

Infanity's Notebook



October, 1993

DECLarations

Welcome to *Infanity's Notebook*. In response to the underwhelming demand by BNFs everywhere for jewels of wisdom from Palm Bay fandom (both of us), I present this immodest exemplar of my every editorial whimsey. Much thanks to those SFSFS members who ~~I could~~ ~~dragon~~ eagerly supplied the fruits of their talents for this premiere issue.

I plan to publish quarterly and hope you will be interested or intrigued or irritated and will contribute articles and art. Send light humor, filk doings, space and science reports and speculations, shaggy dog stories (well done ones), and such other topics as seem likely to entertain and keep the readers from using the *Notebook* for lining their tribble cages. I won't poke my 10-foot editorial pencil at politics, religion, fan feuds, etc. Book, fanzine, and media reviews will be scarce, if not on the endangered species list. Comments and feedback will be most appreciated; I don't plan a regular letter column but hopefully there will be occasion for repartee and rebuttal. Fare well anon.

- Don Cochran

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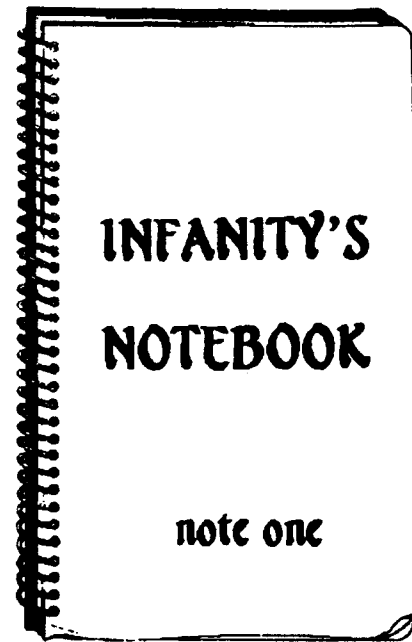


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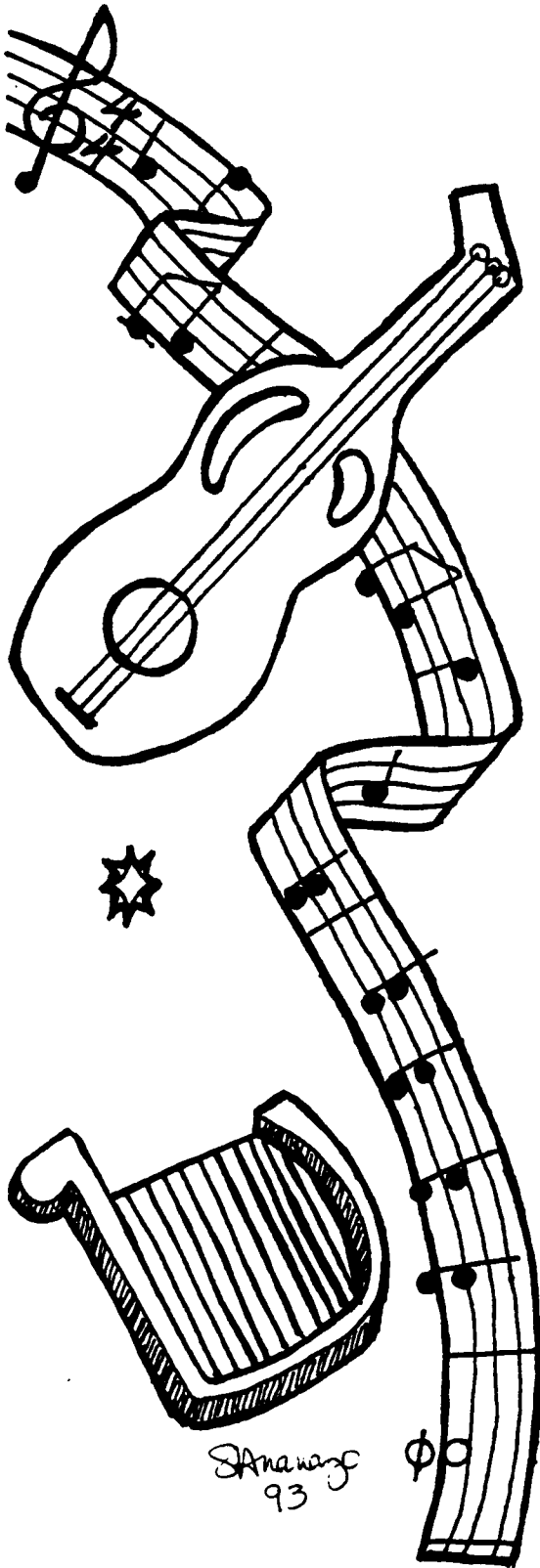
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ART

cover - Shirlene Ananayo
 2, 6 - Shirlene Ananayo
 3, 8 - DEC

So I'll Sing "Farewell to Venusport, Farewell to Sands of Mars"

by Edie Stern



It's hard for me to remember my first exposure to filk. It's tied up with my first worldcon, my first vacation, and my first "independence" trip. The details are a little muddly, but like any good inoculation, the effect seems to be permanent.

Discon II, the 1974 Worldcon, was my first large convention. I was part of no local group, I'd never been an active fan, and I didn't know anybody. I had been part of the silent fringe who didn't trade for the usual, but subscribed to fanzines, and I was an avid reader. Among other prozines, I read *Amazing* and *Fantastic* and was part of the prefannish mass netted by Ted White's "Clubhouse" column. The "Clubhouse" had fanzine reviews (and addresses). commented on conventions, and effectively offered a window to the fannish community. I was a willing voyeur and soon enough was receiving fanzines like *Maya*, *Khairu*, and *Double:Bill*

As I had joined the workforce in '73, IBM had put some money in my pocket, and so with vacation time and bucks in hand, I booked my way to Worldcon. I must have been so stereotypically neo that I could have posed for pictures. Lucily, I was taken in hand, right away, in the line at hotel registration by some ladies who

could see that I needed help. They gave me a "how to have fun at Worldcon" lesson that helped tremendously. (So, when you run into an eager but confused face in line for whatever at some convention, take the time to explain and encourage. Who knows - they might end up filking, and smoffing, and being a faan.

By the end of the con, I'd made friends, gone to program, had my back rubbed, and found out that 22-year-old women were very welcome in the predominantly male world of fandom. (That part was fun, too.) Somewhere, in between Discon's Asimov/Ellison battle of wits, the premiere of *A Boy and His Dog*, and the rest of the three-ring circus, I found the tail end of a filk. There were a few songs, and then it was over. I mentally marked this as a keeper.

There was no fandom in Florida that I could find, so my next exposure was at Big Mac in 1976 (Australia in 1975 being somewhat out of reach). Actually, my filk experience included a bout with Filthy Pierre and the microfilk, but the scene of a room full of neos, with songsheets, facing Filthy and a piano comes from so many conventions, I can't recall where I first ran into him. I bought my set of microfilk and sang along with the rest from whatever was on page 23. But I knew there had to be more.

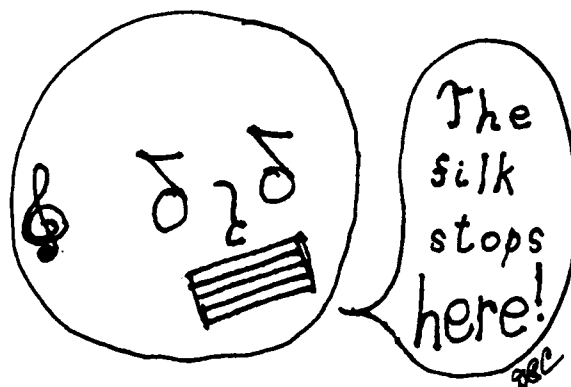
The artshow at Big Mac was in the basement somewhere, and there in the basement corridors in the dead of night, Yang the Nauseating was running a filk. I took a place at the fringe and settled for a few minutes. They sang *Hope Eyrie*. Juanita Coulson sang *Chess*. There were Dorsai songs (with Yang and Margaret Middleton and others). Kelly and Polly Freas were there. My roommate came to drag me away. She left after a while, moderately peeved. Someone (Anne Passovoy?) sang *Mary O'Meara*, and I think *Harbors* too. I can't remember all the songs and all the people, but they sang all night, and at seven in the morning, the dozen of us left trooped out for breakfast. It was invigorating and emotional.

The last song was *The Impossible Dream*. I was hooked, bigtime.

Within a few years, I was toting a mandolin around, too shy to participate in the filks, but hoping to attain enough skill to maybe one day . . . I did have enough chutzpah to strum away in airport Crown Rooms (forgive me Delta, for I was young and eager) and other inappropriate places. So, attending the filks at conventions ranked high on my priority list. I carried a cheap recorder, with equally cheap microphone. Professionally produced cassettes gave us all a big boost - we could learn lyrics from tapes on which you could actually hear most of the words.

South Florida fandom started to get organized, and SunCon in 1977 helped to bring fans together. We read, we sang, we nucleated. When Joe got Tropicon rolling, and we were able to invite filkers, it was great fun to bring down the likes of Leslie Fish, Julia Ecklar, and Kathy Mar.

And the filk goes on. The old songs don't get sung much, but there are also new singers. And there are always new folk to bring into the fold. Gee, did you know that Frank Hayes' *Hole in the Center of the Void* has been played in space, as a wakeup call for shuttle astronauts?



Verses Fit for a Sing

by Francine Mullen

Don is always asking, "How do you write songs? Write me an article on the songs you wrote with groups." Well, shucks. Those things just write themselves, especially if it's an idea whose time has come. In this case, I had been working on Kathy Mar's *Flowers for Algernon* from the copy in Magicon's songbook, *Major and Minor Magic*. It was an obsession that wouldn't leave me alone until I'd memorized and performed it.

About that time, *Bram Stoker's Dracula* the movie, came out. Words just flowed for the first stanza: "If you remember put some wolfbane on the door. The beast has tasted blood and now he's looking for some more..." I had a first verse, but couldn't seem to take it any further, but it really wanted to be finished. So during a break at one of our (SFSFS) bi-monthly filk meets, I threw it out to the rest of the group for consideration. I sang them the bit I had written and asked for ideas. Someone pointed out that wolfbane was for werewolves, not vampires. Aha! That was the problem. The ideas came pouring in, almost faster than I could write them down. We juggled words and lines, trying to stay true to scansion and style. All were wrapped up in the throes of creation and in no time at all we had a multi-verse song! I couldn't get them to stop!!!! Well, that was how it happened.

The next time I was involved with a group filk song was with Doug Wu at OASIS. We had been asked to conduct the filk programming and they gave us a room for the whole weekend dedicated to that very thing. One of our better ideas was the filkwriting workshop. We seated

everyone around a long table, then proceeded to select a melody. Greensleeves is seriously overworked, ditto the Irish Washerwoman. I searched my file of Irish folksongs, but there were not many that all had heard. Finally someone came up with Shel Silverstein's Unicorn Song. Then we had to settle on a theme. Something we could all relate to. After many bright ideas, we agreed on fantasy creatures in space. Everyone had some kind of critter they liked, so I told each to write a verse based on it and turn it in. Some were good, some needed work. So we hashed them out, rearranged them, rewrote, and finally came up with *Creatures in Space*. The product should be in this zine, so enjoy. Feel free to add verses of your own and send them in.

Creatures in Space

by the participants

in the Oasis 6 filk writing workshop

to *The Unicorn Song*

by Shel Silverstein

F C

Since man started working in iron and steel,

C7 F

The creatures felt the danger was much too real,

F7 Bb

The mythical creatures then went to space,

F C F

Leaving behind the human race.

Chorus:

F

There's smoke-breathing dragons and
hippogriffs,

F

Nymphs and satyrs and basilisks,

F7

Bb

A phoenix egg and a hungry roc,

F

C7

F

How can they fit through the main airlock?

At first, it seemed the dryads would be left in
the lurch,

There's no room on a spaceship for an elm
or a birch,

But they found their place, and they've the
mermaids to thank,

Floating in an algae tank. (And in the ship
there were some...) CHORUS

Have you ever built a spaceship for a
basilisk?

If anything reflects then they'll be at risk.

How can you have a crew that can't meet
eyes,

And make the ship an optimum size?
CHORUS

Have you ever built a helmet for a unicorn?

It has to be flexible to fit its form

And strong enough not to be punctured by its
horn,

Have you ever built a helmet for a unicorn?
CHORUS

C

The great gold dragon is the engineer.

The rest of the crew has just one fear

--The oxygen level could get quite low

If he gets uptight and starts to blow.

CHORUS

How does a centaur take a walk in space

Four-leg suits aren't just commonplace.

The helmet and air tank should be easy to do

And don't forget two pairs of shoes.

CHORUS

They wanted to take along the succubus

But they feared there would be too much of a
fuss.

So they finally decided to leave her behind

As a gift to humankind. CHORUS

They hoped for a home where they could all
be free,

Far out in outer space was not the place to
be,

For many years they traveled on their quest,

And finally found a world where they hoped
to rest.

(change of melody to "guess what"!)

But they're banned from Argo every one,

Banned from Argo for appearin' in this song.

They thought they'd found a refuge where
they'd relive the days of yore.

But Argo doesn't want them anymore(ever-
more).



Stacy
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Ah! Sweet Innocent Fan!

by Joe Siclari

In nearly thirty years of being a fan, I have met some people I will never forget. Some, of course, I wish I could. But mostly, fandom has given me a chance to meet some of the people who gave me a sense of wonder.

In the late Sixties and early Seventies, there wasn't much fanac in Florida. It was mostly voracious reading for me - books first, then magazines and finally fanzines. I was a relatively passive fan for years. When I got to college, I met Rich Small and we sort of instigated each other into fanactivity. The NFFF had me in its grasp for a few years and enticed me into getting involved, or at least into contact with some fans. Fanzines followed and soon I was off to cons.

I didn't get to a convention until 1971 - a Southwestercon in Dallas where I was introduced to Robert Bloch and Forry Ackerman. I didn't really get to talk to a pro until over a year later. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

* * * *

There have been a few writers whom I have been enthralled with over the years. I devoured Edgar Rice Burroughs and Doc Smith when I was younger. In college I discovered Robert E. Howard and The Lord of the Rings. At those times I would have been thrilled to have met any of those writers. I never did.

There are two writers whom I enjoyed then and enjoy now. Robert A. Heinlein is nearly

the consensus favorite among most SF readers and he was one of my two. I had a couple of opportunities to meet him in the mid-Seventies but seemed to be just off on the timing, particularly at SunCon because I was running around working on programming.

My luck hasn't been all that bad because the first writer I met and talked to was my other favorite. In 1972, I convinced Rich and another Tallahassee fan, Paris Stripling, to go to New Orleans with me for DeepSouthCon. In those days, DeepSouthCon was held a week or two before Worldcon.

We pooled together enough cash for a room and food. I had my parents' gas card for emergencies. So off we went. Leaving Tallahassee on Friday morning, probably about 10 a.m., it took us nearly ten hours to get to New Orleans. Interstate-10 was not completed so we took the Gulf road, and ran into some wind and weather. At one point, waves were breaking over the roadbed. But neither wind nor rain nor the dark of storm clouds will stay the fan from his appointed con.

Well, anyway we got there.

We got a room on our arrival. We didn't have a reservation, but cons were smaller then or we were lucky. Then the realization struck us. None of us knew anyone in New Orleans! Rich and I had been in a couple of apas and I had published a couple of issues of unterHelios. But we were unknowns in the midst of strangers.

The convention space was on the second floor so we went up the old wooden staircase. Con registration was in the hallway or foyer. A few fans and guests were already talking in a room on the left. There was a window in the doors so we could see them. I had no idea what a DeepSouthCon would be like. If anything, I thought that the con would be relatively large and impersonal as the D-Con the previous year.

I don't remember if we knew beforehand who the Guest of Honor was. Until that moment, I hadn't really expected to have a chance to actually meet with Poul Anderson. But there he was, talking to a bunch of fans, in the next room, with a green bottle in his hand. I could see him through the paneled glass of the doors. I must have said something about it because Rich encouraged me to go and introduce myself. I didn't have the nerve. He harangued me but I wouldn't go through that door. He ridiculed me - threatened to go in and tell Anderson that there was a shy fan who wanted to meet him. I threatened him with severe bodily harm.

Rich gave up on me and went into what was probably the "meet the pros" party. After a while I followed and wandered about. Rich had found some fellow comix fen from Kapa-Alpha. I walked about aimlessly for a while. A fan or two recognized my name because of unterHelios and I got involved in a few brief conversations. Don Markstein was one of them; he must have recognized a neo so he "took me under his wing" and introduced me around. All the while I kept a watchful eye on Anderson, hoping for one of those introductions. But that night ended in dinner on Bourbon Street. Being normal college students, by the time we got back to the hotel, the function space was empty - there may have been room parties but we were too neo to know and too blitzed to care.

Talk about being a neo. I got up before nine AM to go to program. I ate breakfast; I felt dead.

The program was to be a demonstration by Karen Anderson of various aspects of the Society for Creative Anachronism. Astrid was going to assist her. I got to the program early to get a seat (I was a neo, remember?). The room was empty. There were bleacher or stepped seats on one side of the room but otherwise it was barren. I thought the con had gone elsewhere without me.

Eventually, a few fen arrived. Then Karen Anderson bustled in and took over. Poul arrived shortly thereafter and I overheard her asking him if he had had any breakfast. He hadn't but said he would send for some. One of the con staff asked what he wanted and Poul said something about a complete breakfast and sent him down to the bar for two bottles of Heinekens. I had found out what the green bottle was the night before. I also learned that the proper amounts of beer can get you through a con nutritionally. If you can handle it!

The beer arrived. Karen and Astrid were arranging things. Karen wore a long caftan-like robe with gold and black embroidery. Astrid wore a belly dancer outfit with a chain mail type headpiece, I believe. I admit I paid more attention to the rest of Astrid's outfit than I did to Karen's. (I didn't expect to see more of her the next week.) I don't remember what Poul wore.

While I was admiring the outfits, a tall gentleman climbed between the fans in the lower rows in front of me and sat down next to me. As he momentarily blocked my vision, I looked up to see: Poul Anderson was sitting next to me! I didn't know what to say, so I rudely kept my mouth shut.

"Good morning, I'm Poul Anderson", he introduced himself, the Guest of Honor to me. "Can I sit here?"

I swallowed hard. "Of course I know. I like your writing." I stammered. I don't even remember if I introduced myself.

Poul Anderson was sitting and talking with me, well mostly to me. He was incredibly friendly and I was incomprehensibly inarticulate. This was the man who had made me believe in Elves with *The Broken Sword*, who had taken me star hopping with Chee Lan and Adzel on the *Muddlin' Through* and into intrigue with *Flandry*. Who made me believe that we lived in an IQ vacuum and who taught me how to recognize an

intelligent being in a zoo. Goshwowoboyoboy does not half describe the nervousness I felt.

He was sitting with me!

"Are you interested in the SCA" he asked.

"I've read a bit in fanzines, but don't know very much." I replied.

"Perhaps I can explain some of it to you as Karen and Astrid do their demonstration?"

Perhaps!?! I couldn't even reply. I think I nodded. For the next hour or two, Karen introduced what she and/or Astrid were going to do and I got an almost private lecture on the details of a costume or robe or where a particular dance might have originated from. On what the SCA thought of as an acceptable interpretation of a medieval garb. On why a particular dance that Astrid was doing was probably from Morocco. I had never been interested in the SCA. It was fascinating. I didn't have to say much. I could listen and try to absorb and enjoy. I was so nervous that I couldn't have done anything else.

I don't know if Poul Anderson took pity on a lonely neo or was just being his normal friendly self. I just took advantage of it. It is one of the high points of my con going, as you might have surmised.

I didn't talk to the Andersons again until they came as Guests to Edie's *Tropicon* in 1988. He, they, are still incredibly friendly and informative people.



The Fair Adventure of Tomorrow

by Donald Cochran

There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.

Julius Caesar, Act iv, Scene 3

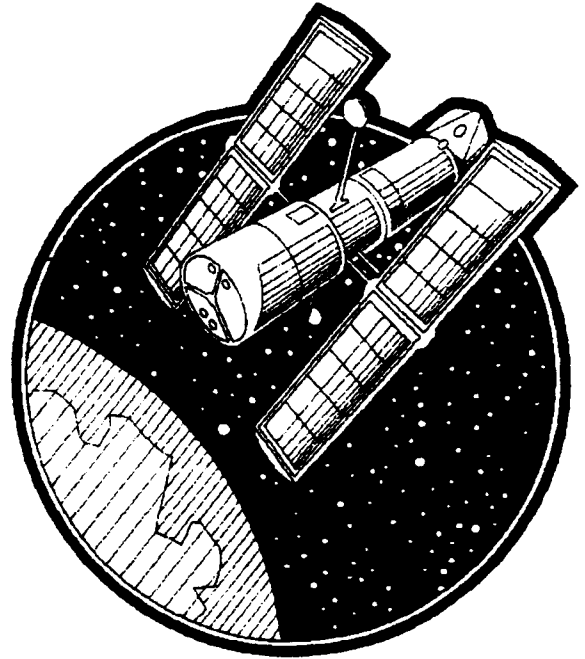
The next few years may be crucial for manned exploration and colonization of the solar system. The increase in population of both the world and the United States and the rising demand for funds for social projects means that there will be an ever more strident call to divert money from space endeavors to "more worthwhile" uses. If these efforts succeed, there may never be another chance. The human race needs to expand into space for survival, for prosperity, and for its psychological and cultural well-being. Even in the immediate future, people will need to be present. Even though they will be trained as specialists, they are generalists in a way no remote-guided or automatic probe can be.

But if you be afraid to hear the worst,
Then let the worst unheard fall on your head.

King John, Act iv, Scene 2.

The most basic, though not the most immediate, reason for colonizing space is survival. The further people spread out, the less vulnerable the human race would be to catastrophe, either natural or self-inflicted.

Natural disasters may originate on or off Earth. The former include volcanoes and earthquakes, global-warming (greenhouse effect), loss of the ozone layer, magnetic reversal, and



genocidal epidemics. The latter include impact by an asteroid or a comet or a black hole, englobement of the Earth or the Sun by a stellar molecular cloud, radiation from an unprecedented solar flare, or the effects of a nearby nova or supernova.

Natural disasters originating on Earth have a low probability for complete catastrophe. No epidemic has ever destroyed a species spread out worldwide, and no disease is likely to even decimate the human race in the face of our current medical knowledge. A magnetic reversal would probably allow cosmic radiation to increase several times but the effect would be limited by the atmosphere. The effect on the world's power, communication, and computer systems would depend on how rapid the change occurred. If the change were slow, there wouldn't be any great damage. If fast, repairs could be made to even extensive damage before the effect on the global economy and social system could become irreversible. The ozone layer is regenerated by the sun and its disappearance for one or several decades would be damaging for individuals but not for everyone. The effect would be greatest on the less developed areas, those least able of keeping

civilization going. Whether natural or man-made, any substance capable of triggering total ozone depletion must be short lived. The only natural phenomena capable of affecting the stratosphere is a volcano and, once the violent eruption has ended, the ozone would begin to regenerate. If the depletion is due to man-made causes, almost certainly the substance would be controlled immediately and again the ozone would regenerate.

One possibility for an Earth-originated threat to humanity is global-warming. If the ice caps should completely melt in a short time, the overwhelming of the world's coasts would be economically disastrous and might cause a temporary collapse of high-tech civilization, but the knowledge would remain and rebuilding would be comparatively rapid. Only a changeover to a Venus-type atmosphere would cause the extinction of the human race. I don't know if that can even happen, but it must be considered. A second possibility is a tectonic catastrophe of (literally) earth-shaking magnitude. Suppose a volcano erupted with a force one hundred (to pick a number) times that of Krakatoa. The tidal waves, earthquakes, and ecological collapse due to the dust ejected into the atmosphere might destroy mankind. It would almost certainly end civilization. The immediate death toll might ONLY be in the millions, but, at best, a tenth of the global population would survive the exhaustion of the food supply if the 'volcano winter' lasted several years, a 'nuclear winter' without the radiation.

Astronomical events are more likely to prove lethal, since the magnitude of their effects is usually larger. A sufficiently large asteroid or comet would certainly wipe out all human life on Earth. A black hole of any size, if slowed down enough to remain inside the Earth, would eventually destroy it. A big enough solar flare could put out enough radiation to sterilize the planet, though there's never been one that size, or even close, and I suspect it's not possible. A cloud of interstellar gas, if large and thick enough, would

block out the Sun and kill off all life. A nearby nova or, more likely a supernova, would endanger people anywhere in the solar system. No space structure would afford protection from the incoming radiation if the explosion were close. Perhaps the only people to survive would be those buried deep beneath the surface of Earth, the Moon, or Mars.

Man-made calamities are a more likely source for man's demise. The cause might be pollution, nuclear war, a plague released either accidentally or on purpose, exhaustion of resources, or ecological disaster.

Pollution, like ozone depletion, is limited by a negative-feedback mechanism. If it gets bad enough, the source goes away, either because of industrial collapse or regulatory control. Exhaustion of resources is not a likely candidate for problems; recycling and substitution of materials can be implemented easily, though possibly at a higher cost. Ecological collapse is almost impossible; life is too adaptable and there are species ready to move into any niche left vacant by the extinction of any particular species. The only possible scenario is the world-wide contamination of the bottom of the food chain, a most unlikely event.

The only real possibilities are nuclear war and a man-created epidemic. The former has been rendered much less likely by the events of the past few years. While the spread of nuclear capability increases the likelihood of nuclear weapon use, the threat of total war has materially lessened. Biological warfare or accident is getting more likely with the acquisition of the necessary skills by third-world countries. Whether current medical techniques and biological warfare countermeasures are sufficient to control an epidemic of an organism designed to be virulent in a world with fast global transportation is a question that can only be answered by the event. It must be remembered that the bubonic plague did not kill off the human race even though the mechanism of

its cause and spread were totally unknown and medical knowledge was extremely limited.

Looking back over the above, the existence of self-sufficient colonies beyond Earth, whether in space or on other moons or planets, would insure that the human race would survive most possible calamities. Only those which could affect more than one planet would be capable of destroying all of mankind. The only four are a nearby supernova, an intervening stellar cloud, nuclear war, and a long-incubation plague epidemic. Ironically, Earth, with its atmosphere and shielding magnetic field, would be about as good a place as any to ride out the various wave fronts (energetic photons and atomic particles of different types) from a supernova. However, deeply buried colonies on the Moon and Mars are certainly attractive alternatives, since their self-sufficiency would enhance their chance of survival. A cloud large enough to be a threat would be detectable far enough away to allow counter-measures to be taken, perhaps solar-powered lasers big enough to blow holes in the cloud. Space colonies would be prime targets in any all-out nuclear war. But the further out man expands and the more colonies established, the better chance there is for survival. Lastly, the isolation of space colonies and the ease of decontamination procedures provide protection against colonists becoming infected in a general epidemic.

"There's gett in them thar hills"

The economic impact of permanent and intensive manned space activity would be enormous. The direct effects include the exploitation of new technology and an increase in jobs and profits in the Earthside space support companies. The indirect effects would be due to the manufacture of products for sale spaceside and the development of new industries for the distribution of space made items and the manufacture of goods by Earth first using space materials and products.

Those carping that the profit potential of space is limited obviously can't see an inch beyond their own atmosphere. Besides Luna just over the first hill, there are eight planets, a score of major moons, and hundreds of fair-sized moons and asteroids. Investors should be standing in line for the chance to explore and exploit whole worlds. The backers of Columbus and the other early European explorers took more chances for a much smaller possible return. Besides the material resources, there are two features not available on Earth at all, limitless vacuum and micro-gravity. Profitable trade, given more efficient access to space and economies of scale, should be possible just utilizing these two advantages alone, especially the latter.

Perhaps one of the first profitable large-scale industries might be metal mining on the Moon. Suppose we start by putting a complete machine shop and foundry on the Moon, one able to duplicate itself (except perhaps for computer control chips that might take a foot or two of cargo space on a single ship) and construct anything not high-tech. The factory is then used to build mining machinery, an escape-speed catapult, and a smelter to form ore into lifting-body shapes. With simple rockets attached for reaction flight control (instead of movable control surfaces), the metal lands itself next to a factory on Earth. With the advances in manufacturing techniques to be expected over the next few years, perhaps fifty people could handle the whole operation once it's set up.

A bit later, after the development of fission and then fusion drives, we might begin mining the atmospheres of Jupiter and Saturn and maybe Venus. Ships could scoop up compressed tanks of methane and ammonia from Jupiter and sulphuric acid from Venus and self-contained factory ships carry them back to Earth orbit, processed during the trip into chemical products for immediate sale.

Once the initial construction of equipment capable of extracting the raw materials and

building the manufactories is done, profits start to roll in. Raw material is abundant and the amount of labor is comparatively low. And this doesn't even consider products requiring abundant vacuum and micro-gravity. And who knows, maybe we'll even find magnetic monopoles.

However, the industrialization of space will not happen without the human presence. Routine operations could be run on the Moon from the Earth. But problems arise over time in even the most carefully planned endeavor. People will have to be on the scene to take the back cover off of a piece of equipment or don a spacesuit and go take a look. Developing new industries in new environments will generate new problems, the solutions for which will sometimes require manipulation not possible to automatic or remote systems without the manufacture of unanticipated tools. The flexibility of human beings will certainly save both time and money.

Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.
 II Henry VI, Act iv, Scene 7.

One of the benefits of space exploration is the increase in knowledge through basic research and technological development. For many years there will be more projects to explore the solar system than can possibly be paid for. This type of planetary research can be quite adequately carried out by unmanned probes. Since the most expensive element is the launch system, the cost of planetary probes like Magellan and Voyager will not go down until the launch cost does. Some reduction of cost and risk could be achieved by Earth-orbit checkout before the vehicle is sent out into the solar system. At least problems like those experienced by the Galileo probe would be eliminated.

Other types of basic research will require people. The behavior of materials in space; zero-gee biological and physiological phenomena; and detailed geological surveying of Mars, Luna

and other moons, and asteroids come to mind immediately. The development of experiments on Earth for launch into space is too costly and the turnaround between conception and results is too long for efficient research into even those areas of science which can be explored in near-Earth orbit. Using only remote-controlled landers and rovers would mean that we would not be able to scratch more than the surface of the Moon, Mars, etc. Delving into diverse and unpredictable environments requires adaptive research not possible in machines designed in advanced.

Applied research would benefit in three ways: vacuum effects on materials, micro-gravity effects on manufacturing and material processes, and technological developments to meet the challenges of traveling, living, and working in space. Carl Sagan has said that spinoffs are not a good argument for manned space travel, as they could be more cheaply developed (if wanted) by research directed at the those results specifically. This ignores the fact that commercial uses for many of the processes, materials, and products developed for Apollo were thought of only because the techniques and materials became available. That is, their existence was the cause, not the result. Also, many of the most important discoveries are serendipitous. For instance, polyvinyl chloride, which became the first plastic, was discovered accidentally during research into acetylene to find a protective dope for aircraft wings. It has been said that Apollo was the only government program that ever paid for itself, meaning that productivity and standard of living increases more than offset the cost of the program.

"Go space, young man, go space!"

The psychological and social benefits of space colonization are subtle but profound. Even for those with no desire to leave Earth, there is excitement, vicarious adventure, and a sense of pride. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 17)

"Shuttlin" For Fun and Profit

by Doug Wu

All my songs are written in one of three ways. The first is that I'll get the idea for some joke, or a horrible pun based on a song lyric I've heard. If I try it out on someone like my wife or a friend and survive the experience, then the whole song gets written JUST to lead up to that punchline. Hopefully, the rest of the song justifies the attempt.

The second is that I'll get the beginnings of a tune or lyric teasing my consciousness and if I'm not hopelessly entangled in other mundane pursuits like job, family, or trying not to crash into a semi on I-95, I'll sit down and try to let the song come out. This method is either that I'm harkening to my muse, my right brain is throwing up, or I'm channeling a non-physical entity. You pays your money and you takes your choice.

The third method is that I'll say to myself "it's been waaaaay too long since you last wrote a song. Time to put your nose to the grindstone, me buchault!" So I do. Usually travelling to work on I-95, hoping I won't forget anything crucial before I get there and maybe have a chance to set it down on paper. Thank Ghu for pocket mini-recorders! If you're a songwriter and haven't gotten one of these yet, beg, borrow or steal one right away! If I hadn't just gotten one of these, "Shuttlin" might never have been written.

I guess that was the most appropriate way for the song to be written since it's a working being's song. It was inspired directly by the curmudgeonly old woman who flew the shuttle from orbit to surface around Ganymede in Robert Heinlein's "Farmer In the Sky". Like most of

his characters she was supremely confident and professionally competent. She believed in getting top dollar for her services. She took an unprofessional delight in terrorizing the mob of groundhogs she ferried down from orbit, but when two boys were lost in Ganymede's outback she pitched right in to help find them and even cried over them when they were found. Or so I remember her. It's been a while since I last read the book. Too long maybe.

Why a rock tune for this song? I thought at the time that I was experimenting in a more economically viable mode. After all, I haven't got the folk's prejudice against electronics or certain types of music, believing that good music is good music whether they stick it in Rock, Jazz, New Age, Easy Listening, or Country/Western. I also strive always to make my songs accessible to the non-fannish. Like the shuttle pilot, I see nothing wrong with getting top dollar. Why not produce a song that could sell?

My muse knows better.

I now realize that this song could not have been as good as it is in any other style. It needed that rebellious, belligerent, "I don't take nothin' from NOBODY!" feel. The rhythm is hard-driving, like an engine. The chord structure reflects the bitterness of a life spent in a largely unsung role, but one without shame or cause for it. It says, "I may not seem like much, but by God you can't do without me, so fork over, greenhorn!"

The song tries to be ruthless, but it only plays the hardnose. Underneath, it's go-to-hell attitude is founded on the conviction that getting this kind of treatment is good for the soul on both sides; well-earned respect for the giver, and a much-needed kick in the pants for the receiver.

I had a great time writing this one, and I hope you, o best beloved, have a great time hearing it, and maybe even picking up your axe and trying it on for size!

Shuttlin'

by Douglas F. Wu



In the youth of the world there were ships borne on the sea, And their captains rode the waves in search of gold.



In the youth of the world there were rivers wild and free, And each steamer bore rich cargo to be sold.



But the longest rolling river could be mighty deep and wide, And it took a firm and skillful hand to reach the other



side, But no one recalled the ferry man, nor spoke his name with pride,

And it's still the same today,



or so I'm told.

But they can't cross the river without me,



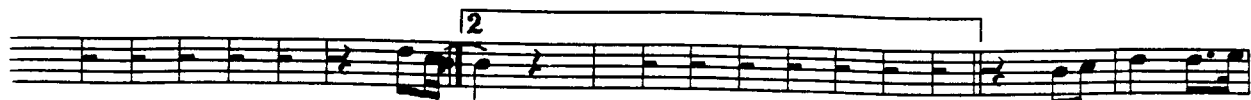
Not if on the other side they'd ever be.

No, my lady, no, my lord, here's one river you can't



ford.

So dig deep within your pockets now, I don't care how, Just pay me the shuttin' fee.



2. And to

Hear the scream of the



atmosphere that paints the hull bright red. We're as close to the edge as we can get. If I'm off just a

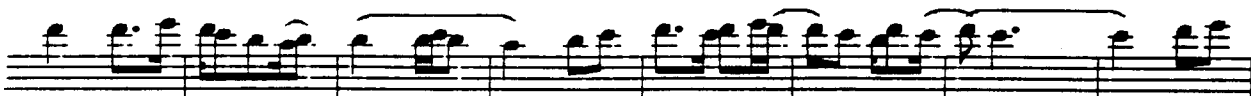


few degrees we all might end up dead, But hell, in thirty years it's never happened yet.



3. I may

No you



can't cross the river without me, If your place among the stars you'd ever see. If my



fare you can afford, buy a ticket, climb aboard, And we'll ride to where the big ships lie, be -



yond the sky, But nobody's ridin' for free! No one rides for free!

Am G
In the youth of the world there were ships borne on the sea,

F G Am
And their captains rode the waves in search of gold.

Am C
In the youth of the world there were rivers wild and free,

F E
And each steamer bore rich cargo to be sold.

Am C F
But the longest rolling river could be mighty deep and wide,

Am C F G
And it took a firm and skillfull hand to reach the other side,

Am C F
But no one recalled the ferry man, nor spoke his name with pride,

Am G Am G
And it's still the same today, or so I'm told. But

CHORUS

Am C F
they can't cross the river without me,

Am C E
Not if on the other side they'd ever be.

Am C G F
No, my lady, no, my lord, here's one river you can't ford.

Am G C G
So dig deep within your pockets now, I don't care how,

F G Am G
Just pay me the shuttlin' fee.

And today they've got mighty ships that fly from star to star

And they haul more wealth than most men ever find.

And today they've got lesser ships that never fly so far

But they help to fill the needs of human kind.

But these passengers and cargo pods must somehow reach the ground.

And their services and stores must be brought up to them they've found.

They could not stay in business long if I were not around,

So make note: the fares I ask are rightfully mine. 'Cause (CHORUS)

BRIDGE

C G F G
Hear the scream of the atmosphere that paints the hull bright red.

Am C G
We're as close to the edge as we can get.

C G F
If I'm off just a few degrees we all might end up dead,

Dm E
But hell, in thirty years it's never happened yet.

I may not rise to stand with the ones who ply the night,

Where the planets and the stars are specks of sand.

But this part of the dream I will hold as mine by right,

By my shuttle and the fares we can command.

For these dreamers and these colonists, they must be moved along,

So I'll bleed 'em just a little, so they won't get started wrong,

And I'll truck like the devil, and I'll sing this bloody song,

'Til I drop my final coin in Charon's hand. For (CHORUS)

No you can't cross the river without me,

If your place among the stars you'd ever see.

If my fare you can afford, buy a ticket, climb aboard,

And we'll ride to where the big ships lie, beyond the sky,

But nobody's ridin' for free!

No one rides for free!

[Doug Wu writes great songs and sings almost as well as he writes, a source of great pleasure and envy for those who have the good fortune to hear him and his electronic autoharp at Florida filk occasions. He, Francine Mullen and Dina Pearlman made *Tomorrow Morning*, a very well done filk tape. - DEC]

Bay to Bay and Back

by Don Cochran

This past weekend Necronomicon XII materialized in Tampa, presented by the Stone Hill gang, an ingathering of Tampa Bay sfans. Melanie Herz, the other Palm Bay fan, gave me a ride over Friday afternoon (Thank you Melanie!). After registering, I went to Steak and Ale with Joe and Pattie Green and a couple of others, a really good relaxing way to start a con.

The big event Friday night was the cabaret; all eager or willing or coerced perform for the amusement of those ~~without the guts~~ disinclined to ~~make a fo show-off~~ do their thing. The three categories were singing, bad jokes, and whatever else (including lipsyncing and dancing). The winning song was a filk of Greensleeves. The best (worst) bad joke was: Sam, rocking on his porch, watches a rabbit hop across the road. A car hits the rabbit, throwing it across the road, where it lies unmoving. The driver screeches to a stop, runs back, gives the rabbit a drink, throws the empty bottle away, and speeds off. Sam sees the rabbit stir. Then one ear comes up. Then the other. Finally the rabbit rolls over and get to its feet. It waves its paw toward Sam and starts hopping away down the road. But every few yards it turns around and waves again. Sam thought about it and then decided to see just what was in that bottle. He moseyed down and picked it up. The label read Hare Restorer with **Permanent Wave**.

The Friday filk session started at midnight and wended its chaotic way till three. We were given one of the panel rooms just about the right size. At the Necro two years ago, we had to crowd into a hotel room and there have been other

times where we just appropriated space. Chuck Lipsig set up his keyboard, I brought my guitar, and about 20 people showed up at various times.

Most of Saturday afternoon I spent at a nearby mall. I went there for lunch and got trapped by rain. Finally I decided it had slacked off tolerably and walked back. Part of the time was spent most agreeably with a banana split. It's been years. The masquerade was small but enjoyable with 19 entries. The kids led off, including the Vampire Can Can Dancers, starting a running joke. The Klingons showed up in force, five or six entries. One group did their version of *Three Little Maids from School*, though not in the original Klingon.

Afterwards, I wandered through several parties, Tropicon, Oasis, and Niagara Falls in '98. Linda Michaels was in charge of the latter. I was glad to meet her after using her art in the *SFSFS Shuttle*. The filk Saturday night was about the same size as on Friday, although run bardic. Happily Fran Mullen came in with her guitar after a while. Everyone joined in where they could with songs from Westerfilk and quite a few other sources and we broke up about three-thirty.

I did make a few panels Sunday, nothing of great note, but entertaining and staying on the subject as much or as little as usual. Melanie and I left a bit before five. It was a typical Necronomicon, well done, overrun with vampire gamers, and enjoyable.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

Although space colonies will not relieve population pressure, the hope will provide a safety valve if the possibility of emigration is sufficiently wide-spread. Given the industrialization of space and the lowering of launch costs, any nation or reasonably large group of people would be able to afford to build a habitat which, with recycling, a closed ecology, and solar power, would not need to import very much - literally living SPACE.

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