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Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society
Club Notice - 10/12/90 -- Vol. 9, No. 15

MEETINGS UPCOMING:

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings are on Wednesdays at noon.
LZ meetings are in LZ 2R-158. MT meetings are in the cafeteria.

_D_A_T_E _T_O_P_I_C

- 10/24 LZ: THE WORM OUROBOROS by E. R. Eddison (Classic Horror)
- 11/07 MT: WANDERING STARS ed. by Jack Dann (Jewish Science Fiction)
- 11/14 LZ: WAR WITH THE NEWTS by Karel Capek (Foreign SF)
- 12/05 LZ: EQUAL RITES or THE LIGHT FANTASTIC by Terry Pratchett (Humorous SF)

_D_A_T_E _E_X_T_E_R_N_A_L_M_E_E_T_I_N_G_S/_C_O_N_V_E_N_T_I_O_N_S/_E_T_C.

- 10/13 NJSFS: New Jersey Science Fiction Society: TBA
(phone 201-432-5965 for details) (Saturday)
- 10/20 SFABC: Science Fiction Association of Bergen County: TBA
(phone 201-933-2724 for details) (Saturday)

HO Chair: John Jetzt HO 1E-525 834-1563 hocpa!jetzt
LZ Chair: Rob Mitchell LZ 1B-306 576-6106 mtuxo!jrrt
MT Chair: Mark Leeper MT 3D-441 957-5619 mtgzy!leeper
HO Librarian: Tim Schroeder HO 3E-301 949-4488 hotld!tps
LZ Librarian: Lance Larsen LZ 3L-312 576-3346 mtunq!lfl
MT Librarian: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 957-2070 mtgzy!ecl
Factotum: Evelyn Leeper MT 1F-329 957-2070 mtgzy!ecl
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1. I was talking last issue about the back-to-basics-and-all-silliness-aside ad campaigns for a brand of bourbon. As if you could do that in the bourbon industry, an American industry apparently named after a long-dead French royal family. Actually, they like to name this hooch after some of the oddest things. Would you like some Wild Turkey? The only wild turkeys I've ever seen are on our roads after the bars close. Hey, how'd you like to get a mouthful of Old Granddad? The thought just gives me the

willies.

I do have to confess to that alcoholic beverages are one subject I cannot claim to be an expert on. I really _a_m a back to the basics sort of drinker. For me it's water, soda, and the occasional

THE MT VOID

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chocolate milk. My idea of a strong drink is ginger beer. Evelyn, on the other hand, is something of a drinker, and not a "basics" sort of drinker either. She likes this stuff that looks like Windex and she says tastes like pancake syrup. The woman who makes fun of my putting peanut butter in oatmeal drinks Windex-colored pancake syrup. And you should see the bottle it comes in. You know how cheese spread and jelly used to come in reusable juice glasses? This stuff comes in a nice reusable glass orb. You know, like the Czars of Russia used to have in jewel-encrusted gold. Well, this comes in one of those, only glass. It's the silliest bottle of anything you ever saw, just what you need if you want to play Czar or something.

Actually, whiskey does get sold in some pretty weird bottles, too. I once saw a bottle of whiskey shaped like a duelling pistol. You poured it out of the barrel. Or, I guess you could just put the barrel in your mouth--taking aim at the brain cells you are about to kill--and fire away. Amazingly farsighted on the part of the distillers.

2. The duelling pistol bottle gives new meaning to "a shot of whiskey," doesn't it? And Chambord is not Windex-colored! [-ecl]

Mark Leeper
MT 3D-441 957-5619
...mtgzy!leeper

Man is a creature who cannot get outside of himself, and who knows others only in himself, and when he says the contrary he lies.
-- Marcel Proust

ConFiction 1990
Con report by Evelyn C. Leeper
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(Part 3)

Panel: AAAAllltttteeerrrrnnnaaaattttiiiiivvvveeee HHHHiiiiissssttttoooooorrrryyyy
Sunday, 2:30 PM

Robert Silverberg (mod) (USA), Evelyn Leeper (USA),
Stanley Schmidt (USA), Thijs van Ebbenhorst Tengbergen (The Netherlands)

Silverberg began by introducing everyone, including Tengbergen, whose full name he managed to pronounce. Tengbergen was on the panel because he had written an alternate history in which the Spanish conquistadores bring back a much more virulent strain of syphilis than they actually did and southern Europe is decimated. The Aztecs end up in India (he couldn't remember whether they sailed around Africa or across the Pacific to get there) and the Netherlands has a much more important place in the world. Other changes include much more advanced biological sciences, though technology in general lags behind our own world.

Since I was on the panel, and a bit awed to be on the same panel with Silverberg, my notes are spotty. One question we discussed was whether alternate histories really take a l l the consequences of a change into effect. The classic example given of this is Ray Bradbury's "The Sound of Thunder" in which the killing of a butterfly in the Jurassic changes our world, but only to the extent of a different candidate winning an election and a different spelling for a few words. We agreed it was far more likely that any change the killing caused either would be so minor as to have disappeared by the present, or would have caused far more major changes. This problem I listed as one of my pet peeves about alternate histories. The example I gave was a story in which World War II never happens, but John Kennedy is elected President in 1960 anyway. Why John and not his older brother who had been killed in the war is one problem; another is recognizing that Kennedy's war record was a large part of what got him elected.

One problem with working out the effect of a change back in prehistoric times is that things rapidly become unrecognizable. Consider William Tenn's "The Brooklyn Project" in which human scientists working on time travel send back a capsule to the primordial soup. It kills a few incipient life forms, changes a few others, and bounces back to the present, where the scientists declare that no change has happened. After doing this a few times (with subtle changes each time), they are purple tentacled monsters in tanks, still adamantly declaring that "Nothing has changed!"

Good alternate histories, on the other hand, work out the ramifications, and also probably don't try to project more than a few hundred years beyond the split point. Examples I gave are John Ford's A

DragonWaiting and Robert Sobel's ForWantofaNail. I also mentioned to Silverberg afterward that I found his alternate histories which looked at the effect that changing religion has on the world to be among the most interesting ones written these days and said I hoped he'd write more.

After this panel, a Yugoslavian fan approached Silverberg to talk to him about the fact that publishers in Yugoslavia were publishing Silverberg's works without getting his permission or paying him royalties. Silverberg knew about this already and obviously was not

happy about this, but the fan seems to want Silverberg to do something about it. What, was not clear, and Silverberg countered by saying that fans in Yugoslavia should write their government to say that the lack of Yugoslavian agreement to international copyright laws made Yugoslavia look bad in the eyes of other people. Somehow I doubt a quick resolution to this problem.

Panel: TTTTVVVV SSSSeeerrriiiiieessss
Sunday, 5:30 PM

Katharina Look (mod) (West Germany), David Lally (Great Britain),
Mark Leeper (USA), Melinda Snodgrass (USA),

Having Melinda Snodgrass on a panel on television science fiction is a mixed blessing: she's very interesting to listen to and knowledgeable, but her presence means that 90% of the questions will be about S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k: T_h_e_N_e_x_t_G_e_n_e_r_a_t_i_o_n (of which she is the story editor).

The panel began by talking about some of the basics of television science fiction. Series in the United States must be unordered--showable in any order--since a large part of the revenue is from syndication, when they can't worry about what order the shows are running in. (H_i_l_l_S_t_r_e_e_t_B_l_u_e_s was an exception in this regard, but it also isn't syndicated much.) The result of this is that American series rarely have a closing episode (though there are exceptions), they just end. In case you're wondering, the two-parter in S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k: T_h_e_N_e_x_t_G_e_n_e_r_a_t_i_o_n was, as everyone suspected, because some of the actors were making contract negotiations difficult, and Paramount wanted to have the option to write them out if necessary.

Anthology series are not very popular; T_w_i_l_i_g_h_t_Z_o_n_e, the most successful, was simplistic and audiences were willing to accept that in the 1950s and 1960s, but they want more now. Mark said he would be happy if the level of writing in television matched the level of writing in the stories of the 1950s and 1960s.

Hollywood is not big on adapting novels or stories--Hollywood writers are young and don't read, according to Snodgrass, and besides, if they adapted a story, they'd have to pay the author. (With tar Trek episodes now costing \$1.4 million--of which the screenwriter gets \$20,000--this is considered important.) And if the writers don't read,

the studio heads are even worse: "Studio heads are as dumb as a box of roaches," according to Snodgrass. And of course they have to steer clear of anything controversial: sex, religion, drugs--in fact, much of the sort of inquiry that makes science fiction interesting. Their idea of a topical show is T_h_e_G_r_e_e_n_M_a_c_h_i_n_e (now called E_a_r_t_h_w_a_t_c_h, I believe) starring Gil Gerard as the leader of a team of gung-ho environmentalists (described by Snodgrass as "the A-Team meets Greenpeace"). Given all this, Snodgrass is "stunned that [S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k] is doing as well as it is," and she describes it as feeble writing under great special effects.

Unfortunately, says Snodgrass, in Hollywood television shows are considered the filler between toilet paper commercials. Or, as Rod Serling once said, "The mass media is supported and sustained by commercial entities. And corn flakes and Shakespeare are simply not kissing cousins. Leonard Bernstein and living bras are incompatible. And you cannot sustain adult, probing, meaningful drama when the proceedings are interrupted every twelve minutes by a dozen dancing rabbits with toilet paper."

What about made-for-television movies and mini-series? Snodgrass says made-for-television movies are dying off, and ever since W_a_r_a_n_d R_e_m_e_m_b_r_a_n_c_e mini-series are in even worse shape. Still, some of the best television science fiction are the British "limited series": A_N E_n_g_l_i_s_h_m_a_n's_C_a_s_t_l_e, T_h_e_D_a_y_o_f_t_h_e_T_r_i_f_f_i_d_s (not to be confused with the Howard Keel movie). (I found myself wondering what German fans think of alternate histories in which Germany won World War II, but couldn't think of a good way to ask.)

Television series from other countries mentioned or discussed included S_t_a_r_C_o_p_s (Great Britain) and J_u_p_i_t_e_r_M_o_o_n (a sort of soap opera in space from West Germany, I think). There was also a seven-part series from West Germany called O_r_i_o_n which Loock says was run in the United States, a black-and-white series which was made before S_t_a_r:T_r_e_k (the original series). It spawned many books and there is a film based on it in pre-production. But most of the discussion seemed to go back to the United States, and seemed perhaps more on the state of United States television series than on science fiction series internationally. There was one fan who wanted to get the name of an old Norwegian television series from a plot description; he was unsuccessful. Someone else mentioned a Czechoslovakian series with time travel. And there was also mention of the series T_i_m_e_l_i_n_e co-produced by four different countries (Great Britain, Spain, Turkey, and somewhere else) which runs about four times a year on PBS and consists of telling about historical events using modern television reporting techniques, but as if it were when the events were happening ("So tell me, Mr. Khan, when did you decide to invade Europe?"), and including commercials for new inventions of the time.

The questions about S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k brought forth the information that S_t_a_r_T_r_e_k:T_h_e_N_e_x_t_G_e_n_e_r_a_t_i_o_n will be available only on video in Europe

for three years before it is released to European television.

The new "Sci-Fi Channel" on cable in the United States was discussed. However, lack of audience and general problems in the cable industry may kill it off. Other cable networks occasionally make forays into science fiction. Arts & Entertainment showed T_h_e_D_a_y_o_f_t_h_e_T_r_i_f_f_i_d_s. USA Network does an occasional movie. The Fox Network shows A_l_i_e_n_N_a_t_i_o_n and W_e_r_e_w_o_l_f.

The absence of any Japanese panel members seemed incomprehensible.

Masquerade
Sunday, 8 PM

The only word for this is "pathetic." (Well, in a pinch "pitiful" will do.) They had only thirty entries, of which twenty were cobbled together since 9 AM (when they discovered they had only eleven r_e_a_l entries). There were no Masters Class entires, and only one or two Journeyman Class. And the Novice Class really were.

How bad was it? Well, no one clapped for most of the costumes, which is extremely unusual. It was also true that the less costume, the more clapping, but this is normal. (There was also a belly dancer. I thought these went out in the early 1980s.) There was a heavy use of classical music. Many of the "costumes" were skits more than costumes, and overly long. (One, based on Moorcock, seemed to go on forever, but was probably only(!) ten minutes.) Mark, in his cynicism, described this heavy use of skits, dialogue, narration, and music as "costuming for the visually impaired." One hopes future Worldcons will return to the concept of a time limit.

There was also a heavy reliance on dry ice for special effects.

There were a couple of reasonable entries: The Headless Mage, The Queen of Air and Darkness, and Fire & Water.

The "half-time" entertainment while the judges voted was pretty lame also, consisting of people in clear plastic suits with lots of tubing doing modern dance and posing. This was promoted as being very

racy and exciting, with warnings to those with pacemakers--clearly a case of false advertising. (At the Gripe Session someone asked what the cost of this show was; it was 2500 Dfl., or about \$1500--not as outrageous as many people feared.) When this was done, the judges still hadn't decided (given the dearth of candidates even worthy of consideration, they should have been done much faster), so we left for the parties.

The parties started late and were over-heated. However, we saw someone at one of them wearing a T-shirt of a woman in high heels spanking another woman in high heels which we all agreed was far more

interesting than anything in the masquerade or the half-time show.

Panel: W W W Wi i i il l l ll l l l T T T Th h h he e e er r r re e e e
E E E Ev v v ve e e er r r r B B B Be e e e
A A A An n n no o o ot t t th h h he e e er r r r
G G G Go o o ol l l ld d d de e e en n n n A A A Ag g g ge e e e ? ? ? ?

Monday, 10 AM

Charles N. Brown (mod) (USA), Kathryn Cramer (USA), ? Donovan (Great Britain),
Malcolm Edwards (Great Britain), David Hartwell (USA)

This panel was scheduled to be in the large auditorium , but was moved. When we finally found the room, Brown and Donovan had already established that "the Golden Age is 12" and proceeded to more serious questions. For one thing, there is no longer a sense of continuity. Even fans starting in the 1960s had to read the good stuff from the 1940s and 1950s to be able to talk about science fiction to other fans; now that link is lost, with teenagers now reading schlock fantasy instead of Heinlein or Clarke. (Interestingly, Brown made use of the phrase "Fans are slans" at one point, and the audience understood, indicating that there remains _ s _ o _ m _ e continuity, although the audience was by no means representative of the latest generation of science fiction and fantasy readers.) Brown and Donovan see the current upswing in comics ("graphic novels") as a temporary phenomenon.

As was pointed out from the audience (me?), there was plenty of schlock in the "Golden Age," but it gets forgotten and the good stuff elevated in people's memories.

What is a "Golden Age"? Brown described it as a large group with shared viewpoints, and gives the classic example of 1939 through 1945. He also claims that today publishers get 24% of their income from science fiction--you'd think they would have a "shared viewpoint" and I suppose they do, but it tends to be "Let's make money!"

Just as Brown and Donovan had decided that there would not be another Golden Age, Cramer, Edwards, and Hartwell arrived, with another large audience segment. They had arrived late, gone to the auditorium, acquired another late arrivals, and started the panel there. When someone finally told them where the official room was, they all moved. But their panel had decided that every decade is a Golden Age!

How to resolve these two very disparate views? Well, one clue was that Edwards would periodically chime in with, "Yes, but what about the rest of the world?" (Interesting that in the Netherlands, the phrase "the rest of the world" was still meaning "everything but the United States and maybe Canada.") Looking at the rest of the world, the panelists concluded that while the 1940s and early 1950s was the United States's "Golden Age," the "New Wave" period in Great Britain was its Golden Age. The 1950s and the early 1960s was the French Golden Age ("Epoque d'Or"?). The 1960s and early 1970s (with the Strugatskys et al) were the Soviet Golden Age. And there was the prediction that the 1990s would be the Eastern European Golden Age. How can English-speaking fans find out about these "Golden Ages"? Well, maybe some publisher could come out with a magazine of translations of science

fiction from the rest of the world. Surely there is enough interest to support a small press publication.

Brown claimed what made a Golden Age was ideas that excite the reader, not great writing, which puts him a bit at odds with the selection of the "New Wave" era in Great Britain as the Golden Age there. Hartwell, on the other hand, wants good writing, but finds the average science fiction novel is better than the average mainstream novel in any case. He does, however, want more science fiction and less fantasy.

Given that most other countries have no science fiction magazines to "practice in," the panelists (at least the United States panelists)

felt that the United States had an edge in this regard, and observed that Golden Ages are often defined by the magazines as much as by the books. Gardner Dozois (from the audience) offered the thought that "magazines are the place to be bad--or at least half-baked." Even in the United States, though, horror is found only in small press magazines (with an occasional entry in T_h_e_M_a_g_a_z_i_n_e_o_f_F_a_n_t_a_s_y&_S_c_i_e_n_c_e_F_i_c_t_i_o_n, I should note).

Echoing the earlier sentiments regarding young fans, Hartwell claimed this was the Golden Age of gaming.

In spite of all this, the panelists listed some works that they thought would be remembered from this age:

- Baxter, ?-- T_h_e_R_a_f_t
- Bear, Greg--"Heads"
- Bear, Greg-- B_l_o_o_d_M_u_s_i_c
- Bear, Greg-- Q_u_e_e_n_o_f_A_n_g_e_l_s
- Bisson, Terry-- V_o_y_a_g_e_t_o_t_h_e_R_e_d_P_l_a_n_e_t
- Brin, David-- E_a_r_t_h
- Haldeman, Joe-- B_u_y_i_n_g_T_i_m_e (Brown)
- Simmons, Dan-- H_y_p_e_r_i_o_n (Donovan)
- Sladek, John--"Stop Evolution in Its Tracks" (Cramer)
- Sterling, Bruce-- S_c_h_i_s_m_a_t_r_i_x (Hartwell)
- Tepper, Sheri S.-- R_a_i_s_i_n_g_t_h_e_S_t_o_n_e_s (Edwards)
- Womack, Jack-- T_e_r_r_a_p_l_a_n_e (Hartwell)

Panel: T T T Th h h hi i i is s s s B B B Bo o o oo o o ok k k k
S S S Sh h h ho o o ou u u ul l l ld d d d H H H Ha a a av v v ve e e e
B B B Be e e ee e e en n n n
N N N No o o om m m mi i i in n n na a a at t t te e e ed d d d

Monday, 11:30 AM

Charles N. Brown (mod) (USA), Evelyn Leeper (USA), Pascal Thomas (France)

Brown started out by saying that he was recently asked to list the "Ten Most Influential Novels of the Past Fifty Years" and three science fiction books that he included were George Orwell's _ 1_ 9_ 8_ 4, Olaf Stapledon's _ S_ t_ a_ r_ M_ a_ k_ e_ r_, and Joe Haldeman's _ B_ u_ y_ i_ n_ g_ T_ i_ m_ e, the last published in 1989 and completely overlooked for the Hugos.

The usual problems of distribution and publicity were discussed. This is especially a problem in the shorter fiction categories. For example, Thom Nichols's novella "Walking Water" was published with another novella in a single volume by a small press, and was not at all publicized in the general science fiction community. New programs to publish novellas as books may help, though the primary reason for these programs is the ever-increasing cost of books. As people balk at paying \$25 for the latest novel by author X, they may be willing to pay \$10 (or am I being optimistic in this pricing?) for a novella, especially if the book _ l_ o_ o_ k_ s as thick as a novel.

As far as the Hugo nominees goes, one problem is that even after they're nominated people can't find them. Some enterprising book dealer ought to take an ad in the Progress Report which includes the Hugo ballot offering the novels, collections, anthologies, and even magazines that contain the nominees via mail-order. This would be especially useful for overseas fans.

Generally from these panels, however, what develops is a list, so here it is (including who recommended it, if I remembered):

- Benford, Gregory-- _ T_ i_ d_ e_ s_ o_ f_ L_ i_ g_ h_ t (Brown)
- Bova, Ben-- _ C_ y_ b_ e_ r_ b_ o_ o_ k_ s
- Butler, Octavia E.-- _ I_ m_ a_ g_ o (Brown)
- Brussard, Jacques-- _ L_ e_ s_ E_ a_ u_ x_ d_ e_ F_ e_ u
- Cherryh, C. J.-- _ R_ i_ m_ r_ u_ n_ n_ e_ r_ s (Brown)
- Clarke, Arthur C. and Lee, Gentry-- _ R_ a_ m_ a_ I_ I (Brown)
- Goldstein, Lisa-- _ T_ o_ u_ r_ i_ s_ t_ s (Thomas)
- Haldeman, Joe-- _ B_ u_ y_ i_ n_ g_ T_ i_ m_ e (Brown)
- Kandel, Michael-- _ S_ t_ r_ a_ n_ g_ e_ I_ n_ v_ a_ s_ i_ o_ n (Leeper)
- Murphy, Pat-- _ T_ h_ e_ C_ i_ t_ y_ ,_ N_ o_ t_ L_ o_ n_ g_ A_ f_ t_ e_ r (Leeper)

- Nichols, Thom--"Walking Water" (Leeper)

- Powers, Tim--_ T_ h_ e_ S_ t_ r_ e_ s_ s_ o_ f_ H_ e_ r_ R_ e_ g_ a_ r_ d
(Thomas)

- Simmons, Dan--_ C_ a_ r_ r_ i_ o_ n_ C_ o_ m_ f_ o_ r_ t

- Simmons, Dan--_ P_ h_ a_ s_ e_ s_ o_ f_ G_ r_ a_ v_ i_ t_ y (Leeper)

- Williams, Walter Jon--_ A_ n_ g_ e_ l_ S_ t_ a_ t_ i_ o_ n

- Wilson, Robert Charles--_ G_ y_ p_ s_ i_ e_ s (Leeper)

In the area of Dramatic Presentation, the following were mentioned:

_ _ B_ i_ l_ l_ a_ n_ d_ T_ e_ d' s_ E_ x_ c_ e_ l_ l_ e_ n_ t
_ A_ d_ v_ e_ n_ t_ u_ r_ e

- "The Measure of a Man"

_ _ M_ i_ r_ a_ c_ l_ e_ M_ i_ l_ e

Gripe Session
Monday, 12:30 PM

Some of the gripes brought up have been mentioned already. Other complaints included the lack of a restaurant map, no vegetarian food available in the Congress Centre, not enough signs (or signs that weren't visible enough) directing people to hard-to-find rooms, poor ventilation, and too much cigarette smoke (smoking by panelists is a problem that is especially difficult to control).

The badges generated lots of complaints. Some people wanted the city as well as the country listed. Others complained that some of the Dutch badges said "Holland" and some said "The Netherlands." One woman complained because her legal last name was on the badge and she didn't want to reveal it (for professional reasons). The latter seems somewhat trivial--just stick something over the last name. Boskone and other

conventions, in fact, insist on members' real names appearing on the badges because they found that many people took advantage of the anonymity of fannish names to act obnoxiously (not to say that was what this woman wanted to do, certainly). One fan from Northern Ireland complained that her badge said "United Kingdom" but the United Kingdom didn't include Northern Ireland. Another fan who was listed as "Ireland" said she lived in Ireland but was a United States citizen and the badges should reflect citizenship, not place of residence. (This, in my opinion, is getting into the truly picky, and people who are overly concerned about this sort of thing should be willing to stick a label over the offending part of the badge or ask if they can have a new badge prepared--which they could have done.)

Compliments went to the Committee for having a multilingual Operations staff and making an effort to ensure that there was always

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someone who spoke each of the major languages on duty at any time. Regarding the language issue, Bill Ritch said that he heard more English spoken at this convention than in his home town of Miami. (On the minus side, several fans complained that the name "Gripe Session" was an Americanism and should have been described better in the schedule. Of course, these people were here, so they must have figured it out somehow!) People also liked the staggered schedule (though I found it annoying, trying to decide whether to catch only half of an interesting panel or not).

I notice they had this in a fairly large hall!

Closing Ceremonies
Monday, 2 PM

The Closing Ceremonies were the usual sort of thing, with the Chicon V committee putting on a little skit to represent their taking over the Worldcon baton. Everything really did shut down at 3 PM as announced, leaving us with lots of time to go back to the boardwalk in Scheveningen, after a last quick rush through the "Fan Market" to pick up some badges from Eastern European conventions that fans from that area were selling to raise money to attend this convention, and to give an extra copy of L o c u s that I had somehow acquired to a Soviet fan who probably has less chance to get one. We also got some Hungarian science

fiction that was being given out by a Hungarian fan, and I got the editor of the Roumanian science fiction anthology I had bought to autograph it. There may have been "Dead Dog" parties, but not as many as would have been as a North American Worldcon. Then again, the whole party situation was different, with the hotel and Congress Centre lock on corkage limiting the parties to well-to-do groups.

Miscellaneous

The elevators were not a major issue, as the convention was limited to three floors of the Congress Centre. However, right before the convention, one elevator was taken out of service, rendering an entire set of rooms inaccessible to people in wheelchairs. Luckily, only one panel had been scheduled for these rooms; unluckily, that was the panel on handicapped access at conventions!

As usual, I'll list the Worldcons I've attended and rank them, best to worst (the middle cluster are pretty close together):

- Noreascon II
- Noreascon III
- Noreascon I (my first Worldcon)
- Midamericon (on the basis of the film program, perhaps)
- LACon (I don't fault them just because they avoided bankruptcy!)
- Discon II
- Seacon
- Confederation

- Chicon IV
- ConFiction (though it's getting hard to rank them all)
- Conspiracy (mostly due to hotel problems)
- Iguanacon (partially done in, in my opinion, by politics)
- Suncon (the location change from Orlando to Miami didn't help)
- Nolacon II (extremely disorganized)
- Constellation (they over-extended themselves)

As I said before, San Francisco won the bid for 1993. Larry Niven and Alicia Austin are the Pro Guests of Honor, Tom Digby and Wombat (jan howard finder) are the Fan Guests of Honor, and Guy Gavriel Kay is the Toastmaster. Mark Twain is the Dead Guest of Honor. I note that

Progress Report 0 lists the dates as Friday, September 3, 1993 through Monday, September 6, 1993; if this is true, it will be the shortest Worldcon in recent history--most start on Thursday. Next year's contest is a two-way race for 1993: Winnipeg and Louisville (originally Nashville).

Next year in Chicago!