

FROM SUNDAY TO SATURDAY

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Saturday, 7 February, 1981: Again, I've put off doing a FAPazine until the last possible moment ... but at least it's getting done, which is more than can be said for zines for several other apas of which I'm now an ex-member. *sigh*.

Arthur Hlavaty: Another remarkable fanzine indeed, and (imho) a remarkably accurate and understanding view of the merits of the introversive and extroversive aspects of fandom. I tend to agree with your (implicit) view that introverted fandom is not adequate as the way of life for a personality of much magnitude, and that fandom is a good training-ground for learning to deal with the real world out there. I've recently been in a highly-alien social situation in which I got along fine by acting almost precisely as if the people were fans at a convention. Admittedly, such a fannish "mundane" scene is rare, but the techniques this once-shy and almost pathologically-introverted person developed to get along in fandom have served so well that I'm now regarded as only moderately quiet, and am reasonably socially-successful in non-fan situations.

"Violating sacred cows" would seem to involve blasphemy and bestiality, but not necessarily sodomy, unless I misunderstand the definition of the latter word.

Bob Pavlat: Ah, Nostalgia for the Railroad lines whose names were eagerly looked for when I was a child in Ohio ... and still are, on the rare occasions freight trains are seen out here. More common, of late, are virtually-unmarked platform cars holding a monstrous truck trailer body -- container shipments which are sometimes (to judge from the Japanese names on the sides) loaded overseas, lending an international flavour to the transport system.

Those who have seen so much of San Francisco rebuilt, over the past two decades, will fully appreciate the sadness of your account of the Change in part of D.C....though, indeed, such change is with us everywhere; I especially lament the passing of the little family shops and restaurants of L.A.'s Li'l Tokyo.

I, for one, have no particularly strong feelings concerning your proposed revisions of the FAPA Constitution; the provisions you suggest eliminating seem to be of some slight potential use/benefit, but perhaps not enough to outweigh the annoyance of publishing them.

Chuck Hansen: So gafia have I become in the past year that not only was the day the FAPA Buncle arrove not a red-letter one, I didn't even open the last bundle until about a month later. Wow, this is getting bad. The basic reason seems to be dissatisfaction -- with my writing, and with the concept of anything but in-person communication. With any luck, this mood will pass before another year is out ... certainly, once I get into the Mlg. I enjoy it almost as much as ever.

Personally, I see no reason why THE SHADOW FAPA should not be franked through the apa (though contributions by the publishers, to defray any additional postage fees, would be a thoughtful gesture, or perhaps should be required), If this be forbidden by the Constitution (I had been under the impression that the "substantially the work of the member" rule referred to the 8 pp needed for Activity Crêdit), I would not object to a change in the Rules. On the other hand...as one who was (somewhat) active in The Shadow FAPA during its early days, the idea of it being a distinct and unofficial publication seems desirable and admirable.

In the Holmesian field, Sherlockon (spOnsored by The Blustering Gales from the South-West, in L.A., Jan. 23-25, 1981) turned out to be a most enjoyable and successful small convention, with (at a guess) between 2 and 3 hundred people attending this commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the meeting of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. As one of the founding members of The Trained Cormorants (the first

scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars in the L.A. area), I attended the panel on Holmesian Society History, and also the Music Hall (The Firesign Theatre doing "The Giant Rat of Sumatra" was worth sitting through the rest of the acts), but made the mistake of skipping the rest of the programming. This might've worked ok at an sf convention, but here there were not quite enough non-program-attenders to make this practical. The Con was low-key, but fell short of being dull, and was so generally enjoyed that the ConCom is planning on another one next year, probably in conjunction with BoucherCon.

M. David Johnson: Contemporary parental permissiveness &/or abrogation of responsibility seems to permit many people to evidence their alcoholism or drug dependence (there seems to be little personality difference involved) during early adolescence, but I've recently been encountering a number of young people who say they used to drink/dope a lot but who now either don't touch the stuff, or use it sparingly, so perhaps the situation is not so bad as it first seems. On the other hand, as some thoughtful young people (among others) have pointed out, we have real cause for concern in that our society seems to be producing an increasing number of young people who have no respect whatsoever for others, and who can get away with acting on this basis. The Pendulum Swings, of course.

Roy Tackett: Unlike you, I believe I could live in the Bay Area. Why, I've even taken to spending some time in parts of L.A./West Hollywood, where people rush about a great deal, and really enjoy standing on the sidelines and watching. Maybe it's just that I've been having too much peace and quiet of late. But San Francisco...that place has just about anything one could want, and is small enough that finding this is not too difficult.

Niels Dahlgaard: Was something lost (or, perhaps, gained) in the translation? ca. 40 pages per year would not seem to make one a Publishing Giant... why, even I (a very small frog in the fannish puddle) published an average of one page per day from January through March of last year, if memory serves (let us ignore the close to zero pp per day from Sept. through Dec.), and many fans keep up at least that much activity, or regularly do two pages for each issue of a weekly apa.

Have you, perchance, arranged to have the NDAPA Bundles delivered by UFO?

Marc Ortlieb: Humm...just about the time you had your hair cut short, I became a long-haired hippy. Well...maybe not quite, but when the price of haircuts went up from \$2 to \$2.5 I decided to try putting up with the inconvenience of long hair. It is a bit of an annoyance, though, and when the weather warms up and winter is clearly over, I think I'll go back to the old crew-cut... at least once per year.

Considering that the early (to say nothing of the later) Australian settlers seem to have been even more contemptuous of the Aborigines than the U.S. settlers were of the American Indians (the latter fought back harder, before being virtually exterminated, & thus gained a sort of grudging respect), I am puzzled that Australia uses so many Aboriginal place names. Could it be a facet of deliberate rejection of British/English heritage, or is some other theory commonly accepted there?

As it happens, I was recently watching a teen-ager (under the rather heavy influence of marijuana, I later discovered) parallel-parking a car. He did a better job of it than I (not-very-well-coordinated, and unaccustomed to that style of parking) usually do, but he did it remarkably slowly (cannabinols do distort the time sense) and in a red/no-parking zone, which might be considered an error of judgement, or perhaps just excessive self-confidence/egocentrism. (An hour or so later, the car was still unticketed, so perhaps he was right.)

As far as I know, drivers in Southern California are no worse than those anywhere else, and the use of pot here is extremely common (despite the ridiculously high street price of 60\$ per oz.), that I can't be sure of any particular correlation, though mixing alcohol and driving is clearly Bad.

Sam Moskowitz: Fantasy Commentator enjoyed as usual, but (as usual) not in a way that sparks comments... except, perhaps, an abstract one on the rather strange feeling I get at seeing this this zine which is (I gather) an example of the best sort of fanzine from The Early Days, when fanzines were magazines, rather than extensions of an editor's personality.

Mike Glicksohn: That some people have enough free time (and freedom of movement) to attend a whole bunch of super-good conventions over the summer is something I find rather annoying; that some of them ~~actually/possibly~~ write up these adventures (at least in part) does much to counterbalance this. Vicarious pleasure has its place.

I must confess that, during my first few years in fandom, two decades ago, I sometimes dreamed of getting the Fanzine Hugo. Now, I consider that award to be nearly meaningless, and would much prefer the FAAn Award. (My chance of getting it is approximately zero, since there are so many really good fanzines and fanwriters around today.) The real Virtue of the award, of course, lies in the fact that one is appreciated by those people who understand what one is trying to do... and a good fanzine editor gets enough feedback from his readers that a formal award hardly seems necessary.

If you like snorkeling in Florida so much, it would seem highly probable that you would also like doing it along the Great Barrier Reef off Queensland.

Perhaps, as Kurt Erichsen put it, "the worldcon really wasn't too large, it just didn't last long enough". About a month, I suppose, would be ~~that~~ enough time to permit visiting sufficiently with most of the people with whom one wants to visit. Perhaps Marty Massoglia's idea of the LASFS buying a hotel and operating a permanent Convention is A Bit Much, but as a con winds down and one begins to say goodbye to people, that sort of idea begins to seem attractive.

The idea of lots of conventions is becoming particularly attractive to me recently since A) I'm not at present able to get away from home long enough to attend other than local cons (which are too few), and B) I seem to be moving into a phase of desiring in-person associations, rather than the in-words sort which makes up fanzine fandom. The solution (by no means entirely satisfactory) has been to make once-or-twice-per-week visits to a little neighborhood beer-bar, patronized by quite a few really nice people who belong to a socio-cultural milieu so utterly Alien that my Galactic Observer qualities are tested continuously.

Seth Goldberg: Your Tai Chi practice seems to have some effect other than merely keeping your weight down. When you entered the consuite at LosCon, I asked someone, "Who's that chap?" -- such an unusual degree of control of physical movement, such excellent muscle tone, such a sense of Vitality makes you ... unobtrusively impressive.

Hey, yes, I'd noticed that Chinese restaurants here on the mainland rarely offer chopsticks ... and had tentatively deduced that this stems from the ethnocentricity of an earlier era. In the midwest of my childhood, the Chinese restaurant (there would be only one, save in a large city, but the presence of that one would mark a city off from a small town) was likely to be the only place one could obtain non-WASP cuisine, and provided an Exotic Gustatory Adventure... but eating with those foreign utensils would have been too Exotic. Since almost all of the patrons demanded western-style silverware, Chinese restaurants formed a Tradition of providing it. Japanese restaurants, on the other hand, generally provide only hashi, and usually encourage their use. Perhaps the Japanese are more ethnocentric than we are, or perhaps these restaurants have sprung up since mainstream Americans became more cosmopolitan.

Sometimes I wonder if all/most of those teen-agers who seem to be alcoholics really are -- young people tend to ~~over/do~~ plunge into things with total enthusiasm... and to use them all up fairly rapidly, moving on to something else. Consider all those hyperactive youngfans of the past, who have either gafiated entirely or settled down to eight pages per year.

Brian Earl Brown: It's interesting -- and sad -- to note the work of such promising and talented ~~neofans~~ such as Todd Blake, Steven Trout, and Bill Bryan, and to realize that (in all probability) they will not be a part of the fandom I/we know.

Marc Ortlieb: It is difficult to believe that a wombat could ever be erotic -- even to another wombat.

Granted that drug abuse is usually the result of frustration (a not-quite-so-final substitute for suicide, which is the result of utter and total frustration), but what bugs me is most of the (comparatively few) people I know who abuse drugs (as distinct from those who use them, occasionally) ought to be quite capable of coping with their frustrations if they'd only go about it the right way. And so many people's extreme and incapacitating frustrations are centered on things which seem to me to be quite insignificant. *sigh*

This is rather embarrassing, but if you've previously recounted the details I've forgotten them and am not sure how much of a neofan you were at the time of AussieCon I, I do recall thinking, along about the second day of it, "This would make a Superb First Convention/Worldcon for a neofan." Not too large, with elaborate and generally interesting programming, reasonably partying and socializing, and a generally friendly family atmosphere. It's easy to understand that the infection would be virulent and long-lived.

Jack Speer: I do believe you actually neglected (or did not notice) an opportunity for grammatical nit-picking. After quoting "Gum leaves have a mild narcotic effect on Koalas you know," you might well have asked, "What about their effect on those Koalas you don't know?"

Methinks there is an excellent reason for using the hyphen in a person's name -- if that person wants it used. The same reasoning applies to the use or non-use of nicknames.

"Onan" might be a good trade name for a seed-sowing machine, though the Biblical reference might be lost on many people today.

It has long been my impression that "Black Irish" referred to either descendents of some survivors from the Spanish Armada who settled in Ireland, or to a dark Celtic subrace (akin to Welsh & Breton), and that the "Black Dutch" were a genetic reminder that the Netherlands and Spain once shared the same ruling family.

Hummm... I believe you are technically correct, there; politicians rarely (at most) use force to make people do things. Rather, it appears to me, politicians decide what people should (or should not) do, then direct an enforcement arm to see to it that this is carried out. I should think that even such control of Power would be, if not corrupting, at least more heady a wine than many human beings could handle. The distinction between direct and indirect use of power sounds like quibbling.

Keith Walker: Grumble, grumble...all those reviews of British fanzines, most of which are undoubtedly excellent, but few of which I'll ever get around to subscribing to. Time, Time, Time. *Sigh*

Guy H. Lillian III: Yes, SFAPA has a Reputation for Big Mailings...and for Quality, and for potent ingroup/friendly atmosphere; it will certainly go down in fanhistory as on of the great apas. It would be nice if an anthology of writings from it were to be made generally available.

Gregg Calkins: It sounds as though you came perilously close to over-extending yourself, in buying that boat. Good luck. The probability of the social & economic disaster you envision seems to be growing, and your solution sounds increasingly attractive.

Dan McPhail: Well, I (for one) would rather see Phantasy Press filled with your own/original/new writing, but the "fillers" are reasonably interesting, and I have (of late) developed a new sense of sympathy for those who don't feel like writing pages and pages of stuff. Certainly, after 50 years of producing fanzines, one's enthusiasm and energy might be expected to flag a bit.

To try to peer back through the mists of time, if only as far as First Fandom, is a real Task for me (even with your help), since my discovery of fandom (twenty years ago) was in the era of the newly-revived LASFS, where things were very much people-centered (though we did talk about science fiction, occasionally). And fandom, though much smaller then than it is now, was far more comfortably substantial than it could've been during the First Fandom era. It's difficult to fully appreciate the sense of isolation which must have pervaded those early days, and the sense of Unity which must have been such a strong part of the fannish experience then.

Peggy Rae Pavlat: "Over all too soon and not soon enough." Yes. My mother (now 91 years old) is still able to get around reasonably well, but her health and vitality are gradually failing, and...looking forward to a dismal prospect may be worse than actually confronting it.

Frankly, my opinion of "religion" is not especially high -- but the two "religious" quotations you present could be called "philosophy", which is ok.

Len Moffatt: It's good to see this fanbiography all together, after hearing bits and pieces of it in conversation at various parties. It will, of course, continue to grow in interest for me as you get up into the era and scenes of which I was a part.

Greg Bridges: Well, yes, we (fanzine/apa fans) do often write a lot about ourselves (and about each other). Perhaps this is almost necessarily inherent in the practice of the familiar/informal essay (the literary form, if it could be called that, most common in fanwriting). (As Montaigne put it, "If I knew some other subject nearly as well, I'd write about that.") Or perhaps it's that most of us are interested in other people, and realize that we must trade information about ourselves and our feelings/opinions. My own ~~excuse~~ reason might be closer to being a result of the belief (increasing as the years pass) that the concept of objectivity is much overdone, and that being frankly subjective is more accurate, as well as more honest.

Tara Wayne: Lack of feedback, lack of response...yes, that does tend to bring a visit from Brother Gafia. But then you begin to think about the five or six of the people who did Respond (sometimes much later, when met at conventions), and those people who are Important to you, and you decide that the zine was worth doing after all, and that it's worth trying a few more times, maybe.

Your childhood was filled with vastly more modern toys than mine was, yet reading your account recaptures much of the Magic. Thanks.

Fred Lerner: Though croggled by your description of your bride (there must be more significant things to say about her than "a second grade school teacher from Orange, Connecticut"), I went on to read (would you believe it?) all those boo# reviews ... and to enjoy them. So few fans who review books, even for library publications, retain adequate awareness of the budget restrictions under which libraries operate.

Irwin Hirsh: The desire to become a Film Director seems a bit rash -- there are so few of them that even entering the field would seem to be largely a matter of luck.

I've been looking at photographs rather much recently, and have noticing especially the effects produced by lighting -- something which is almost incidental in street photographs of people. But I've also been noticing (with leas pleasure) the grain which seems to be unavoidable in significant enlargements of 35mm b&w, and wondering why 4x5 or 5x7 cameras are not used more often. The procedure of making a virtue out of a necessity/convenience, by considering the graininess to be Artistic, often seems to be overdone &/or not to my taste.

Don Miller: If we really dislike the editorial "we", we could cease using it, quoting "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds." As a fanzine fan, I'm glad to see that the Fanzine Clearing House is continuing, and am equally glad to discover that fanzines and apazines are being preserved in yet another institutional library -- though from Craig Miller's Aggie Stories (he went there for a convention, of sorts), I'd not thought of Texas A&M as being a notably fannish place.

Harry Warner, Jr.: I must take your word for the status of "franked" material (illegal in the FAPA), though I had been assuming all these years that the "must represent to a substantial extent ((whatever that means)) the work of the member" rule was in reference to Activity Credit. I can see no good reason why "franking", to a moderate degree, should not exist (we are, after all, not required to read everything in the Mlg.), though I would agree that such material should have postage paid by the franker.

At least one fan who moved from the U.S. to England promptly sent back a frantic request for a set of non-metric measuring implements, in order to utilize American cookbooks.

If it is of any consolation (or interest) the Pacific Ocean still looks as big to me on trips to the seashore as it did when I first saw it at the age of twelve.

The paper on which this Horizons (Whole #163) is duplicated seems to be tinged with age already, as proper for an Historical Document, but I hope it is microfilmed or otherwise Preserved by someone -- your bit on church operettas, alone, is of significant historical importance.

PANIC! The Antique Gestetner is malfunctioning, and may not survive to repro the the remaining two stencils (if, indeed, it does this one); I may have to included two pages of previously-circulated material (ok by FAPA Rules, if memory serves) to make up the requisite 8pp. Next quarter, so help me Ghu, I will not let this zine slide until the day before the deadline.

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This section of segments from a continuing Journal contains notes dealing with the recent LosCon, and is intended for inclusion in the 812th Distribution of APA L, 4 Des., 1980. It is produced *but not proofred* by the usual Don Fitch, of 3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722, Tel. (213)3383744.

Monday, 1 Dec. 1980:

Several people at the Pelz' Pennsylvania Dutch Dinner last week had been expressing concern (sometimes verging upon Dismay) that LosCon memberships might not reach the break-even point, much less produce the intended modest profit for the club. When I arrived at the Anaheim-Sheraton on Friday morning, the Concern seemed to be more in the opposite direction ...errr...not that there would be too much Profit, but that there would be too many bodies for the space, since Galacticon (at the Bonaventure that weekend) had been cancelled suddenly and the notices for this cancellation had included a plug for LosCon. Eventually, we ended up with slightly over a thousand members -- which means twice as many as we might otherwise have had -- a substantial profit (perhaps as much as \$3,000, despite some additional expenses), and a different sort of convention -- probably a better one.

The small convention (not much more than a very large LASFS Party/Meeting augmented by a few out-of-town fans (mostly from Phoenix)) originally planned and anticipated would have been a bit too small for the facilities, and cons usually work best when fans pretty much take over the entire hotel, or at least the entire convention floor. Well, we did so this time, without any noticeable overcrowding. "We"? ...humm...yes -- the "GalactiCon types" seem to be primarily media-oriented, and especially prone to dress up in Fancy Costumes (often the futuristic Combat/Logan's Run sort of thing), and a large percentage of them are Very Young and quite disgustingly Energetic, but they're mostly intelligent and amiable people, well within the norm of fannishness, and as a People-Watcher I considered them a welcome addition to this Con. (A few fans did not, but when one was complaining about the people running through the hallways, I put it something like this: "Yeah, it's Really Dreadful, the way all these teen-age kids go tearing around like...errr... well...like teen-age kids. At least they aren't shooting Plonkers, like the LASFS members used to do when we were meeting at Zeke Leppin's place 20 years ago.") (I should note that one chap (wearing the nametag "Dave 2", possibly to distinguish himself from Dave Nee, whom he resembled somewhat) -- a member of the group which was collecting aluminum cans until they had filled all of their cars, and himself an enthusiastic "Runner", deplored the potential for accident when this Game was played incautiously in hotel corridors.)

The ConCom (and people who might be on future ConComs) should be told about all the Faults of a convention, of course -- to Rub It In a bit if they were really inept, and otherwise to aid in future planning. Lessee now... The Program Book arrived only on the second day. (No real problem, but I can see no reason why the schedule should not call for the P.B. to be in from the Printer 2 weeks before the con begins). The (computer-printed) nametags were in a typeface slightly too small for casual reading. The ConSuite was as far as possible from the Function Rooms -- rather too long a walk in this Very Sprawling motel. Those are the most significant Faults I can think of at the moment, and even lumped together with the absence of munchies at the ConSuite Party (the drinks were various & abundant), they are hardly really Significant.

There was one slight annoyance, one evening, when a GalactiCon Reject (actor namebadge) gopher was (apparently) in charge of the Drink area, and began rather

officially to demand I.D. from any young-looking person carrying a can of beer out of the bathroom. This may be a GalactiCon custom (or necessity), and it sometimes has to be done when The Hotel is Cracking Down for one reason or another, or if the youngfen seem likely to cause (or to get into) Trouble, but none of these was operating here -- it seemed to be a simple case of ~~Power~~ over-enthusiasm. (Informed of the situation, Shupp/the ConCom posted a sign near the bathtub, reading "You should be 21 or older..." ... now, that's Fannish, even if the "should" is not underlined to distinguish it from "must".

Actually, this LosCon continued the trend of recent years towards very light drinking &cet. Fans tend to be so Hyper at cons that users of Uppers would hardly be noticed, but I saw only 4 or 5 people wandering around presumably tripping on Acid, nor was there much Smoking. (A group with George Clayton Johnson was passing a joint in the ConSuite on Sat.(?) evening -- Very UnCool, imho -- it's marginally OK in Melbourne, San Francisco, and Minneapolis, perhaps, but not in an LArea Con Suite, yet, and especially not in Orange County. A largish group sensibly went out for an inconspicuous Smoke Break on Sunday evening (unfortunately, I was almost ready to leave by then, and couldn't join them, distrusting the Effects on top of lack-of-sleep, to the half-ounce acquired from Dusty's ex-lover the previous week went untouched.)) Whatever the Stimulants and Mind-Altering materials used, they apparently were used, rather than Abused == a distinct advance over past eras I can remember in fandom.

Remembering -- this was a time for that, since it marks my twentieth year in fandom. But that's material for another Essay. I did sorta give a Party, but without putting much effort or organization in it, and soon decided that the ConSuite Party, a few doors away, was much more interesting & enjoyable. Next WesterCon, ~~how~~ever... 21 is a good age to celebrate.

Much of my time during this Con was spent with Allan Beatty, who was en route back to Ames, Iowa, after deciding not to relocate in Davis after all. His zines in APA 50 are generally personal (and sometimes even Intimate, in the Tradition of that apa) but somehow he remains a bit Distant in them, and I wanted to grasp this opportunity to get to know him a bit better as a Person by doing things like having breakfast and supper together and ~~chitchat~~ talking about mutual friends. Much of the time, too (perhaps too much) I spent just wandering/standing about aimlessly, with no purpose but to People-Watch and soak up the good feelings of Excitement & Enthusiasm & Enjoyment which were being released abundantly all around. Yes, it was A Good Con.

Why, I even fell in love. ...Well...perhaps that is a debasement or misuse of language, and inaccurate too, since (as far as I can determine from my feelings) there is no element of sexuality involved ... He's not exactly My Type, as it were. Besides, something very similar has happened at least six times in the past five months, and "falling in love" should be more rare than that.

During these twenty years, I must have attended at least a hundred Cons, and each has been marked by encountering at least one Very Special Person -- someone I instantly (or very quickly) Like, and whom I definitely want to get to know better. Sometimes this has happened, sometimes not; sometimes such a person has become a friend, eventually, and sometimes not, but the experience is always Rewarding.

This time... the person was introduced at first as "Sourdough Jackson's brother" but since (as he put it)"There is no physical resemblance whatsoever", he ~~quickly~~ became known as The Marine. Of medium height, with a stocky, muscular build, regular features, a Jarhead haircut, and obviously excellent physical conditioning, he simply looks the Marine he is. Shattering the stereotype, however,

this Marine turned out, after a few minutes' conversation, to be an extraordinarily intelligent, perceptive, sensitive, and sensible human being. Tom Jackson is, to put it bluntly, the most thoroughly charming person I have met in several years. (And this effect does not seem to have been entirely idiosyncratic -- he was definitely the major centre of attraction during several hours he spent in the Con suite (don't be misled by that -- he Took The Stage at moments, but mostly he took part in conversations, rather than overwhelming them).) (Oh, I'm sure he has faults -- for one thing, he's very direct and explicit in developing ideas, and at least twice seemed not to recognize an indirect allusion -- but (at least on first impression) these are completely overshadowed by his qualities as a superior and entertaining person. Unfortunately, he does not seem to be a fanzine fan, but (being stationed at Pendleton) he could get into the LArea on weekends, and would certainly be a welcome addition to any fanparties ... and at least four of us were making attempts to encourage this, by giving him the phone numbers of the LASFS and of Bruce Pelz, so maybe he will again enrich my life as he did for those few hours during LosCon.

Brief observation (and even more brief overhearing of the conversation) of a seemingly-promising profan from Cucamonga led me to some more Speculation on Where Fandom Is Headed. Now, Cucamonga probably isn't as bad a place as it might sound, but it is comparatively remote & isolated, in the midst of an area far more reactionary and redneck than would be tolerant of the sort of Differentness which is part of being a Fan. In The Old Days (says I, (stroking an imaginary long white beard) the profan in such a situation could discover fanzines and -- through reading the, writing letters of comment & articles, and publishing -- find a place in fandom, meeting and inter-relating with intelligent, imaginative, and broad-minded people and finding at least a few friends or companions with whom to share interests and enthusiasms. This still holds true, of course -- but only for those profans who are oriented towards (or who are capable of becoming oriented towards) the written word. The large number of people (and one can hardly refuse to call them "Fans" -- who were here as a result of the cancellation of GalactiCon serve as a reminder that an increasing percentage of Fans are entering the microcosm by way of the visual media -- movies and TV -- and that many worthwhile profans are (especially at first) likely not to be oriented towards the written word, so they will not feel entirely comfortable in our traditional fandom. Their pattern is to associate together in person in largish groups from the very beginning, apparently, with a certain premium being placed on gregariousness and social skills, in distinction from the "traditional" fannish pattern of the Loner, the shy and alienated & lonely and often socially inept young person (remember?) who first establishes inter-personal relationships on paper, and only gradually moves into attending conventions, eventually (usually) developing the ability to get acquainted in person (at least with other fans) fairly easily.

If this projection is accurate (or reasonably so), it would seem that this New ("Media"?) Fandom is going to be largely convention-oriented, and is going to be composed almost overwhelmingly of people whose fanac consists almost entirely of in-person association. In addition, it would seem that these new generation fans will/must spring almost entirely from large cities and population centres, and that their opportunity for (and emphasis on) in-person fanac will militate against taking the fanzine/correspondence route. Worse yet, the young proto-fan in places like Cucamonga, even though able to attend three or four conventions, will be so overwhelmed by mundane influences, day-by-day, as to be stifled, to the loss of our fandom.

(All this Speculation is clouded, of course, by the fact that most written word/fanzine fans eventually come to delight in in-person socializing, and those who move to such actifan centres as N.Y., L.A., or Seattle generally publish/write less and less as the months go by. In any event, this will be an interesting light in which to look at the fandom of 10 or 15 years from now.)

(Of course there will continue to be a written-word-oriented group (core, even) within fandom, and I can only hope that the people who need it will find their way into it. For all my Galactic Observer pose, I remember all too clearly what it was like to be entirely surrounded by people who couldn't possibly Understand, and the Joy and Relief upon discovering this little world in which there was something like a 50% chance of intercommunication and understanding with any given individualwell...maybe 25%. With that memory, I cannot be unmoved by the sad idea that some/many people who need the niche or temporary haven that fandom can supply may not find it.)

In the midst of life ... A Conventinn is pretty much a Joyous Celebration of Life, and this one was no exception, even though I'd heard early the previous week of the death of Susan Wood. There was time for the shock and the grief to subside, and for the realization to dawn that Susan's vibrant Aliveness and Energy precluded any extended period of solemn mourning. After the first tears filled that sudden Emptiness, the only proper thing to do was to go on and Live Life To The Hilt... and maybe try to repay her kindness, thoughtfullness and stimulation by trying (once in a while, within the limits of my talents) to apply them in my relationships with other people. It's annoying to be so dumb that you don't realize how much you love someone until it's too late.

Late one evening, when the major function room was being used for practicing Regency Dancing, a guy with light red hair and beard, wearing a floor-length full and sweeping black cape/robe/gown was doing some very different Free-Form dancing, in the far end of the room, and eventually was asked to leave, by a member of the ConCom. I suppose the Regency Dancers did have right of prior occupancy, but the action did seem rather fuddy-duddy-ish to me, since I was enjoying his Joy of movement and music, and was also enjoyeing the contrast of Free Form Movement vs. the strict and formal patterning of the Regency Mode. Perhaps both have about an equal connection with Science Fiction (i.e., practically none) but now that I think back upon it, the Individualistic approach of this dancer seems to be closer to the fannishness/Spirit of Fandom which attracted me 20 years ago and has kept me around ever since.

It has been said that one's second, third, and most recent cons were the Very Best, and I'm not far from agreeing with that. This LosCon was, for me, at least as enjoyable as all but 3 or 4 of the early (reasonable-sized) WesterCons. Oh, I might have wished that Lyndon Baugh had been able to stay longer, and that Gunderloy and Burbee and Miriam Knight and the Hulans and at least a dozen or so other people had been there, and that it had happened that I'd spent more time with certain people, but one always feels that way; Total and unalloyed Joy would be unbearable. Part of that alloy is the sense of obligation I must now feel towards the members of the ConCom and to the numerous other people who flat-out WORKED at putting on the convention. I may creeb at some of their decisions and at what might be considered a tendency to lean over backwards to prevent any Problems from arising, but the fact remains that they provided me with the opportunity for three days of extraordinary Enjoyment. Why, even The Hotel was excellent -- spacious rooms (I felt almost Guilty about the empty spare bed and all that un-sleepingbagged floorspace) and a staff/security force which kept the lowest possible profile. The Pasadena hotel which is the site of next LowCon is, if memory serves, a trifle haughty about fannish unconventionality, but should be ok, and now I'm looking forward....and kinda regretting that that, and WesterCon, are likely to be my only two conventions next year unless I can somehow slip AquaCon into the weekend of the Indian Hobbyist Winter Dance, when the Porcupine Singers will be coming out from the Rosebud Reservation. The world is so full of so many things.