrates a toleration of others' views which, if history has been recorded faithfully, was not the norm in 17th century Western civilization.

Mr. Mace is quite resourceful and well able to take care of himself. His self-confidence allows him to endure extremely unusual situations with a minimum of panic. He strode into the TARDIS and relished the impossibility within.

The Doctor would have done well to take Richard Mace with him: the sonic screwdriver had been destroyed, and Richard was an admirable picklock.



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## DOCTOR WHO - THE EARLY YEARS by Robbie Cantor

In 1962, Sydney Newman, the Canadian-born Head of Drama at BBC, and a senior colleague, Donald Wilson (Head of Series), sat down to discuss the creation of a new Saturday afternoon serial. It was to be a children's show but they hoped it would appeal to the rest of the family too. They hit upon the idea of a traveller in space and time whose origins were mysterious. To avoid the cost of something extravagant like a flying saucer, the hero would travel in a spacecraft so advanced that it would be able to alter its shape to fit in with its surroundings. However, to avoid the cost of a new ship every episode, they decided the chameleon device would get stuck on the very first outing into whatever shape it was first seen by the viewers in. And what shape? A police call box. Something, which at the time, was very familiar and simple in shape and style. An eight-foot high, three-foot square Police Box, which always looked incongruous in its perambulations through space and time and yet to children watching would be familiar and safe.

As for their hero, well, they decided to stay with the different and make him a 746-year-old, curmudgeonly man of mystery. The title given the show was a bit of a put-on really. The hero was the Doctor - no last name given - and someone inevitably asked "Doctor who?" Thus they had their title, only they took off the question mark. The creators of the show thought out a few more details about this mysterious man and his strange craft and the show was sold to the BBC (in the sense of convincing the corporation to produce the programme). Verity Lambert was brought in to produce the new show and David Whitaker was its first Script-Editor. Anthony Coburn was commissioned to write the first serial and the process of casting the parts began.

They knew they needed someone to play the Doctor. Verity Lambert took a chance on an experienced character actor better-known for playing crooks and Army sergeants, William Hartnell. The supporting cast were Carole Ann Ford as Susan, Jacqueline Hill as Barbara Wright and William Russell as Ian Chesterton. The first episode titled "An Unearthly Child" aired on November 23, 1963. It was reshowed the following Saturday because John Kennedy had been shot the previous week and it was felt that too many people who might be tuning in for the show on the second week would have missed the all-important first episode.

And it was important. In the first episode we were introduced (after the spooky looking opening titles that seemed to start off saying "Doctor OHO" before settling down to "Doctor WHO") to the strange young girl whose home address was a junkyard, and who seemed to know things she couldn't possibly and yet was strangely ignorant of everyday things. For instance, she seemed to think that England had a decimal based monetary system! We met her concerned teachers, Barbara (History) and Ian (Science), who followed her home to find out where she really lived and with whom. And we met the Doctor. At first as an old man messing about in a junkyard and being threatening towards Susan's teachers. Then as Susan's grandfather who seemed far too secretive and even dangerous! He kidnaps the two teachers at the end of the first episode because they know too much about him and his granddaughter and will cause him problems if they talk about their experience.

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The kidnapping was the start of a long association. First the group went back to prehistoric Earth and had an encounter with a primitive tribe that is trying to re-discover fire. In this serial the Doctor was at times crafty and at times violently inclined -- he even wanted to clobber one of the cavemen with a rock. His only concern seemed to be his own hide and scientific knowledge. This behaviour carried over into the next serial, the seven-part Dalek story which ignited the imagination of British children. It also set the trend that the programme would maintain for many years: an historical story followed by one set in the future or in outer space. This on top of introducing the Doctor's most famous enemies!

((((( )))

As always, thanks to Dick Lynch, the Knoxville Doctor Who Club, Debbie Grisham, Robbie Cantor, The St. Louis CIA and Terminus TARDIS.

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TRADE ?

CONTRIBUTION ?

HAVEN'T HEARD - LAST ISH