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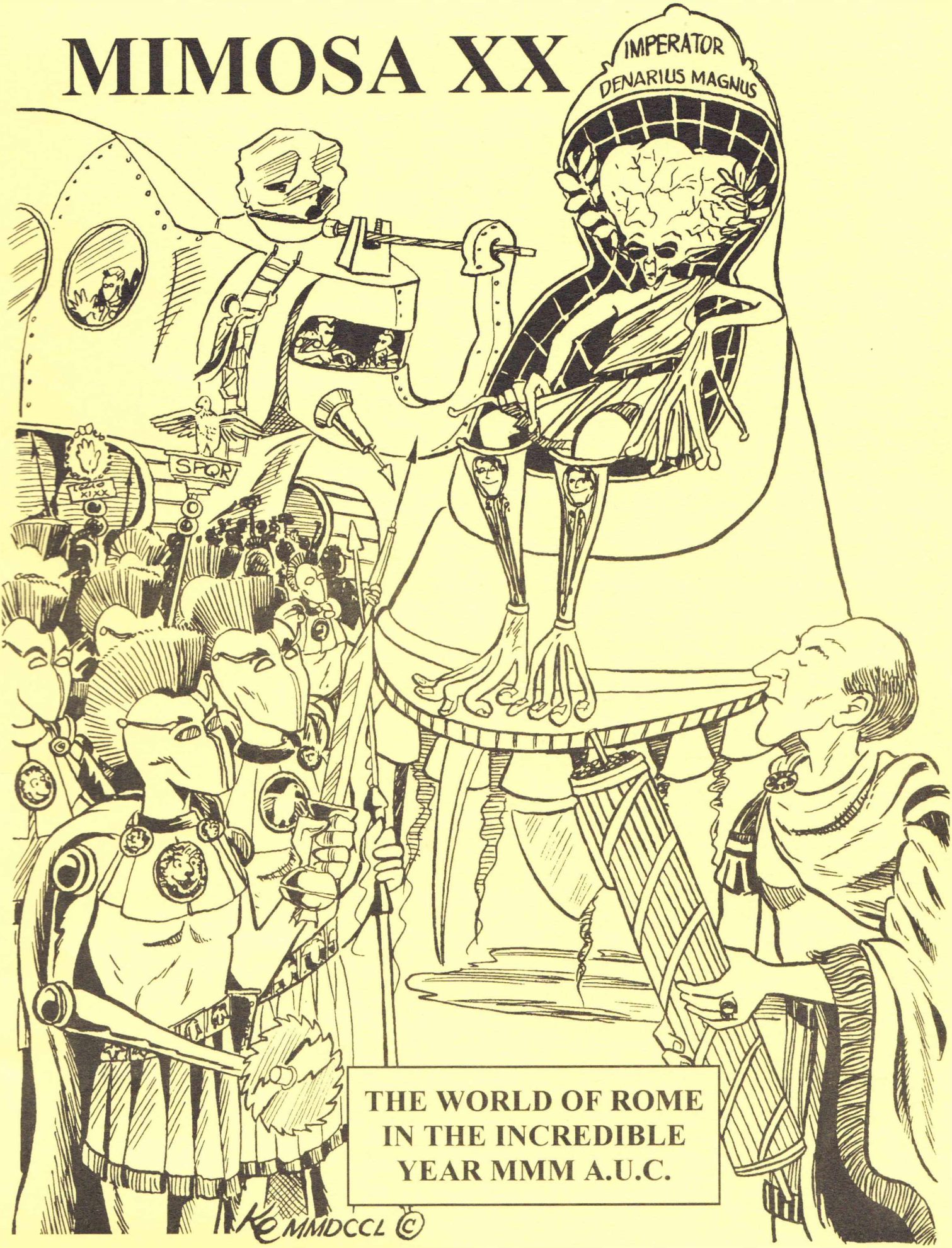

THE WORLD OF ROME
IN THE INCREDIBLE
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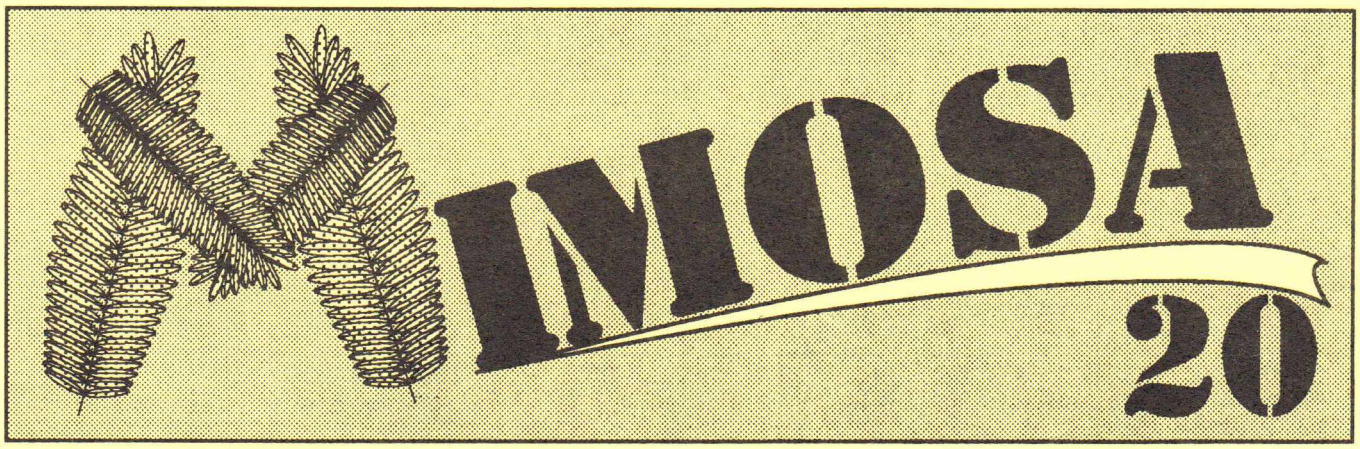

from Nicki and Richard Lynch, P.O. Box 1350, Germantown, Maryland 20875, U.S.A.

e-mail: lynch@access.digex.net web site: http://www.smithway.org/mimosa

This twentieth issue of *Mimosa* was published in May 1997, and is available for the cost-effective price of four dollars (U.S. currency or equivalent), which includes postage. We welcome letters and e-mails of comment; one of those, or a fanzine in trade, will get you a copy of *M*21 later on this year. (We'll assume all correspondence we receive is intended for publication unless otherwise indicated.) Back issues are available; please write us for more info on price and availability. This entire issue is ©1997 by Nicki and Richard Lynch, with individual rights reverting back to contributors after this one-time use. All opinions and versions of events expressed by contributors are their own.

☐ ☞ If this box is checked, a letter of comment or e-mail of comment from you is truly appropriate in order to stay on our mailing list.

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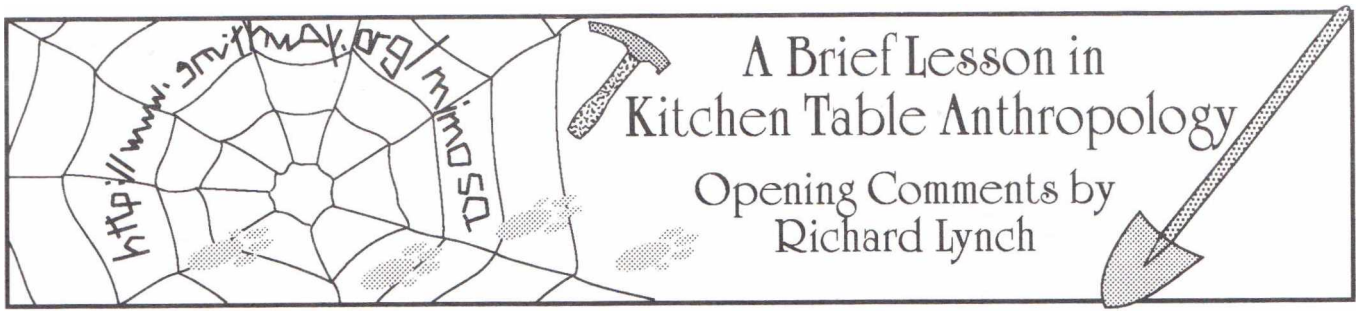


A Brief Lesson in Kitchen Table Anthropology

Opening Comments by Richard Lynch

You know, this has turned out to be a busy year so far. I expect that most people who are reading this know of me (and Nicki, too, for that matter) only from fanzine fandom, but I do have a real life, too. I work for the U.S. Government here in the Washington, D.C. area, which means that much of my time is spent catering to the whims of the politicos, both elected and appointed.

Nicki has a real life, too, as a software tester for a financial management company, and to qualify herself for eventual advancement she has been taking graduate-level courses in computer science at The Johns Hopkins University. The JHU computer science curriculum is fairly highly regarded, but they also have other prestigious programs. I came across some of them when I looked through their college catalog the other day and saw there were listings for both anthropology and archeology.

Being a fan history preservationist, both anthropology and archeology ought to interest me, but they don't really. Personally, I don't think you have to poke around people's attics or dig through ruins to learn about the social and cultural development of mankind. I think you could learn almost as much by attending a science fiction convention, reading fanzines ...or by simply cleaning off your kitchen table once in a while.

I'll prove it. Our kitchen table is a bit oversized for the two of us, so the far side of it tends to accumulate mail, magazines, fanzines, and the like. Moving downward through the stack is like traveling through time. On the most recent clean-off, the top of the stack held the most recent *Newsweek* that both of us were looking for the other day, an apa mailing (still some time before the deadline, luckily), and a reminder from the quick lube shop that my car is due for an oil change. A little further down were some clipped coupons for ice cream shop discounts (some of them expired, *sigh*), a postcard (partly in Polish) from a friend in Warsaw, several pencils and pens, and a long-lost stapler. Near the bottom of the pile, I rediscovered receipts for March's power and water bills (at least they had been paid), the local PBS station's February listings magazine, and the most recent *File 770* (old news is still good news). At the very bottom, I'm embarrassed to admit, I came across the file folder of masters... for the previous *Mimosa*.

Actually, it's not quite as bad as it sounds, as that folder *had* been diligently filed once — we had taken it back out of the file cabinet to get photocopies of some of the fan art for the web version of *M*19. And maybe this is a good place to mention that our *Mimosa* web site has both expanded and moved. There are now eight issues of *Mimosa* on the World Wide Web (starting with *M*12), thanks to some hard work and perseverance by our webmaster, Roxanne Smith. It's now also at a *new* location: **http://www.smithway.org/mimosa**. The web version of each issue is as close a rendering to the printed version as possible, and we'll do the same for other issues (including this one).

But back to that 'kitchen table' theory of anthropology. This issue of *Mimosa* might be an example of how it applies to fandom. In it there's information about the earliest science fiction conventions and the most recent doings of fan artists; the beginning of a major U.S. fan organization and a farewell to a fan whose activities spanned many decades; there are tales of things fans do, from the southeast U.S. all the way to southeast Asia.

In short, we hope we've got something for everyone this issue, and that you'll get some enjoyment from *M*19. We think it's filled with entertaining things to read. We hope you think so, too. ☼

With a Worldcon going there next year, it seems appropriate that the first stop in our little archeological and anthropological exploration of fandom is just up the road from here, at Baltimore. Baltimore fandom is now one of the more active fan groups in the country, meeting twice-monthly in its own clubhouse (which makes it one of the more affluent, as well). Its roots date back to the beginning of the 1960s, as we'll see in the following article by one of its founders.

A SHORT HISTORY OF BALTIMORE FANDOM (Part 1)

by Jack Chalker

I discovered science fiction fandom in 1957, when I wrote to an Alabama fan named Billy Joe Plott who had bragged about his 'magazine' *Maelstrom* in the letter column of a science fiction comic book. I was not even thirteen years old at the time. Soon afterwards I began writing for *Maelstrom*, and a bit later for other fanzines across the country. Fanzines were my first real form of fanac.

Even then, I was already an avid reader of science fiction. About that same time, I had answered an ad in the back of an issue of *F&SF* from The Werewolf Bookshop in Verona, Pennsylvania. It was really just a book remainder house; you sent them money and they sent back lots of books, you didn't get to pick which ones. Most of the ones I received were worthless or uninteresting in the extreme, but one title I got startled me by its look and feel, and by its general production value. It was *The Throne of Saturn*, by S. Fowler Wright, published by a company about which I knew nothing: Arkham House. So I wrote to their address and asked for information on other titles, and in a very short time I was in almost weekly correspondence with August Derleth.

I'd also discovered another operation that advertised in *Astounding*, Pick-A-Book of Hicksville, New York. This proved to be the Gnome Press attempt to compete with the SF Book Club and, somehow, I wound up corresponding like mad with Marty Greenberg. Thanks to both of these men I got a real grounding in the business side of science fiction and fantasy, a lot of advice, and, in the case of Derleth, an opening of correspondence with other famous folks like Robert Bloch, Fritz Leiber, and Clark Ashton Smith.

I did my first fanzine in 1960, a *very* primitive affair called *Centaur*. It was basically of the then-popular faanish sort, and was done with my neighbor and good friend Harry Brashear, who was on the fringes of fandom but was a pretty good spot artist. He drew the cover and managed to trace a lot of the submitted artwork from well known fan artists of the time on standard mimeo stencils using a kitchen fork.

The problem was, of course, I had no money to produce it and no means, either. Harry solved this by having us walk into nearby Forest Park High School (the template, by the way, for Rydell High in *Grease*), go into the printing room, and run off about fifty copies of *Centaur* using the school's mimeograph and mimeo paper. Not a really shocking thing, except, of course, that I didn't *attend* Forest Park High. Instead, at that time I was going to Baltimore City College, which was a high school that also had a first-year junior college. Baltimore City was a very old school, third oldest in the United States, and it was housed in a massive stone castle-like building on a large campus. It also at the

time had the most famous graduates in the arts (although they were always fond of noting that Leon Uris had been expelled from it) and it looked like a good bet if I was going to do any college prep work.

Baltimore City College had the reputation, but it was not local to me; it required me to catch a bus in front of my house and take it for six miles through rush hour traffic, then change to a second bus that went at least that far again through even worse streets and traffic. I lived in the northwestern part of the city, while City was just to the east of the middle of Baltimore.

Decembers in Baltimore can be chilly or warm; sometimes they can be both in the same day. I woke up one Wednesday morning in December, 1961, to find it well over 60°F and mostly sunny, and I never even checked the forecast (which was wrong, anyway). I got into school, and it proceeded like a normal day until about noon, when the temperature suddenly began dropping like a stone. By two o'clock it was in the thirties, and because of a general class disruption when the first snowflakes began to appear my English teacher kept the entire class after school. By 3:15 p.m., when he decided to let us go, there was already four inches of snow on the ground and it was falling like mad. Major snows in December are unusual; this one was a whopper.

Bus after bus went by as the snow piled up, all full with anxious students from the several high schools that funneled through the area. It was close to four o'clock before I finally got on one, after just about all the student traffic had already gone. The bus had to go west to connect to the second bus I'd need, which intersected at the end of the first bus's line. We pulled by the Johns Hopkins University, very slowly, and got onto the mile-long bridge over the deep Jones Falls Valley that essentially splits Baltimore in two. In the middle of the bridge, the snow and traffic were too much. We were stuck.

The bus driver urged us not to get off, since it was a long way to anywhere from where we were. The snow was still falling, and he had plenty of fuel so we had heat and light for many hours. Believe me, in that position, there was very little incentive to get out and walk, nor were any of us dressed for doing so. In the next few hours, those of us on that bus got to know each other very well indeed. One other City student on the bus was David Michael Ettlin, who was a year behind me. After I discovered he read science fiction, I got to talking about science fiction fandom and the recent Philcon I'd attended, and he was fascinated by discovery of all that was out there.

We were eventually rescued by city crews with industrial towtrucks and plows. It was about a week before the city recovered from the snow and I again went back to school. During that period, though, Dave and I spoke frequently on the phone, and he told me that he'd met a senior who not only knew more about science fiction than anybody he'd ever seen but had the kind of mind that was like a library card catalog. His name was Mark Owings, and the reason I had never met him was because he was what was called a 'midyear', that is, a student on a different calendar track whose school year ended in February rather than June. I had originally started as a midyear as well, but took a special set of summer courses in elementary school to get me on the 'normal' track. Mark never did, so he was graduating in February, while I was graduating in June. I met him in the cafeteria at City in early January 1962, and we started a conversation on a wide range of things that has not ended yet, and a collaboration on a number of projects based on our mutual love of books.

At this point I should mention that Dave, Mark and I were not, of course, the very first science fiction fans from Baltimore. In fact, there were fans in Baltimore as early as the 1930s, but nothing was organized in any meaningful way until the late 1950s. This was the Baltimore SF Forum, which was centered around students at the Johns Hopkins University (although not limited to them) and dominated by John Hitchcock, John Magnus, and Raleigh Multog. The club was really too student-based for its own longevity, though, and essentially fell apart by 1960 due to loss of members from graduation and growing lack of interest from those who remained. By 1963 the last of the Old Guard had graduated from grad school and were moving out of town to new careers. Multog called me out of the blue one day that spring and offered me his entire fanzine collection, which I accepted. Magnus sold his collection, both books and fanzines, at the 1963 Worldcon and then vanished as well. I haven't seen nor heard from anyone in this group since.

I had become aware that the group existed, but I had never attended any meetings nor got directly involved with any of them. Ironically, at that time I was much too involved with the Washington club, WSFA, a large and active organization, and had little interest in what was a dying institution that didn't even look to perpetuate itself.

At that point in my life I was working two jobs, attending high school, and with whatever money I made I bought stamps for letters, bought occasional books when I could afford them, and spent the rest going to Washington every first and third Friday for WSFA meetings. I had discovered the Washington Science Fiction Association in 1959, after reading Schuyler Miller's review column in *Astounding* that mentioned the forthcoming publication of a book called *Fancyclopedia II* by one Richard Eney of Alexandria, Virginia. I wrote to Eney to find out if it had appeared yet; it hadn't, but he noted that I lived in Baltimore and wrote back inviting me to attend a WSFA meeting. I explained to him that I was just fifteen and didn't have any transportation, and he responded that, if I could make it to the D.C. Trailways bus station, he would make sure I got to the meeting. From that point on, much of my money started going both for bus tickets and for the taxi to get back home from the station; I often got back from WSFA meetings at about three or four o'clock on Saturday mornings.

WSFA was quite active during that period and had a number of members around my age. The teen clique became basically Tom Haughey, Joe Mayhew, Don Studebaker, and myself. Meetings were held at the home of a retired elderly railroad lobbyist named Elizabeth Cullen and were being run by George Scithers, who was stationed in D.C. at the time. It was a golden time for the club, and it was the only real relief from work and school that I had.

In point of fact, it was somewhat frustrating to have my regular fannish life revolve entirely around WSFA; Baltimore is not right next door, I had no hopes of affording a car and the insurance, and I was now working more of the day than I was going to school. I actually longed for the now vanished Baltimore SF Forum, which would have been handier and cheaper.

By the end of 1962, Dave, Mark, and I were all riding the bus to WSFA. The trio had even expanded to a quartet with the addition of our only female interested in science fiction fandom, a girlfriend of mine named Enid Jacobs. The four of us were not only social regulars, we also attended various conventions, including Philcon, Disclave, and some irregular groupings of fans from New York and New Jersey that seemed about as socially disorganized as we were. Ettlin also seemed to be into recruiting, bringing one Baltimore-area person or another he'd run into either at school or in other walks of life. The trouble was, there wasn't anything there to recruit folks to. When you included Mayhew, Studebaker, and Haughey, we were more of a kind of gang of nerds than a real club.

At the end of 1962, Dave Ettlin, Mark, Enid, a friend of Ettlin's named Dave Katz, and I were coming back from the WSFA New Year's party. It was about three o'clock in the morning on New Year's Day, and we were sitting across the whole back of the Trailways bus. I think it was Ettlin, partly in jest, who suggested that we should form a new Baltimore club and provide some base to which members could be recruited. The rest of us more or less went along with it, although not with the feeling that this was going to go very far, and at that moment the Baltimore Science Fiction Society

was born. The name was obvious; the choice of 'Society' rather than WSFA's 'Association' was not merely to eliminate common letters; Mark suggested it so that if anything *did* come of the group and it got some national recognition, it would never be confused with the British Science Fiction Association.

The first meeting was held a week later in Dave Ettlin's basement. Meetings later on tended to rotate between member's homes. Ettlin proved a recruiting fool, and by the end of 1963 had brought in a large number of people from all over the area, ranging from fellow high school and college students to the head of the University of Maryland's Pharmacology Department. These were not WSFAns but Baltimore people, many of whom were just discovering fandom, and the club grew as a separate and distinct unit, not just a group of WSFAns in Baltimore. Most notable in that group were Ron Bounds, Jerry Jacks, Pat Kelly, comics fan James 'Kim' Weston, and Ed Krieg, whose sister, Alice, didn't initially join but liked hanging around. There was also continued cross-pollination with WSFAns, although aside from Mayhew, few D.C.-area people were regulars at BSFS, while about half of BSFS continued to make it to WSFA meetings with some regularity. This was particularly important in 1963, since WSFA was running the World Science Fiction Convention that year and many BSFS people were working on it.

Tom Haughey, Joe Mayhew, and I were in charge of local publicity and promotion for Discon I, and we appeared on radio, television, and around campuses in the area. Among the fans brought into local fandom by hearing about the con locally were Jack and Joe Haldeman, and Doll and Alexis Gilliland. The Gillilands and Joe Haldeman (who met Gay Potter at a WSFA meeting and later married her) remained solidly WSFA, while Jack Haldeman (who was known as 'Jay' locally, primarily to distinguish him from me when somebody yelled "Jack!") moved to Baltimore after completing his degree in biology where he worked at the newly created Shock Trauma Center. However, Jay remained active in both clubs, and at one time was president of *both* BSFS and WSFA. He remained in Baltimore, though, and later married Alice Krieg.

In late 1965, there was another important addition to Baltimore fandom, when Don Sobwick moved to Baltimore to work as an editor at the Baltimore *Sun* newspaper. Dave Ettlin, who had a part time job there while in college, recruited him for the club. Sobwick worked on the morning edition of the newspaper, so his hours were generally from about 4 p.m. to 2 a.m., Tuesday through Saturday, which meant he couldn't make most club meetings. But instead of just saying the heck with it, Don offered his own apartment as an alternative meeting place that would *open* at 2:30 a.m.! For the rest of the 1960s, the club became schizophrenic, meeting at the usual places until about 1 a.m. Many people then piled into cars and headed for an International House of Pancakes or a White Coffee Pot (which, curiously enough, had good food but lousy coffee), where we had an *early* breakfast while waiting for Don to get home.

During the 1960s, almost all of the club's 'usual' meeting places were in the northwest or western part of the city, but Don lived so far over in east Baltimore that he was almost out of town. People who had cars with lots of room were highly popular! The aftermeetings at Don's were strictly parties, with lots of game-playing and all the usual fan silliness. These parties often attracted people who seldom if ever made the formal BSFS meetings, and they often didn't break up until ten or eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. Many times, I can remember watching *George of the Jungle* with the survivors, and then getting a taxi home.

While all this was going on, BSFS members were also engaged in other types of activities. One of these was Jay Haldeman's 'Guilford Gafia', a writers group that met in his house and attracted local and regional writers to various party/workshops that were often sleepovers. Guilford was the section of Baltimore where Jay's house was located (which provided an alliterative, less-pretentious alternative to Damon Knight's 'Milford Mafia' writers group up in Milford, Pennsylvania). I *hate* self-criticism sessions for writers so I wasn't much involved in it, but I do know that some of the regulars included Jay's brother Joe, Roger Zelazny (who had moved to Baltimore in 1964), and frequent Haldeman houseguest George Alec Effinger. There was also a gaming group that revolved around Ron Bounds, but had no formal name as such. Members often gathered on weekends and played elaborate war games, with 'Diplomacy' being a particular favorite. Both Ron and I published Diplomacy fanzines, which allowed play-by-mail...plus propaganda!

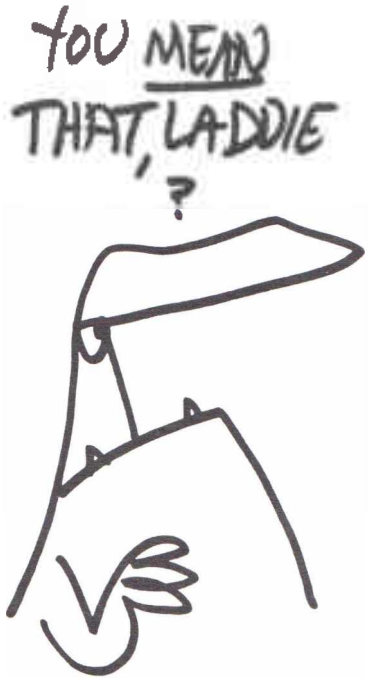
Besides these Diplomacy fanzines, many other fanzines of a more traditional nature were also published by BSFS members, so many that it was almost a fanzine-of-the-month club. Kim Weston is still one of the major experts on and collectors of comic books; he published comics-related fanzines and participated in comics-related amateur press associations. Bounds did other gaming fanzines, and I did *Mirage*.

Mirage evolved out of my earlier fanzine, *Centaur*. My second issue was called *Kaleidoscope 2*, but it had no title on the cover, as I had announced a contest for a permanent title. *K2* couldn't have been more different from *Centaur*; this time August Derleth was the big influence, and the fanzine was very Lovecraftian in content. *K2* was printed by Don Studebaker, and took some time to get out since I actually had to pay for supplies this time. I was very surprised by the positive reaction to it; I picked *Mirage* as the 'winner' for its permanent name (which had been suggested by a Sears & Roebuck salesman and would-be horror writer from Knoxville, Tennessee, named Gene Tipton) and decided to go with the 'serious and constructive' path that *K2* had taken rather than the 'same-old same-old' of *Centaur*. The cover was drawn by David Prosser, a classical music disk jockey and part-time portrait painter from Ohio whose portraits of great opera stars are in major opera houses across the country. In fact, Prosser did the cover for every issue of *Mirage* and also designed the distinctive logo for *Mirage* (which I still use with my Mirage Press publications).

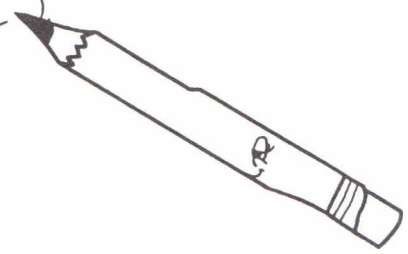
There were eight issues, in all, with the *Mirage* title. Because it had no competition, it attracted a contributor's list that in retrospect is quite impressive: I published nonfiction by deCamp, Leiber, and others, the first stories of Ed Bryant and Ray Nelson, the last stories of Seabury Quinn and David H. Keller, M.D., poetry by Tim Powers... well, you get the idea. *Mirage* eventually gained a large enough following and popularity that it was nominated for the Best Fanzine Hugo in 1963. The last five issues were collated at BSFS meetings, the times when the meetings were at my house. By the end of the run, circulation had reached one thousand copies, so collation was no trivial matter. Actually, everyone who attended *had* to collate the zines, because otherwise there was no room to sit down and have a business meeting! ☼

[☞ Next: Jack's condensed history of fandom in Baltimore concludes with the beginnings of Balticon, worldcon bids, those BSFS business meetings, and more...]

It may have been our dinner with all the fan artists at L.A.Con last year that provided the spark for this next article. The concept was so blindingly simple that we're surprised that nobody has done it before. In January, we wrote to several fan artists, asking them to 'collaborate' with William Rotsler by completing five 'set-ups' that we included with the letter. (The same five Rotsler cartoons were provided to each artist.) We also asked them to write something interesting about Rotsler we could publish with their art. Here's the results...



Rotsler traces



Words and Pictures by:

Sheryl Birkhead, Kurt Erichsen, Brad Foster, Alexis Gilliland, Ian Gunn, Teddy Harvia, Joe Mayhew, and Steve Stiles

Beginnings

by Alexis Gilliland

The first time I encountered Rotsler was when I was cutting artwork on stencils for the *WSFA Journal*, back in the late '60s. Bob Pavlat gave me a folder with several pages of drawings by Rotsler, Atom, and miscellaneous. The first time I encountered him in person was at St. Louiscon, in 1969. He was a Hugo nominee in the fan artist category — and a BNF, and I felt very much the neo. At that time I hadn't started putting captions on my drawings, and I was having a run with a head opening the cranium hatch to show the joke in the conning tower, as it were. I drew one for Bill, and he said: "Why do you always draw those heads?" A very reasonable question which I took as criticism, and sort of wandered off, feeling that I was maybe intruding on his good time.

Time passed, and while I knew him, he got to the point where he knew my work in fanzines (he may have been aware of my work in '69, how else would he have known I was 'always' drawing those heads?), and then, after we were both Hugo nominees together, he began to know my face. Seacon '79, over at Brighton, he beat me out to win his second Hugo, and at some point we were in a hallway together, autographing program books. I was standing downstream from him, and when he began doing little pictures alongside his signature, I began doing little pictures alongside his little pictures. That is the first time I can remember us doing any sort of collaboration. In the natural course of events, some of the books made their way back to Bill to show him what I was doing to his work. He loved it, and after he got home, he sent me the first of many packages of set-ups, for me to find and develop the jokes concealed within.

Since then, we have encountered each other at Worldcons, and now and then a Corflu or some such. Each time, we get together and draw silly pictures, sometimes on panels. Clearly if it wasn't fun for both of us we wouldn't be doing it. There is also an element of psychic jump-start involved. Collaborating with Bill for a few hours over the weekend is not only one of the highlights of the weekend, it also sets the creative juices flowing better than anything I have ever encountered on a regular basis. (There was the time... but that was a long time ago, in another country, and besides the wench is dead.) What else is there? Apart from the drawing, Bill is excellent company, and tells the most marvelous anecdotes. Some day I shall use one of his throwaway lines to start a novel: "After the war we all went to art school."

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

The Last Time I Saw Rotsler

by Steve Stiles

The last time I saw Bill Rotsler was on a Monday morning, the last day of L.A.Con III. It was around 10:30 and I *snarled* at him — and all he had said was something innocuous like "Good morning," or "Hi, Steve." I grumped something incoherent and kept on stumping down the hallway until, about a dozen steps later, I came to my senses and did an about face and attempted to undo the rudeness. I'm still not sure why I snarled at Bill Rotsler, although it might have had something to do with that nutter-crushing hangover, or the ear-popping cold I was due to come down with by noon; I try to avoid doing stuff like that to Ordinary Persons (if such exist), and here I had reflexively dumped on WR!

*"On *you*, however..."*

Maybe it was envy prying loose in a weak moment — I hate to suspect that, but there *is* the fact that Rotsler is on a mental list of people I admire, right up there with Alexander King and Henry Miller. I mean, think of it; William Rotsler — artist, cartoonist, wit, writer, photographer, film maker, sculptor, man about town. Most people know about all that, but I wonder how many people remember that Bill was once deputized as a member of a posse (in 1957), and helped apprehend a dangerous criminal? I could never do that, I'm the nervous type. Besides, some days I can't even find the car keys.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * * *

My Dinner with Rotsler

by Teddy Harvia

My memories of the convention panels I have been on with Bill Rotsler are a blur, the blur of cartoons flying from his pen. The guy never seems at a loss for ideas. It's as if his many characters are alive, all coming from inside one man's head.

The cartoonist panel at Noreascon 3, the Worldcon in Boston in 1989, was scheduled for midnight. While I sat with pen posed over blank paper, my eyelids drooping from a day of conventioneering, Bill and Alexis Gilliland dueled on an overhead projector, their work appearing larger than life on the wall behind us. The laughs from the audience kept me turning my head. The only laugh I got came when I copied the work of a belligerent comics artist beside me and showed my version to the audience only seconds after he showed his.

In San Francisco in 1993, at ConFrancisco, the cartoonist panel was at a more decent hour and the convention provided large pads of paper on easels. The audience laughed and applauded as Bill,

Alexis, Phil Foglio, and I alternated altering what the previous cartoonists had sketched. Having been challenged to my limit to keep up with the others, I commented afterwards how well I thought the panel had gone. Bill expressed disappointment, thinking we could have done more. Any more would have killed me.

The late Dolly Gilliland once told me that she thought Bill and her Alexis were as much performing artists as artistic ones. I agreed. Give Bill an audience and he draws, feeding off the situation and individuals around him.

At the WorldCon in LA last year, I went to dinner with Bill in a party of ten, five of us cartoonists, the other three being Marc Schirmeister, Craig Hilton, and Alexis. (I could have sworn Brad Foster went with us, but he swears he was elsewhere that evening.) After the meal, Bill pulled out a pad and started drawing setups, sketches of characters begging for cartoon responses. I have to be hungry to draw, but Bill seems to let loose best when full. One after another he finished and passed them around the table. We other cartoonists could not resist and added characters and captions to Bill's work. Bill amused us and we amused each other for almost an hour. At the end of the line, Dick Lynch stuffed the collaborations in his shirt pocket for future publication.

On the way back to the convention center in the car, Bill told anecdotes. He told us of the time he meet Marilyn Monroe. A friend of his was a real estate agent in Hollywood and asked him one day if he like to accompany him when he took a movie star out to show a house. Bill sat in the back seat of the Cadillac. When the friend stopped to pick up the client, Marilyn stepped into the car. She turned to Bill and greeted him with all her charms. He was overwhelmed. The act didn't last, however. The instant she realized that Bill was not "somebody", she turned it off. Bill said he quietly stayed in the background the rest of the trip. I wanted to lean over to him and tell him that I thought he was "some body" even if Marilyn hadn't. But I didn't have the body for it. I just nodded my sympathies.

Bill is somebody. And I'm not the only one who thinks so. Seeing him carrying his two massive Hugos around at the nominees party later at the convention confirmed it.

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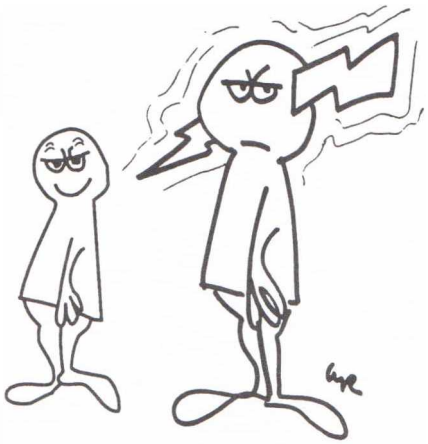
Vintage Rotsler

by Sheryl Birkhead

"Some wines are ageless!"

"And some just turn to vinegar."

Um...er...well, I consider *Rotsler* to be one of fandom's priceless assets. When I first got into fandom, way back in the Dark Ages, it took a while to figure out the fannish *patois*. A *Neofan's Guide* helped with the written word, but there was never any doubt about the content of the simplistic Rotsler cartoons. Don't ever confuse simple with simplistic. The man is about as chary as they come with lines, but packs a deceiving wallop in content.



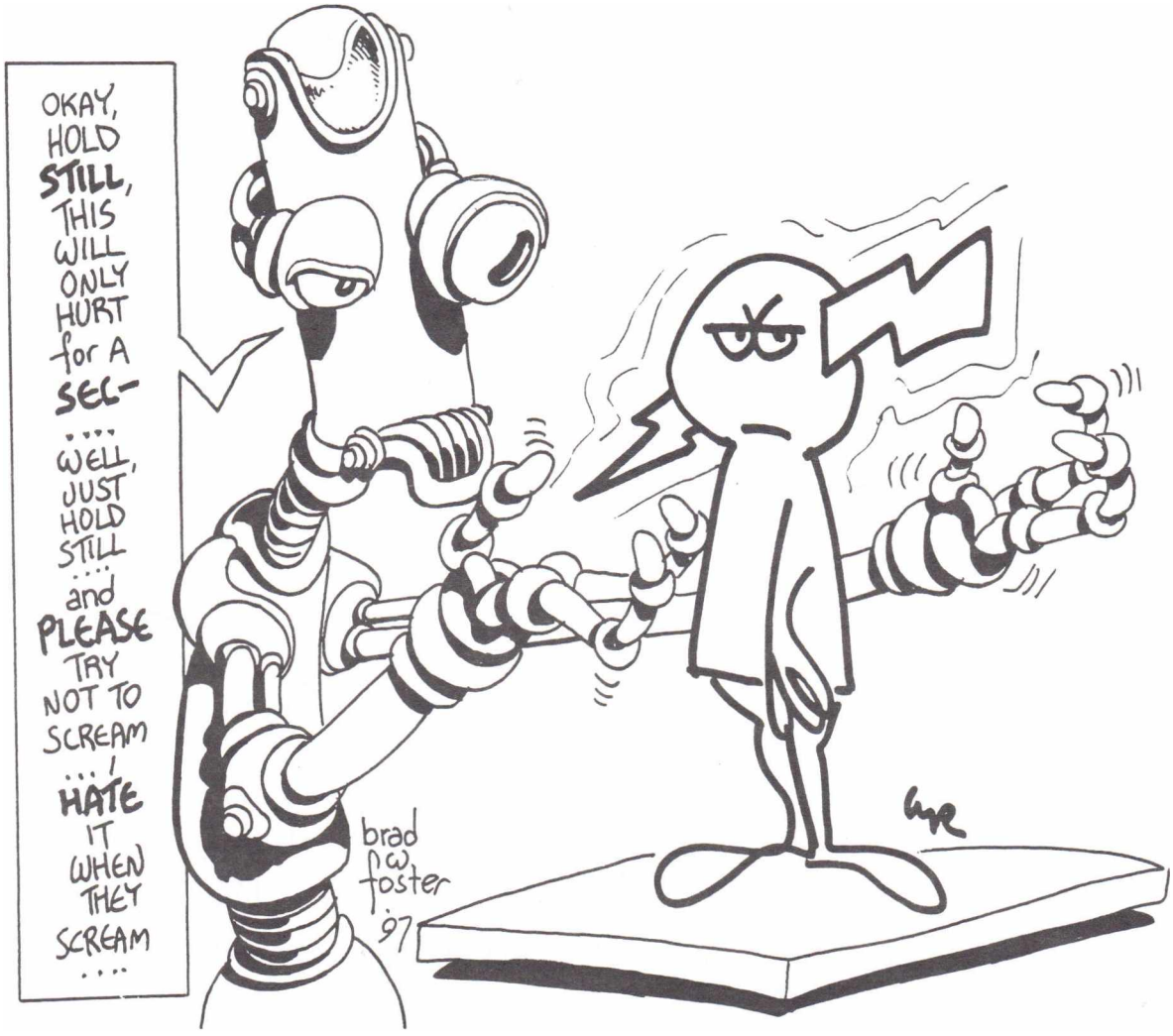
...being short has its advantages!

Alas, I cannot do much more than appreciate the man and, sadly, I don't have any juicy anecdotes to relate. I have never even been privy to one of his legendary *dish renditions*, when he mystifies all, waiters and mundanes alike, by turning innocent and unsuspecting dishes into fannish mementos. However, I *have* seen the man at various conventions and watched in awe as he participated in fanartist duels. He wields his felt tip as he would a sword, and has an economy of motion that is a beauty to behold. Few can keep up with him in sheer volume, and none can match his contributions to fan publications over (literally) decades.

I have never seen a biography of this phenomenon, but in bits from various articles have gleaned a bit of understanding of just how versatile and diverse an individual Rotsler is. But he's more than just that. Bill Rotsler has been a delight to fandom for over a half century that he's been *in* fandom. And there's only one word that adequately describes such a person of lasting, superior quality...

Vintage!

{{✎ Some of the fan artists who responded provided only the cartoon collaborations, apologizing that they didn't know Rotsler well enough to write an accompanying article. **Brad Foster** was one of them. He wrote that "... I've only met the man twice or so at cons, due to my basic hide-in-my-room nature, so I don't really have anecdotes to pass along. I *am* looking forward with immense curiosity to seeing the variety of takes on these same basic starts!" Of the collaborations he sent, here is one of our favorites.}}



{{✎ Another fan artist who turned out to be frugal with his words was **Kurt Erichsen**, who provided us with the following insight... }}

Bill Rotsler is just this guy with a beard. He's not even an artist, just a seismograph. You just put a pen in Bill's hand, put it down on a piece of paper, and wait for the next earthquake. It's not a widely-known fact, but Bill supplied the artwork that was etched on a gold plate and sent off to the stars on a space probe. The man is saying, "You *mean* that, Laddie?" and any aliens who find the probe will write a word balloon for the woman and send it back. The final cartoon will be published in a distant future issue of *Mimosa*.

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{{✎ In spite of some lengthy campaigning, we didn't get contributions back from every artist that we sent the Rotsler cartoons to 'finish'. And then there was **Joe Mayhew**; he did provide finished cartoons, but we weren't able to coax him into writing us any accompanying text, for more-or-less the same reason stated by Brad Foster. (Here is one of Joe's contributions.)

We should also mention that we received *many* more collaborative cartoons than we can fit into this article! You can see more of them in our letters column in this issue, and probably the next three or four issues after this one. }}

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Along the Limpopo With Canoe and Felt-Tip

by Ian Gunn

Day 97: After months of traveling through inhospitable jungle, the expedition finally encountered our first piece of good news. At a native encampment hereabouts we heard tell of The Rotsler. Upstream, in the heart of the densest rainforest, there is, so 'tis said, a cave wherein a lone soul dwells — a white man raised by the great apes. The N'Muntus call him Bil-Rott-z'lah, The Ghost Who Scribbles. So the legends were true. With Ranson interpreting, Dr. Birkhead negotiated an exchange: mirrors, blankets, knives and the last of our horses (scrawny, emaciated beasts though they be) for three large war canoes and a handful of native guides. We set off at dawn.

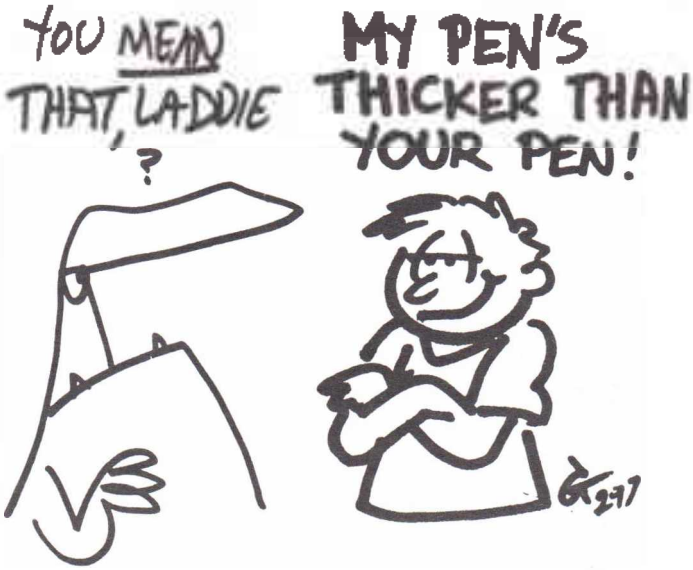
Day 99: The river is an endless series of rapids interspersed with mosquito-ridden quagmires infested with crocodile and hippo. Erichsen's fever grows worse, and progress is slow.

Day 101: Disaster! The second canoe overturned and all hands were lost. Allard, Stein, Williams and The Other Williams — along with two plucky native guides — perished amid a veritable swarm of crocodiles. Harvia was all for shooting the beasts but such a waste of our already depleted ammunition would have been futile. Gilliland conducted a brief memorial service and then, with grim determination, caused us to press on. Erichsen's fever grows worse.

Day 104: This morning Mayhew's tent was found empty. No sign of a struggle or foul play, but the natives claimed Bad Medicine was afoot. Unidentified tracks of some great beast — somewhat larger than a lion — were found near the shore. Erichsen is showing signs of delirium.

Day 106: Dr. Birkhead fears that little more can be

done for Erichsen. We discussed the unthinkable: a swift merciful release. The poor wretch was babbling and screaming. The natives are restless. Foster gave them more trinkets and rum, yet they seemed not appeased. As we pitched camp we realised that Ranson was no longer with us.



Day 107: Erichsen at death's door. Jungle drums disturb our sleep. The natives fled in the night taking most of our supplies with them. Gilliland introduced a strict system of rationing.

Day 109: Dr. Birkhead caught pilfering powdered eggs. Reluctantly, Gilliland had the Doctor shot as an example. Erichsen almost gone. Still no sign of The Rotsler.

Day 112: Erichsen still hanging on. Our supplies are almost spent. Harvia suggested we eat Erichsen. Foster said he could make a good chili. Gilliland would hear none of it and urged us onwards. I do believe our leader is showing signs of madness. The grizzled Texans muttered dire threats under their breath, and I fear mutiny is not far off.

Day 113: Erichsen has made a miraculous recovery. Quite chirpy and bright, he managed to sit up and drink some invalid tea, and even hobbled a short distance unaided. Gilliland found a scrap of paper with an alien head scrawled upon it. The spoor of The Rotsler! Morale is up. Harvia caught a small fruit bat for supper.

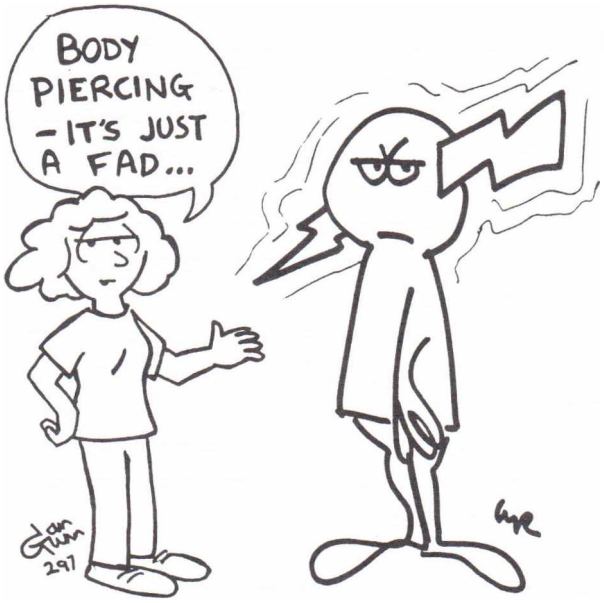
Day 114: We buried Erichsen. Tragic business. Cut himself shaving, fainted and was sucked dry by leeches. Hardly enough left for soup stock. In the evening we ate Foster. He put up a struggle, but he was right: he did make a good chili.

Day 127: And then there were two. Cold cuts of Gilliland for lunch. A pity, as he was the only one among us who had sighted The Rotsler in the wild. Harvia began to look at me strangely and mumble about gravy.

Day 132: I've often though that Harvia had dubious taste, and now I know for sure.

Day 142: At last! I've found it! The cave of The Rotsler! I staggered in, half crazed, my clothes in tatters, covered from head to toe in every kind of mud, blood and jungle filth imaginable — and here was the cavern in all its glory! The legends fail to do it justice! The floor of the cave was littered with tiny scraps of paper each with a scrawled picture of figures standing in archways, alien heads and lumpy characters talking about LoC columns. On a rock in the centre was a hand-written note "Gone To Corflu. Back In Five Months."

You know, I never did get to meet him... ✡



Any archeological dig through the history of science fiction fandom is bound to uncover some pretty good fanzines. One of the better ones was *Skyrack*, an energetic little newszine by British fan Ron Bennett, which lasted nearly one hundred issues in its lifespan between 1959 and 1971. *Skyrack*'s demise can perhaps be attributed, at least in part, to Bennett's job-related relocation to Singapore in the late 1960s. But therein, itself, lies a story...

I'd been warned that they'd get to me. The Communists, that is.

It was 1967 and I'd taken up a post in Singapore, teaching the children of British army personnel stationed on the island.

Before flying out to Singapore I'd attended a Ministry of Defence briefing session at which attendees had been warned that at some time during our tour of duty we would doubtlessly be "approached."

The dapper major who was apparently sufficiently important to be able to perform his duties in mufti hadn't been referring to the catamites and dubious characters who frequented the infamous Bugis Street; he meant an actual real-for-goodness reaching out by the Commies.

They were somewhat active in Singapore at that time. There was a great deal of apprehension among the British and the Singapore authorities, remember. The Vietnam war was in full swing and there existed the fear that if Vietnam fell the Communists would move toward and down the Malay Peninsula where each country would fall in turn, Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore itself. It was known as the 'Domino' theory.

It wasn't that the Reds, apparently under all our beds, would offer us sacksful of rubles, pound notes or dollar bills (Singapore or U.S.). After all, we were *teachers*. We didn't have access to the plans of nuclear submarines or the like (though come to think of it, I was shown around the nuclear powered aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Enterprise, when it took a break from patrolling the waters off Vietnam and paid a courtesy visit to Singapore) and it did seem most unlikely that the Hidden Masters of the Kremlin would be interested in Jimmy Smith's math homework, even if he had progressed on to the five times table.

It wasn't even that the Commies intended to recruit any of us to inveigle any high ranking official into some sort of compromising situation so that *he* could divulge whatever it was they wanted divulging, though no doubt had such a scenario actually come to fruition it would have been one heck of a bonus.

No, it was simply that we might inadvertently 'drop a stitch', let slip a little fact which would be unimportant on its own but when fitted with a couple of hundred other bits and pieces would help build up some sort of picture.

Heavens, didn't anyone remember that during the Second World War we'd been bombarded with propaganda posters warning us that CARELESS TALK COSTS LIVES?

So, okay, at some time during our time in Singapore there would be an Approach. Not only that, but we were even told the form said Approach would take. This always amazed me. The Communists always followed the same method. Our side

knew what it was. Yet the Communists continued to employ it. When we were told the form the Approach would take, the entire gathering shook their heads. Unbelievable!

This approach, we'd been advised, would normally take the form of our landlord dropping in from time to time to discuss our comfort. Whether the furniture was to our liking. That sort of thing. On his fourth or fifth visit he would bring along a cousin who, in the normal course of conversation, would ask various simple questions such as "How do you like living in Singapore?" Or whether, as a civilian, we enjoyed working for the military. All exceedingly subtle.

Once I'd got myself established in Singapore I took a house on a year's rental. My landlady was a young Chinese Singaporean woman who would... guess what?... drop in from time to time to discuss the furnishings and the like.

True to Oriental convention, tea or a soft drink would first be offered the visitor and for a half hour or so the conversation would be on virtually any topic (usually the climate, the temperature, the humidity, a ritual observed at every visit and played like a tape recording) before Miss Lim would move on to the nitty gritty, satisfying herself as to her tenant's comfort. It would be churlish of me to suspect that during these visits she was calculating by what amount she could raise the ante on the expiry of the lease.

On her fifth visit Miss Lim brought with her a man of about forty. He was, well, you don't say, her cousin. Very pleasant fellow. All smiles. Good firm handshake. Thought the tea excellent. Loved the fruit cake.

"And how do you like working in Singapore?" he enquired.

I told him that I enjoyed teaching children, irrespective of where in the world I might be. I wondered as soon as the words were out of my mouth whether this might be interpreted as an indication that I'd be happy teaching somewhere in the Urals.

"Ah, so." He took a second... or was it a fourth?... piece of fruit cake. "And as a civilian, how do you like working for the army?"

I told him that I was a civilian and had no interest in military affairs. The army merely paid my salary. My interest was the children.

"Ah, so." He suddenly glanced at his wrist watch, looked pointedly at his cousin, our landlady, put down his half-devoured cake, stood and said that he must apologise. He had to leave. For an appointment. Off they went.

I reported the conversation to my Head of Establishment, the school principal, as soon as I arrived the following morning. He made a note of the date and the time.

And that was that. I didn't hear another word about the incident and I never again had the pleasure of meeting our landlady's charming cousin.

At the end of the year I didn't renew the lease on the house. My, what a suspicious mind you have! You're not suggesting that Miss Lim hiked up the rent, are you?

Yeh, exactly.

I moved out, into an identical house in the next street. My new landlord was a Mr. Kong. Very pleasant, accommodating fellow. He'd drop in from time to time, usually about once a month, to discuss the furnishings (excellent, comfortable rattan) and the like. There would be the usual preliminaries about the climate and so forth, always as though the subject was being broached for the first time. I suspect that Miss Lim, Mr. Kong and all the other thousands of Singapore property owners followed this sterile routine because they felt that *they* were pandering to the eccentricities of their tenants who would possibly lose face if the charade was not played out.

You're ahead of me, aren't you? On his fifth visit Mr. Kong brought with him his cousin, a man of about forty. Very pleasant fellow. All smiles. Good firm handshake. Thought the tea excellent. Loved the fruit cake.

"And how do you like working in Singapore?" he enquired. "And as a civilian, how do you like working for the army?"

After I'd said my piece he suddenly remembered an appointment and off they went. The next morning I made what was becoming the usual report and that was that. Never met the charming fellow again. Though I did wonder whether he knew Miss Lim's cousin.

A few months later the Russian champion soccer team, Dynamo of Tbilisi, visited Singapore to

play three exhibition games against specially selected opponents. I attended the first in the company of a colleague, Carl Kelly. We took our places half way back in the center of the main grandstand. As is usual on these occasions we commented from time to time on the inadequacies of various players.

"This Singapore winger's hanging back too far," I said. "He should be further up the field."

The thick-set spectator sitting immediately in front of us turned round. "Yes," he said in an accent I didn't recognise. Nothing unusual about that. There were dozens of different nationalities living in Singapore. "He is dropping back too far. He should be standing alongside the Dynamo full-back."

"The centre-forward is too static," Carl remarked after a while.

Our thick-set friend turned round. "He should be moving around to distract the defence," he agreed.

This went on throughout the first half. During the fifteen minute interval our friend turned round and introduced himself as one of the Dynamo coaches.

We were surrounded by the Russian party, coaches, reserves, wives, girl-friends and supporters who had (been allowed to have) made the trip.

"So," our friend said, "you are serving in Singapore with the British army?"

We explained that we were teachers and had no contact with the military.

"Of course," our friend observed, "the British army has its wives and children with it. The children must be taught."

"Exactly," we agreed.

"And how many soldiers are there in Singapore?" our friend asked conversationally.

We'd no idea, we said, We repeated that we had no contact with the military other than as parents. In any case, I had a pretty fair idea that he already knew.

"And the climate here," our friend went on. "It is so different from Tbilisi. It must be different for you, too. It is possible to acclimatise, is it not?"

We discussed acclimatisation.

"And your forces here are not only army. There is your air force, too. And the navy in the north." He was just showing off with that one. "How many ships would you say there are at the naval base?"

We were finding it difficult to cope with all this oblique questioning. Couldn't understand why the fellow didn't get straight to the point.

We told him that we didn't even know where the naval base was.

The conversation moved on to the relative qualities of different British soccer teams. My home town team was ruling the roost at the time.

"Ah, yes. Leeds United. A fine team. All international players," enthused our friend, adding without changing his tone. "And how many soldiers did you say are based in Singapore?"

The next morning we reported this conversation to our school principal. About an hour later one of the school secretaries came into my classroom. Could I set the children some work and go downstairs to the principal's office?

I had some difficulty getting into the room. Carl was there and so were a dozen or so severe-looking men. Half of them were in uniform. They were all high ranking, one a brigadier. The only face I recognised was that of the SO1Edn, the senior officer in charge of education for the entire FARELF, the Far East Land Forces.

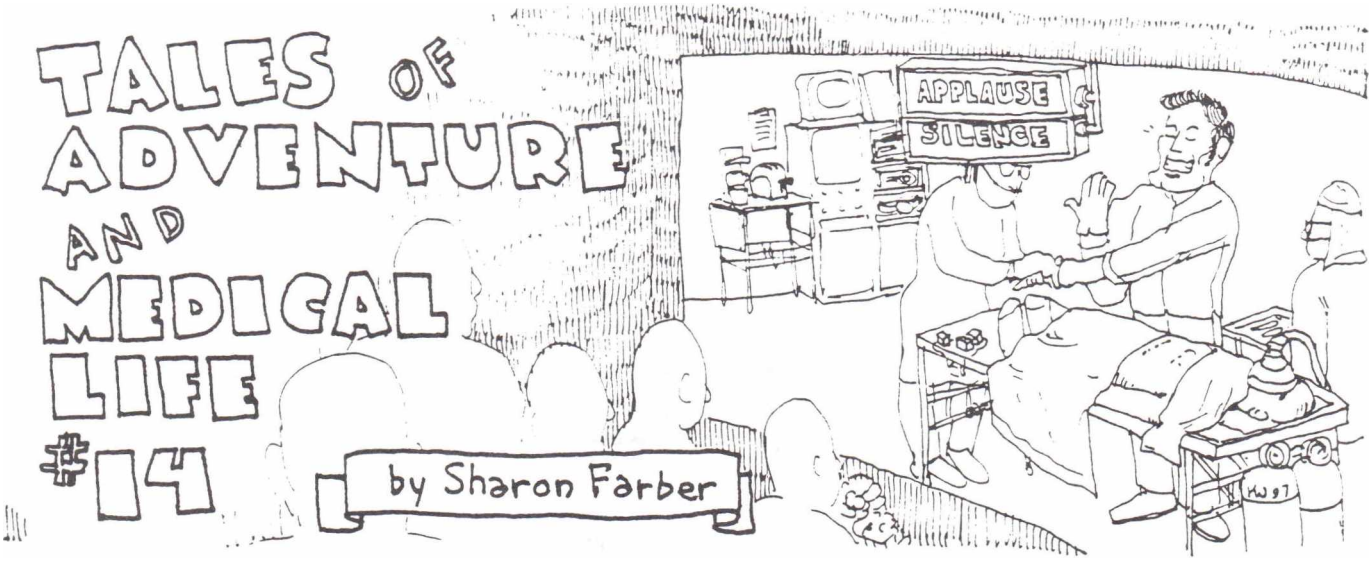
Carl and I were grilled for over an hour by three men in lightweight lounge suits. Every word we'd reported was discussed. Every nuance of tone with which we'd answered the Russian's questions was analysed. On two or three occasions we were told, "But previously you said such-and-such," which we hadn't. Every attempt was made to trip us up. We objected vehemently. Our principal objected vehemently. Our SO1 objected vehemently.

Eventually, one of the Lounge Suits told us. "Nothing that has taken place here today must be reported or discussed. Not even with your families. In fact," he added in the best ...or possibly the worst... tradition of B-movie Hollywood, "this meeting has never taken place."

We returned, shaken, definitely not stirred, to our classrooms. The meeting may not have taken place but the little horrors sitting angelically at their desks were more street wise than we'd credited.

"Sir," asked one boy when I came into the room, "Sir. Are you really a spy?" ☼

The science of Anthropology can be described as the study of social relationships and cultures. An examination of the Anthropology of fandom ought to show that fan writers and writing played at least as important role as fanzines in the shaping of today's fandom, and in how today's fandom will be remembered in the future. Definitions aside, it's quite likely that Sharon Farber will be remembered decades from now as one of our best fanwriters; here's the latest installment of her "Tales of Adventure" series.



Astute readers will notice that I've been promising the continuation of the story of my third year of medical school, but I come up with other things to write about. Like last issue's ruminations on the sex life of Vulcans... Do you get the idea I'm avoiding something?

It's true. I've been putting off the story of the end of third year, my ob-gyn rotation. Not because it was particularly more painful than the rest of third year — in a way it was, but not only is it ancient history now, by the time it all happened I was so numb I barely noticed that things had just kept getting worse.

No, it's because it just doesn't really lend itself to brief humorous anecdotes. I like to pride myself in my ability to drag humor out of misery — my dentist had to tell me to stop giggling during my wisdom tooth extraction — but this just didn't seem to foster quite the humor of previous rotations.

Sorry...

#

One evening during my first year of medical school, as we were waiting outside a movie theater, another first year student came up to me, looked around furtively, and asked an urgent question. I was five years older than the other students and had been out in the real world, sort of, and was also a California weirdo. All that had transformed me into a mommy equivalent, able to answer practical and philosophical queries from classmates who had generally gone from college prep high school to prestigious university to med school without Passing Go or Going To Jail.

"Sharon," the young man said, "Do women enjoy pelvic exams?"

My jaw dropped. Had he been raised in a glass bubble? Had he never overheard his mother or sisters or even strangers on a bus dreading their trip to the gynecologist? Or was he simply hoping to hear good news that would set him on the path to a career that would be salacious as well as bringing pleasure to thousands of eager souls?

"For god's sake," I replied, annoyed. "Would you enjoy a refrigerated metal object shoved up your ass?"

His eager little puppy dog face fell, and he subsequently chose a career in pathology. I don't know how much I had to do with that.

#

Whether or not women enjoy or dread or simply tolerate pelvics seems to have a lot to do with who goes into gynecology. I've met male gynecologists who honestly like to help women, and others who just go all gushy when they get to escort a new life into the world.

Unfortunately, those guys weren't teaching us.

Our faculty seemed to be composed entirely of Grade A porkers, the sort of autocratic chauvinists who enjoyed seeing women helpless and uncomfortable. I leave it as an exercise to the reader to decide if their need for power was political or sexual or simply the mark of inadequate personalities. (I will, though, note that the chief of the beer-guzzling sexually obsessed frat boys whom we called Neanderthals, until my friend Lorraine pointed out that the analogy was insulting to proto-hominids, wound up on the gynecology faculty. Now isn't that amazing.)

A typical lecture from the chairman of the department began: "Little Suzy Brown comes in, a bleedin' down the block." It wasn't long before every woman in the class who was not either clueless or teflon started skipping lecture.

#

I finished off my third year of medicine with the clerkship of ob-gyn. I started at the University hospital, where I was mostly astonished by the sheer, well, *boredom* of the subject. Let's face it, gynecology deals with a single organ system, and not the most complex. Clinic consisted of pelvics, one after another, often just healthy women needing pap smears. Maybe a bit of a discharge, so you checked a slide and either treated for yeast or bacteria. Maybe some pelvic inflammatory disease or a case of clap to liven things up. A few cases of herpes — always prefaced by the comment, "I got it from my *ex*-husband," the hurt in their voices explaining that this disease was the final confirmation of their spouses' infidelity. Maybe a case of dyspareunia (painful intercourse), but the warm and sensitive chief resident was apparently of the 'dyspareunia is better than no pareunia' school of thought. And prenatal visits, measuring the belly, listening for heart tones... Frankly, I found it about as intellectually stimulating as making toast.

Even the surgeries were boring. Hysterectomies varied only in how you went in and how much you took. They lacked finesse — general surgeons tended to call gyn work 'meatball surgery' — except for the occasional case of cancer, which was depressing but at least different. And dilation and curettage was, well, messy and unchallenging.

It might have been a bit more interesting if we'd been allowed to do some cutting or sewing, but there was a hierarchy at the university, and medical students were at the bottom. The attending might let the chief do something, or the more senior residents, but medical students just stood and watched, like worshipful little robots. (Some surgeons in academic centers find having an audience necessary. I remember one who loudly refused to yank a gallbladder until someone found him a student. I finally volunteered, figuring this guy was hot to teach. No. Another silent surgery, in which I saw and did nothing, though the surgeon did smugly inform me that the muzak was playing Mozart's fortieth. But as the same tape played in all the operating theatres, and a number of surgeons had already and just as smugly identified the symphony for me, I was unimpressed.)

My friend Jon did get to do part of a D&C once, to his future benefit. The next year he did an away rotation in a religious hospital in the African bush. It was the second largest hospital in the country, but still had only three doctors. One had left and not yet been replaced, one was on vacation, and the third had just been summoned by the President of the country. So when Jon arrived, he was greeted at the landing strip by a couple of senior medical students from various countries.

How nice of them to come down and meet me, he thought. "Hello!"

They cut off the introduction. "Can you do a D&C?"

"Well, yeah, sort of..."

So within an hour of arriving he was in an operating theatre with a bleeding woman. "What anesthesia do you want?" asked the nurse anesthetist.

He had no clue, but he said what turned out to be the right thing: "Uh, the usual."

And then, as he stood there wondering what he was going to do, his hand fell open and the scrub nurse, who spoke only Swahili, slapped an instrument into it. He found that, in this way, the surgery went rather smoothly, as every time he wasn't quite sure how to proceed the appropriate tool would strike his palm.

But, as usual, I digress. One of the 'treats' of being a medical student on the ob-gyn service was a certain venal private doctor. The residents hated him, and as someone had to scrub with him, that fell to those at the bottom of the pecking order — the students and interns. One day I watched him do something I didn't understand. I asked him about it.

"Just killing time til the bleeding stopped," he said, or some such. The intern looked panicked. Afterwards she explained to me that I had just witnessed conscious fraud and malpractice. I was horrified. How could such unethical and illegal behavior occur at one of the top ten medical schools in the country?

The residents told me not to make waves.

Maybe I misunderstood the entire thing. Maybe I was simply clueless. But a friend later told me he had witnessed the same doctor do the same thing.

#

Well okay, but there was still that 'helping new life into the world' bit. *That* was fun, right?

Wrong. Maybe I just don't have the temperament for it. Having a kid seemed to take a long time, and be associated with a lot of pain. And it meant not one pelvic but a bunch, checking the amount of dilation constantly. Watching largely irrelevant squiggles on the monitor. And finally going into the labor room for a long screamfest followed by the arrival of a slimy conehead, much rejoicing, and then repairs.

I'd guess that most of the deliveries I saw there, at least of the private patients, were of planned or at least wanted pregnancies. But I remember one, a young woman who'd been raped. She began flashing back to the assault during delivery, meaning we were dealing with hysterics as well as the ordinary shrieking. Her boyfriend was with her, a scuzzy disreputable-appearing dude — if I'd seen him on the sidewalk, I'd have crossed the street, he was that bad. But there in L&D he surprised me by his support. I wish that every anti-abortion zealot could have been in that delivery room...but on the other hand, they probably think rape is punishment for uppity behavior and that this suffering was deserved. (There was an abortion clinic down the street from the hospital. Pickets always came out on weekends with good weather. My classmate Kathy liked to stop and chat with them. She claimed that if you kept them talking for more than ten minutes, every one would eventually admit to really being against abortion because sex was a sin and deserved to be punished.)

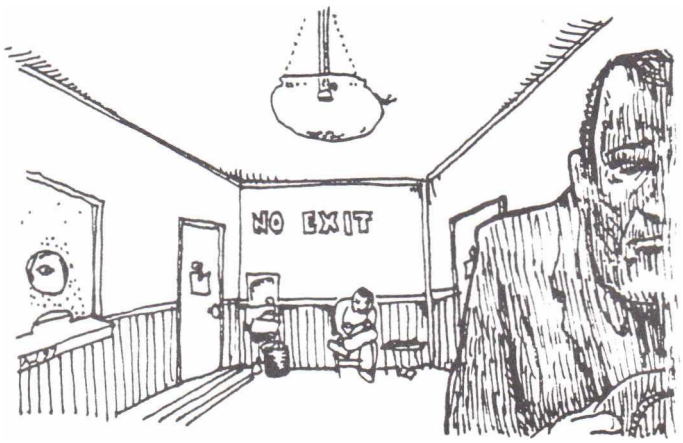
Another bad day: a woman was having complications, and the intern ordered an X-ray that showed the infant had hydrocephalus and other deformities. As is usually the case in a hierarchy, everyone responded to the incipient tragedy by blaming the intern.

One of my classmates told me the chief resident kept making passes at her. She was worried about her grade. I didn't care by then — I was spending the next three weeks at County Hospital. I'd been told ob-gyn was more fun there, that medical students uniformly had a great time.

I wasn't about to go to County Hospital. I was about to enter Kafka General.

#

Three students went to County: me, my friend the Ace, and the Little Rich Girl. The Little Rich Girl was some sort of idealist. One day she stopped me in the hall and gushed, "Don't you just love the dignity of the poor?" Since I had just spent several weeks delivering babies to impoverished people who hadn't planned them, often didn't want them, and were usually condemning them to a life of equally hopeless poverty, I wasn't so sure.



Our first residents, who were there only for one week, were the most cynical individuals I'd ever met. And lazy. They sent us to the emergency room to evaluate patients, to labor and delivery to check the patients, and in general just showed up, like the Lone Ranger, to rescue things at the last minute. If they could have figured a way to have the students breathe for them, they'd have ordered it.

Another bad thing about ob-gyn was that any pregnant woman, no matter what her presenting complaint, automatically belonged to ob. And the minute we showed up, every doctor and nurse in the ER evaporated into thin air, leaving the students alone and baffled. Usually it was something you could deal with, like the woman who showed up hysterically screaming that her water had broken. I did a pelvic, got a sample of the fluid to check under the microscope — it certainly wasn't amniotic fluid. I had a slide full of anxious sperm, all swimming about wondering where they were supposed to be. I never had the guts to say, look, it's semen, didn't you sort of notice how it got there? I just reassured her and sent her home.

And the minute you decided someone had to go to labor and delivery, the nurses would help you push the stretcher as far as the elevator. But once inside the elevator you were on your own...hoping it moved fast and didn't get stuck.

We did get to do more in deliveries than at the University. I even delivered a baby myself. Sort of. What really happened was that a young woman came in, unmarried, first pregnancy. She evidently hailed from a long line of relatively intelligent and educated women without husbands or active fathers, and the man she had chosen to perpetuate the line (he bopped in briefly, strutted and left, realizing his lack of importance in the overall scheme) looked like he'd been picked for availability rather than any outstanding personal qualities. And the whole time I was examining her she kept repeating, "I won't keep it if it's a boy."

That made me a little nervous, since we were talking fifty-fifty chance or better there'd be an unwanted infant. She was so definite about it. I looked questioningly over at her mother, who just nodded and smiled.

A few hours later I was checking her when she began to scream, "I need to go to the bathroom! I need to go to the bathroom!" I, still somewhat clueless to the entire childbirth thing, started to help her onto the bedpan and noticed scalp appearing between her legs.

So I delivered the kid, no gloves, ruined my watch (well, it was almost gone anyway), an incredible mess, and the whole time she's digging nails into my arm and screaming "*I don't want it if it's a boy!!*"

Was I ever relieved when it turned out female.

Clinic was even more depressing than at the University. My favorite case was when I noticed that a pregnant woman wasn't putting on weight. "Morning sickness?" I asked.

"No." She didn't want to talk, but I was eventually able to dig out the story. She wasn't hungry...

That seemed odd. Was she sleeping? No. Was she crying? Yes.

Within a few minutes of speaking to her I'd formed a diagnosis of severe depression with psychotic features. I went out and found the chief.

"She's not putting on weight because she's suicidally depressed. I'm worried about her. We need to call psych and get her some help."

The chief glared at me, exasperated. He walked in, looked at the woman and asked casually, "Everything okay?" His tone of voice clearly demanded she agree.

"Yes," she said, and he turned to me with a look of triumph: This is how it's done. I was allowed to give her the number to call to make an appointment at psych clinic, but she never did. She did call a week later, at 3:00 a.m., crying in a phone booth. "Call psych clinic," I told her. My sympathy was less by the end of a rotation, especially at 3:00 a.m.

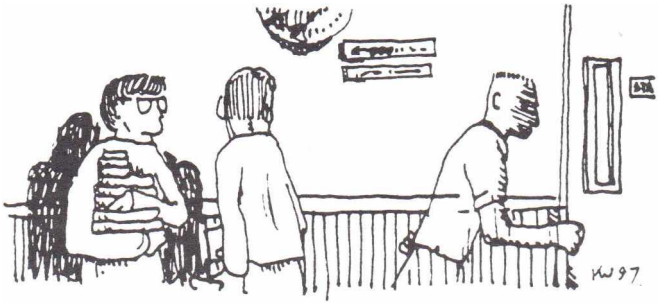
#

The residents were replaced by new ones: a chief, a woman I shall call 'The Evil One', and an intern. The Little Rich Girl hit it off immediately with The Evil One. They'd sit giggling together like junior-high-schoolers. I should have suspected that this meant trouble for me and the Ace. The Little Rich Girl was mad at us.

On our first day she had come to us with a list of days when she absolutely did not want to be on call, because she had parties or committee meetings

or political rallies. We said sure, and allowed her to arrange the call schedule. Then we learned the clinic routine — it seemed that, on days when there was no clinic, you might be able to leave early if you weren't on call. The Little Rich Girl's schedule gave her fewer light days than we got — so she wanted to switch things around so she would get all her chosen nights off and also a goodly share of easy days. We pointed out that we'd already bent over backwards, and would stick with what we had.

There was another resident. He'd decided to leave the program, or been fired, and he'd spent every moment when he wasn't absolutely essential hiding in a call room. It was intimidating and disheartening, a little like having Mrs. Rochester locked in the attic, and made a weird rotation even weirder. When the guy did emerge from the call room and walk silently past, I was always tempted to start quoting the first scene of *Hamlet*.



At rounds he was totally quiet. Even the day when the other residents were explaining about a patient who was in the ICU, probably not planning to survive. They were painting a grim yet inevitable story for the boss...

And then my friend Ace, the A student, who just last year won a national award in her chosen profession — my friend the hopeless naif chipped in with a fact that the residents had left out their history, the one fact that let the attending know just how bad the entire case had been screwed up and what a disservice had been done the patient. The Ace sat back, proud to have contributed, unaware of the evil stares the residents were fixing upon us.

I should not have been surprised to hear my course evaluation, a litany of character assassination, cheap psychological assumptions, and falsehoods. It seemed like the perfect cap to a rotten year.

#

Of course, no one could expect us to ever get an internship with such a horrible evaluation on record. All that ultimately saved me — and it took the better part of a year to accomplish — was that the Ace got an equally rotten grade, and the faculty knew *she* was okay.

It seemed that the chief had walked into the clinic back room one day, carrying our evaluation sheets, and said, "I don't feel like doing the grades. Anyone want to?"

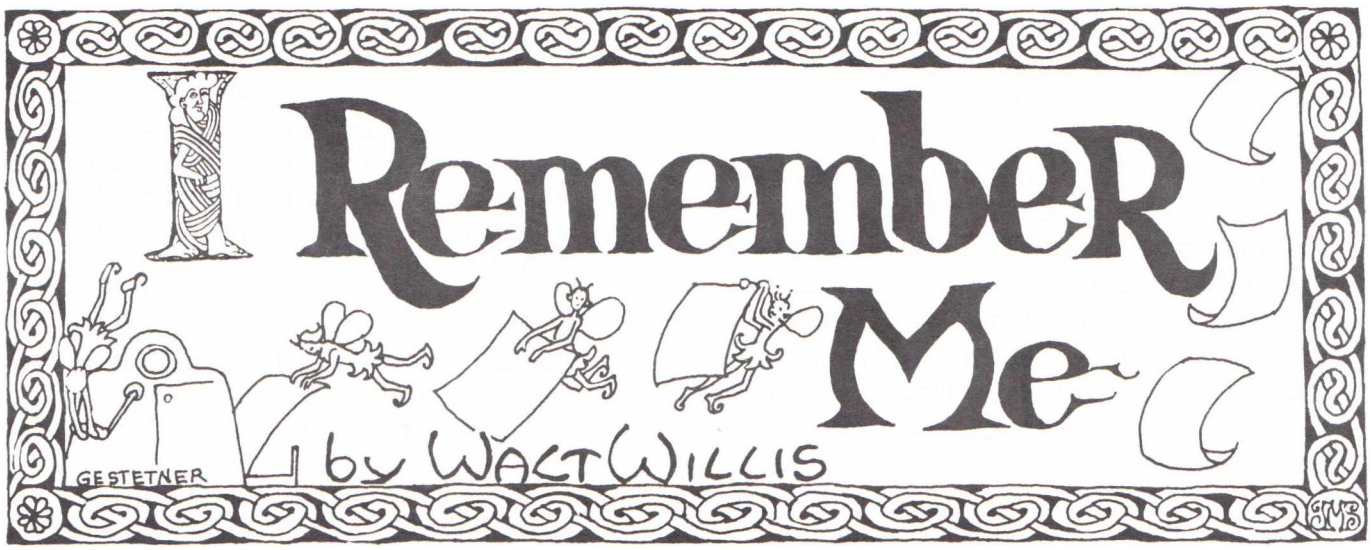
The Evil One said, "Yeah... I don't like Sharon and Ace."

The intern told us this, but didn't agree to tell the ob-gyn course supervisor. She didn't want to rock the boat.

Ace and I went to complain to the course supervisor. She explained that we were stuck in a Catch-22 situation — the only person who could change the grade was the one who had given it to us! It didn't matter that that person hated us and was acting out of personal spleen, it didn't matter that she had no business grading us in the first place. We had to convince her to change the grade.

So we dutifully made appointments to talk to her one evening. She took me into another room first and indulged in vicious insults. I told her that it was clear she was incapable of reason, and left. Ace stuck it out for a couple hours of invective, with as much success. As I said, it was just luck that I was stuck in a hopeless situation with an A student who had friends in important places. Things eventually got straightened out and we got grades that, if not exactly making us look like Albert Schweitzer, at least didn't make us Hannibal Lector.

Even the most superficial study of fan history will demonstrate that there have been many, many notable and noble fanwriters in the history of fandom, but the noblest fanwriter of them all could very well be the writer of the following article. Walt Willis now continues his look back at the fabulous year of 1954 with the discovery of *another* amazing fan writing talent, some unabashed praise for two of Walt's most famous works, and more...



I see that on the 23rd of March, 1954, I was confiding my inmost thoughts to Chuck Harris on the question of nationality:

> You know, I think [Vernon] McCain had something there when he talked about this part of Ireland inducing schizophrenia. Can you imagine what it's like to be torn always between two rival patriotisms? Three, rather. Ireland, Ulster (which has a national mythos of its own), and England. We accept English standards of conduct and find ourselves supporting them in cricket test matches and so on, and yet we're ambivalent about them. The ones we have experience of here, of course, are the ruling classes, the hunting and shooting types, and a more obnoxious crowd of bastards you never met, and yet you've got to respect them. There's a curious mixture of hate, envy, and amusement in the Irish attitude to them, and even I feel a vague inherited sense of inferiority when speaking to someone who talks like Vince [Clarke]. Then, on the other hand, we like to think of ourselves as Irish, and we appreciate Irish folk music, etc. Yet we reject unity with the rest of the country because they are dupes of the RC Church. We could build up a national mythos on Ulster itself — the Cuchulain saga and so on — if it weren't for the fact that we know quite well that we are descendants of the Plantationists who drove those people out. Many people here dispose of the problem by frankly claiming allegiance to Scotland.
>
> This country is a godawful mess of contradictions.
>
> One thing though. Belfast girls are not only more highly sexed than Southern drabs — we have the highest illegitimate birth rate in the British Isles — they are the best looking ones I have found anywhere. That's counting America. I've never been anywhere else where you can walk through the city just admiring the scenery walking by.

In a postcard no bigger than a man's hand there now appeared on the horizon the first Englishman to manifest himself in Irish Fandom:

> 5th July, 1954
> 31, Campbell Park Avenue
> Belfast
>
> Dear Mr. Willis,
>
> I would be obliged if you would kindly forward to the above address the latest copy of *Hyphen*, which I note is mentioned in *Authentic Science Fiction* No. 46. I

enclose PO for 1s 9d, including 3d postage.

Yours,
John E. Berry

The first thing I did was to look up the address in the Belfast Street Directory, of which there was a copy in my office. I noted that the occupier of the address given was a policeman, and a small warning bell rang. (I had recently fallen for a hoax by Vince Clarke in which he sent over Mike Wilson to represent himself as a neofan.) However, my office was empowered to send for police files and within a couple of days I had before me the file on Constable John E. Berry. It disclosed nothing suspicious about him, so I invited him to call at Oblique House. He turned out to be friendly, congenial, and enthusiastic, so I invited him to come again the next night there was a regular meeting of Irish Fandom. Again, he proved very congenial and I reported on the new acquisition to *Hyphen* co-editor Chuck Harris, who responded prophetically...

> Berry sounds all right. I'm already wondering what he'll turn out to be a genius at. It would shake fandom rigid if a wheel of IF turned out to be just mediocre.

I was also breaking the news to Dean Grennell...

> We now have a new member of Irish Fandom, and a *prolific* one. The third time he came up here he produced a top drawer fannish type article which will be in the next *Hyphen*, and he's written enough for the next two issues already and shows no sign of slowing down. His latest project is a series of studies of the Old Guard of Irish Fandom. (He has uncanny powers of observation and also I learned today has been in the habit of taking notes of the conversation here when he gets home.) We think it would be egotistical to publish them in *Hyphen*. Would you like them for *Grue*? Oh, the name of this latter day genius is John Berry.

* * *

I have been criticised for including praise of myself in these memoirs, and I can understand why. But I ask you to understand my feelings at being expected to throw away this letter of comment by Robert Bloch on *The Enchanted Duplicator*. I think it deserves to pass before your eyes on its way to the waste basket.

> Dear Walt,
>
> I have never read a finer piece of fan writing than *The Enchanted Duplicator.*
>
> It is the most delightful, whimsical, provocative, wise, witty work I've ever had the pleasure of reading... and re-reading.
>
> You and Bob Shaw have immortalized yourselves in this effort... and reflected a radiance of spirit which redounds to your mutual credit.
>
> Let Laney quibble about the presence of a Fairy in the story... let Clean Fandom shudder in horror over the dreadful word ending Chapter Eleven... I can only say that this, for me, is the epitome of fan-fiction.
>
> Thank you for sending me a copy... and over and above that, thank you both for having written it. *The Enchanted Duplicator* is truly and evidently a 'labor of love' in every sense of the phrase. And I loved it!

I might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, so here's a letter of comment from Chuck Harris on my report of Chicon 2. It's a very model of what a letter of comment should be like, and I defy anyone receiving such a letter to willfully destroy it without regret.

> This Convention Report is wonderful. It took me an hour to read and I finished it just three minutes ago. I've made a cliche out of 'the best thing you've ever written' during the last couple of years, but I'm in grave danger of becoming a sincere acolyte of yours. Look, forget everything nice I've ever said about your stuff. Forget that I'm a friend of yours. Forget that I know all these fannish names and references. Ready? Walt, this was the best thing that you've ever written — it's the best thing I've seen in any fanzine anywhere. I'm still full of the sort of exhileration that I get after reading Sturgeon or Heinlein. Whilst reading it I felt that I was making the trip with you and meeting all these people, just as if I had been in Chicago too. I think the biggest compliment I could pay you was that after deciphering twenty-five pages, I felt bitterly disappointed when I reached the end

because you didn't carry on with a report of what happened afterwards.

I'm more than a little awed with you just now — it's as if Vince had suddenly become a better writer than Heinlein, or James [White] blossomed out as a second Messiah. Do you remember talking about how you intended to get a sort of monopoly on conreports so that any future conmittee would automatically put aside your retainer before planning anything else? With stuff like this you stand a damn good chance of pulling it off. It's true that I'm the world's No. 1 sucker for any sort of conreport, but this was different. I was quite excited and kept trying to read faster than I could absorb the words in a sort of over-eagerness to find out what the holy hell was going to happen next. I was so interested that I even forgot the cup of tea that was standing on the mantlepiece. Tonight I'm too effusive to comment on it. I've got little word pictures skidding over my cortex and I'd rather wait until I come down to earth before making with the fearless comments.

If Lee [Hoffman] drops dead before this coming issue [of *Quandry*], remember that *Hyphen* is first in the queue for this report. In fact, I've a good mind to write her trying to persuade her that it's crap so that she'll reject it, and then I can earn undying ego-boo as its publisher.

I feel very proud of you. Please keep your clay foot out of my eye. I shall probably address you as 'Sir' when I see you again. ☼

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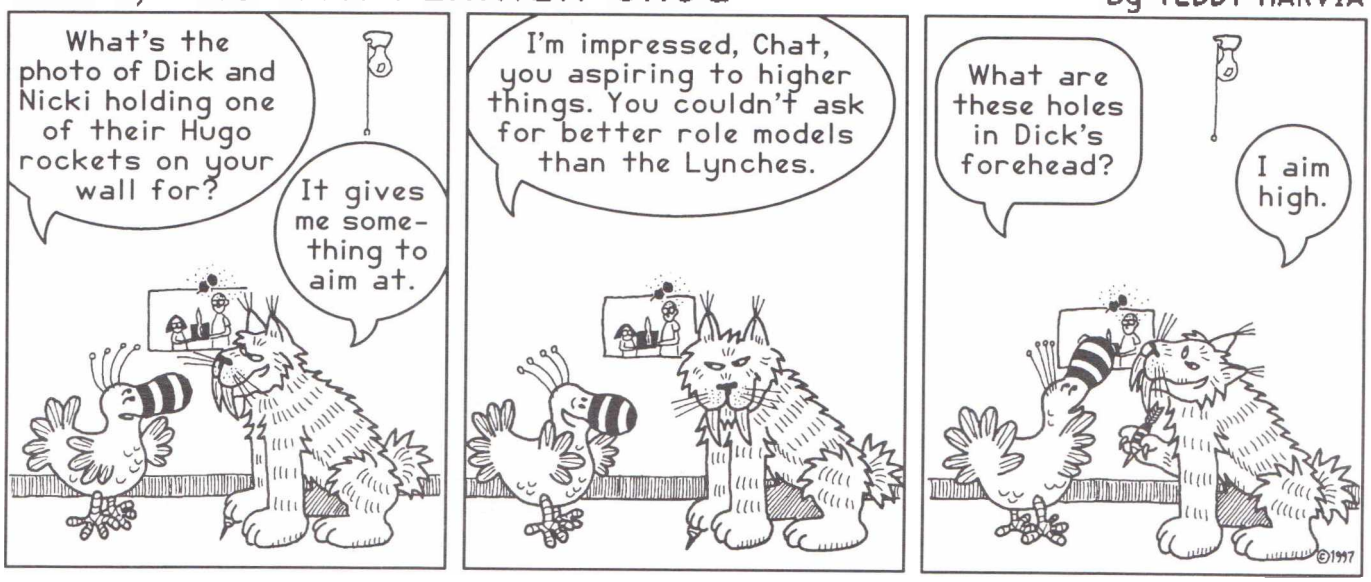
ARTIST CREDITS

Sheryl Birkhead — pages 2; 3; 42; 51
Kurt Erichsen — front & back covers
Teddy Harvia — pages 25; 26; 28
Joe Mayhew — pages 4; 5; 7; 8; 15; 30; 31; 34
Julia Morgan-Scott — page 23
William Rotsler & Sheryl Birkhead — pages 9 (top); 11 (bottom)
William Rotsler & Kurt Erichsen — page 13 (top)
William Rotsler & Brad Foster — pages 12; 49
William Rotsler & Alexis Gilliland — pages 9 (bottom); 48
William Rotsler & Ian Gunn — pages 14 (both); 50
William Rotsler & Teddy Harvia — pages 11 (top); 45
William Rotsler & Joe Mayhew — page 13 (middle)
William Rotsler & Steve Stiles — pages 10; 46
Diana Stein — pages 40; 41
Charlie Williams — pages 35; 37; 38; 39
Kip Williams — pages 18; 19; 20; 22 (both)

CHAT, the 4th Fannish Ghod

By TEDDY HARVIA

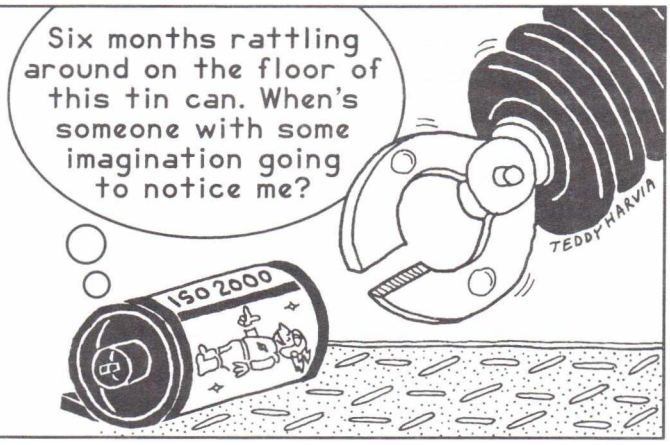


No archeological dig through fandom would be apropos without some mention of Forry Ackerman, who has been continuously active as a fan for over sixty years. However, this latest installment of Forry's autobiographical series describes an event that made him famous outside fandom, and in the process, creating a whole *new* kind of fandom.

Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman

PART V

by Forrest J Ackerman



I've already mentioned how, in 1951, when I was in Europe, I went over to Northern Ireland and met the Big Three, including Walt Willis. Walt probably wasn't aware of it, but for that entire trip, the only time I was ill was when I was with Walt Willis. And when he came to America the next year, he returned the compliment — the only time he was ill was when he was in my home!

When Walt came back to Los Angeles during his second North American trip, in 1962, he had wanted to do some things he hadn't been able to on his previous trip. One of these was to see Disneyland, so we spent a full day there, having a good time, but managing to lose a roll of exposed slide film at some point. Six months later, a fan from Chicago, Bob Greenberg, while on the submarine ride at Disneyland, felt something rolling around by his feet. He reached down and picked up a little can of undeveloped photographic film. When he got back to Chicago he had it developed, and to his surprise staring back at him on the very first slide was a face he recognized — *me*! It was sheer luck that a *fan* had found the roll of film — for *six months* it had been rolling around where *anybody* could have picked it up!

Well, it turned out that one of the reasons Greenberg recognized me was that he was a fan of *Famous Monsters of Filmland* magazine, of which I was the writer and editor. But for more on that subject I should go back a few more years.

#

In 1957, fifty-five of us chartered a plant to fly over to London for the World Science Fiction Convention that year. Dave and Ruth Kyle had just gotten married, and that was their honeymoon. When the plane landed, there was some question as who should be the first American fan to set foot upon British soil for the World Convention, and we finally all decided on Sam Moskowitz. So when the door opened, Sam paraded down the stairway, and I followed shortly thereafter.

Well, after the Loncon we had a couple of weeks before the plane flew back to America, so we fans scattered out around Europe. I went first to France, and while I was passing by a news stand in Paris, I noticed a motion picture magazine. On the cover was Henry Hull as the Werewolf of London. That attracted me, and inside I found the entire issue was dedicated to imagi-movies. So I of course purchased a copy for my collection.

I stopped in New York on the way back home to California. At the time, I had been involved as a literary agent specializing in science fiction. I'd been selling to a magazine called *After Hours*, which was a kind of a poor man's *Playboy*; it was edited and published by a fellow named James Warren.

Warren knew I was in town, so he came to meet me at my hotel, and we went down the street to an eating place. I told him about the convention, and

then I showed him this movie magazine from France. Well, in his mind's eye, he could immediately see it turning into English. He felt that all he had to do was write a letter and somebody over there would lend him all the stills. What he didn't realize was that they were not the property of any one person, but belonged to maybe half a dozen collectors, and it would have been quite difficult to get them back together again. Also, as he began reading and translating the text, he found it all rather dry and didactic, which he felt wouldn't exactly appeal to an American audience.

At that point he was ready to give up on the notion, but I spoke up and I said, "Well, I have about 35,000 stills at the present time. I've been seeing these fantastic movies ever since I was 5½, back in 1922. I'm sure I can put together a magazine like this for you."

Even though he was buying fiction through me, he still didn't know me from the proverbial Adam, or if I was just a Holly-wooden head full of hot air, so he said, "Okay, I'll come out to Hollywood and check you out." And he did, arriving with a flourish at the airport. But I didn't know until many years later that he had had nothing in his expense account for cross-country plane trips. So in order to impress me, he had taken a bus all the way to Las Vegas, and *then* got on a plane. When he came out to my home and saw that, indeed, I *did* have 35,000 stills, the next thing I knew I was sitting at a dining room table with an old mechanical typewriter, and he was sitting opposite me with a sign which read, "I'm 11½ years old and I am your reader. Forry Ackerman, make me laugh!"

Well, I hadn't the slightest intention of being funny about anything. What I had really planned to do was produce about a hundred-page magazine. There would be one definitive still of *Dracula*, with an explanation on how the public reacted to it at the time, my own feeling about the film, and a summary of the plot. There would be similar entries about *Frankenstein* and *Things to Come*, and the whole thing would be more or less like an encyclopedia. But it turned out that Warren had already gone around New York with an idea similar to that for a proposed magazine called *Wonderama*. At the time there were thirteen distributors and every last one of them had turned down the idea of a magazine with crazy messed-up faces in it. That might have been the end of it, but right about then *Life* magazine came to his rescue with a feature on the runaway success of teen-age monster movies such as *I Was a Teen-age Werewolf* and *I Was a Teenage Frankenstein*. After that issue appeared, one of the magazine distributors remembered that crazy editor who'd been around. That distributor called Warren back, and when Warren again brought up the idea of *Wonderama*, the distributor told him, "No, no, forget about that — put monsters on the cover and you're in business." He didn't care much what was inside as long as it was appealing to the teenage crowd that was into monsters.

Well, that didn't make me too happy; I had really wanted a serious publication. I had no original intention of funning around with fantasy films. But that was what was required, so for about twenty hours a day I sat in front of a typewriter so hot it was smoking (I was afraid I was going to die of cancer, it was smoking so badly). At about four in the morning, publisher Warren and I would go over to a 24-hour eating place for orange juice, coffee, and hot cakes. After that I would take him to his motel, then four hours later, pick him up at about eight o'clock in the morning and away we would go. It went on for days and days like that, but in the end we had a magazine we were both reasonably happy with — it was the first issue of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*.

That first issue was not circulated simultaneously all over the United States — there was at first just a try-out in New York and Philadelphia, in February of 1958. Unfortunately, the day it appeared in New York there was a terrible snow storm going on, and Warren must have thought, "Oh death, doom and destruction. Nobody will be going out to buy *Playboy* or *Life*, let alone our little curiosity." But the next week he called, very excited, and said, "We're getting fifty fan letters a day! There have been 200 fan letters just from Philadelphia and New York! If it goes on like this, in other parts of the country, don't you think we ought to squeeze out one more issue? Can you *do* it?"

I laughed and replied, "Jim Warren, you don't know me very well. I don't happen to believe in reincarnation, but in case I'm surprised and I keep

coming back for the next 5,000 years, I think I can go on and on without ever duplicating myself."

Well, I didn't quite go on forever, but I did edit 190 issues of the magazine, ending in the early 1970s. It was the economics that convinced me to quit. I was never really paid any fabulous sum of money to begin with, and it never got any bigger. Even in times of rampant inflation, I continued to get the same check every time I created a magazine, at the end of a year it was buying me five or ten percent less than at the beginning of the year. I had discussed this with Warren four years before I resigned as editor, and he had agreed in principle to increase my payment. But year one went by, then the second, and then year three. At the end of year four, I thought, "Well, I'm chopped down by about one-third of what I could buy four years ago." Also, the two-hundredth issue of *Famous Monsters* was on the horizon, so I wrote Warren and said, "I know you won't pay an extra penny for this, but I would like to give the readers two hundred pages for the two-hundredth issue." I got no response to that, so I resigned after issue 190. The magazine went on one more issue after I resigned, and that was the end of it.

A few years before all of this unpleasantness happened, while *Famous Monsters* was going very well and I was happy, Jim Warren called me up one day and said he was going to create a comic book about 'a mod witch' and he wanted to know, "What would you call her?"

Well, just off the tip of my tongue, I said, "How about 'Miss Terry'?" If you say it fast, it sounds like 'mystery'.

He replied something to the effect, 'Not bad but no cigar', which I didn't mind, since I don't smoke anyway. So I kind of forgot about it until 1969, when I was flying down to Rio de Janeiro for the Science Fiction Symposium that was going on there in March of that year. Sitting directly behind me was George Pal, director of *The Time Machine* and *War of the Worlds*, and sitting with him was Yvette Mimieux, who played 'Weena' in Pal's adaptation of *The Time Machine*. Across from me was Roman Polanski, who gave us *The Fearless Vampire Killers*. A. E. van Vogt was aboard, as were Robert Bloch, Poul Anderson, and Harlan Ellison. If that airplane had gone down it would have wiped out about half of the fantasy and science fiction community.

Around midnight there was some thunder and lightning, and I was wide awake, looking down at the Amazon River snaking along. The hungry pirhana were probably jumping up, hoping we would crash and they would get a free hot meal for a change. I began thinking, gee, if we crash-land, we've got our fearless leader, Harlan Ellison, who could hack away through the jungle and get us back to civilization. And we have the white goddess, Yvette Mimieux, and there was George Pal to direct and produce — we'd have a fabulous movie!

But then, oh yeah, what about that mod witch? Well, *Barbarella* was very big at the moment, and I realized they'd be bringing back *Cinderella*, and would probably make a movie about a space siren called 'Asterella'. Wait! How about 'Vampirella'? The idea for the name had leaped into my mind! She, along with her twin sister, Drakulina, lived on the planet Drakulon, where the rivers flowed with blood instead of water.

When I got back to New York, Warren had about half a dozen possible titles on a bulletin board, to which he added 'Vampirella'. And as people came in, he said to them, "If you were interested in comics and had half a buck to spend, which of those titles would you buy?" They all gravitated toward 'Vampirella', so that evening he told me, "OK, you just named her."

#

I've not only edited a magazine about movies, I've also been in a fair number of them. It started back in the 1940s. By the time I had become a

Corporal at Fort MacArthur in California during World War Two, a studio, I think it was Columbia, came to the base. They were making a movie called *Hey, Rookie*; in one sequence they had extras getting out of a bus, and they included me in a scene as the editor of the Fort MacArthur *Bulletin*. Shortly after the war, my friend Walt Daugherty was involved as an extra in a film which got an Academy Award, *The Farmer's Daughter*. He asked me if I was also interested in being in it. As an ex-GI, I wasn't making much money; I was interesting in anything to keep body and non-existent soul together, so I took the job. My big scene was in an auditorium where I sat right behind Loretta Young, which later turned up as a little postage stamp-sized picture in an issue of *Life* magazine.

Many of the bit parts I've had have been in science fiction, fantasy, and horror movies. I think that the main reason I'm in so many of them, including six by John Landis, is because for years I brought Halloween to the kids in the country in every issue of *Famous Monsters*. These kids grew up and turned out to be Stephen Spielberg, and George Lucas, and John Landis, and Joe Dante, and John Carpenter. They feel it's kind of amusing to have Uncle Forry in their films.

Some of my 'roles' in various movies have been interesting. One I was pleased with was in a movie called *Aftermath*, where I was the curator of the last museum on earth, after World War Three had destroyed civilization. I became President of the United States in *Amazon Women on the Moon*, and to follow that up in the next film, *Turkeys in Outer Space*, I became President of the World. Then I was out a job for four years, after which all I could get to be was a judge in *Nudist Colony of the Dead*. It was quite a comedown from President of the World. In all, I've had cameo appearances in fifty-two films. If you put them all together, I'd guess they last about an hour. Perhaps somebody will do that some day!

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CONTRIBUTORS

Forrest J Ackerman, 2495 Glendower Avenue, Hollywood, California 90027
Ron Bennett, 36 Harlow Park Crescent, Harrogate NG2 0AW, United Kingdom
Sheryl Birkhead, 23629 Woodfield Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20882
Jack Chalker, 629 Jasontown Road, Westminster, Maryland 21157
Kurt Erichsen, 2539 Scottwood Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43610
Sharon Farber, 1000 Panorama Drive, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37421
Brad Foster, P.O. Box 165246, Irving, Texas 75016
Alexis Gilliland, 4030 8th Street South, Arlington, Virginia 22204
Ian Gunn, P.O. Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria 3130, Australia
Teddy Harvia, 701 Regency Drive, Hurst, Texas 76054
Dave Kyle, 289 Ashton Road, Potsdam, New York 13676
Guy H. Lillian III, P.O. Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153
Joe Mayhew, 7-S Research Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770
Julia Morgan-Scott, 108 Woodlawn, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37411
William Rotsler, 17909 Lull Street, Reseda, California 91355
Roger Sims, 34 Creekwood Square, Cincinnati, Ohio 45246
Diana Stein, 3665 North Adams Street, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48304
Steve Stiles, 8631 Lucerne Road, Randallstown, Maryland 21133
Charlie Williams, 1200 Woodcrest Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37918
Kip Williams, 118 Terrell Road, Newport News, Virginia 23606
Walt Willis, 9 Alexandra Road, Donaghadee BT21 0QD, Northern Ireland

Another fan who has been around nearly as long as fandom itself is Dave Kyle, who has taken part in fan activities in seven different decades. That, combined with Dave's interest in fan history, might qualify him for the title of 'Fan-Archeologist-in-Chief'. This next installment of Dave's look back at the early days of fandom takes a look at the very earliest science fiction conventions, and some of the events surrounding them that shaped the later course of fandom.

An appalling thunderbolt slammed my personal fannish world in April 1936, barely three years after I had discovered it. Hugo Gernsback had disappeared. *Wonder Stories* had disappeared. My first short story, advertised for its next issue, had disappeared into what-might-have-been.

However, another three fresh years, from 1936 into 1939, lay ahead, to end my teens. In the late summer of '36, out of Monticello High School, finances had changed my plans from attending Dartmouth College to an art school in New York City instead. This brought me directly into the world center of science fiction fandom.

The Art Career School was in the penthouse of the Flatiron Building facing Madison Square. My base was the McBurney YMCA on 34th Street, between Seventh and Eighth Avenues, two long crosstown blocks away. Across the street from the Y was an old and faded hotel, The Chelsea, which became in later years the permanent way-station for Arthur C. Clarke whenever he was in the United States.

I made only one very close friend at the school, John R. Forte, jr. Like me, he was crazy over Alex Raymond's marvelous drawings of *Flash Gordon* and later, through my efforts after the War, became a science fiction illustrator. My real circle of friends, however, became the fannish crowd in the greater New York urban area, the future Futurians: Pohl, Wollheim, Wilson, Wylie, Michel — even the strange sort-of genius, William S. Sykora. Dick Wilson was my first contact and remained my closest friend for the rest of his life. Within months, I met out-of-towner "Doc" Lowndes and introduced a very young James V. Taurasi to my new world, which marked the beginning of his meteoric rise in regional fannish affairs.

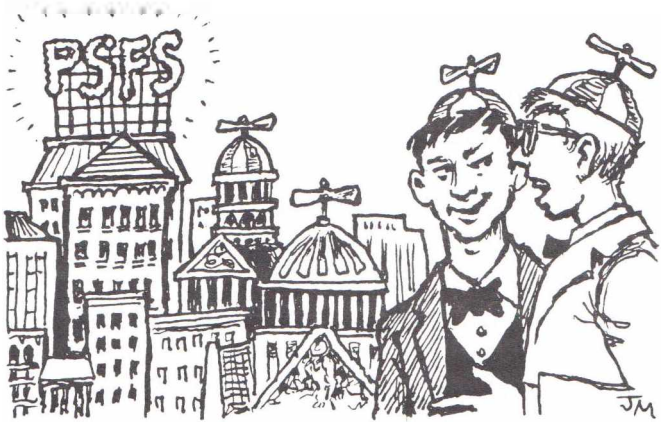
I immediately became a regular part of the International Scientific Association — the legendary ISA, styled as an 'experimental science' club, a remake of the International Cosmos Science Club. We met at least monthly, in Sykora's basement, in the Borough of Queens. The ISA was my post-graduate class in sf society and fannish ways. The members were extremely young men, exceedingly bright and precocious, many with Marxist thoughts and in youthful Communist activities, but they didn't try to indoctrinate me. Fans were universally tolerant, idealistic liberals — and often rather naive. The fact that Don Wollheim, as radical as his comrade John Michel, wore a Kansas sunflower pin in support of the Republican candidate for President of the United States, was, to me an up-state boy, pleasantly reassuring.

By the end of my first month as a Manhattanite, I had rapidly evolved from a typewriter, fanzine fan into a socializing, intimate, shaker-and-doer. I was to help make history on Sunday, October 22, 1936,

by my attendance at the very first science fiction convention. That event, which came to be called 'The First Eastern Science Fiction Convention', came about when five sf fans from New York traveled by train to Philadelphia to meet a handful of Philly Phans. The idea probably was generated by the two leaders of the ISA, Wollheim and Sykora. The other three New York fans who took that short train ride were Frederik Pohl, John B. Michel, and me. Meeting us at the Broad Street Station in Philadelphia were Milton A. Rothman, Oswald Train, Robert A. Madle, and the guy who took our picture for immortality, John V. Baltadonis.

We met in Baltadonis's father's empty barroom. We had a 'business' session, and to the best of my memory, it was I who proposed that we call ourselves a 'convention', just because the previous months had been awash with the national conventions of the Democratic and Republican political parties. Why couldn't we be a convention, too, even if we had no serious agenda? Didn't we represent a flourishing fandom? Fred Pohl took 'official' meeting minutes for posterity, but their whereabouts are now unknown — neither he nor I remember precisely what we discussed, only that we all should meet again soon, this time in the New York area.

Most vivid in my memory was the Philly skyline when we left for home that evening. Dominating the center of the city, high on a skyscraper, were four gigantic red neon letters — PSFS. They actually stood for the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society (or some such), and I remember joking about the extravagant publicity the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society had created to impress the ISA.



That 1936 social 'convention' had a very important result. The ISA began preparations, under the vigorous leadership of Sykora and Michel, to have a return engagement in New York City in February of 1937. Wollheim and Pohl went about creating a 'special convention issue' of the club publication which appeared that January. That issue of *The International Observer* was truly remarkable — a thick, large-size mimeographed fanzine with a fancy silk-screened cover that sold for ten cents! The contributors were almost a roll of honor: A. Merritt, Doc Smith, Edmond Hamilton, H. P. Lovecraft, Jack Williamson, Ray Palmer, and many others, both pro and fan. I don't remember my contribution and the copy I once had is now long gone.

The February 1937 gathering in Bohemian Hall at Astoria, Long Island was, for the times, an enormous success, bringing together so many professionals and fans. The ISA activists arrived early — myself, Sykora, Wollheim, Michel, Pohl, together with Wilson, Dirk Wylie, Lowndes, and Jack Robbins Rubinstein. Also attending were George R. Hahn and Herbert E. Goudket, who was the most senior and serious of us all. Goudket, as I remember, had been chosen to act as chairman. At that convention I met for the first time newer fans such as James Blish, William Miller, and Willis Conover, and others like Julius Schwartz, Mort Weisinger, Charles D. Hornig, and Conrad H. Ruppert, who had been active since the dawn of fandom. Fans also came in from Philadelphia, of course, and in all, there were maybe thirty or even forty people present.

Unfortunately, no comprehensive written coverage of this truly remarkable event ever appeared, and only a few fanzines eventually carried some brief news notes. The most important result was the focus on the upcoming New York World's Fair in 1939 as being propitious for another big convention. Don Wollheim became the head of an exploratory committee, with Sykora, Bob Madle, and John J. Weir, who was noted for his literate fanzine *Fantasmagoria*. That February 1937 convention became known as the 'Second Eastern' and led, quite naturally, to the 'Third Eastern' in Philadelphia in the fall of 1937.

Through the second half of 1937 and the first

half of 1938, I was hard at work at my family's print shop and its weekly newspapers. I was saving up again for college. I knew most of what was happening in metropolitan New York fandom, but I wasn't on the scene, being more of a long distance observer. During that time, I was making regular pilgrimages back to the world of the Futurians, a two hundred mile round trip. Nevertheless, I was there on October 30, 1937, when the 'Third Eastern' returned to Philadelphia. The New York metropolitan group who went was much larger than the previous year's excursion. Besides the original five, there were Wilson, Schwartz, Taurasi, and Goudket, as well as Sam Moskowitz, Dan Burford, Leon Burg, Robert Thompson, Jack Gillespie, and Mario Racic, jr. I had to make a special trip from Monticello via New York City to be there.

The seeds of 'radicalism' were forcefully sown at that convention with the politicizing of worldly social issues linked to science fiction. Because of John Michel's stammer, his fierce, inflammatory speech, "Mutation or Death," was delivered by Don Wollheim, and extensive discussion developed afterwards among fans nationwide. One published report stated that "Kyle, one of Wollheim's inner circle, harangued at great length *against* the Michel speech." I was always for Utopian dreams, but I was never sold on 'Michelism'.

Dick Wilson had, toward the end of November 1937, created a weekly fanzine full of fannish news, under the title of *The Science Fiction News Letter*. In the January 1938 *News Letter*, Wilson commented on a report of the Third Eastern convention that had been written by Moskowitz, who had now begun to be very active in fandom, and published in the January 14th issue of Olon Wiggins's *Science Fiction Fan*. Wilson said that Moskowitz's report "was the first unbiased view" of the convention. Moskowitz had written that "the bombshell of the evening was perpetuated by Donald A. Wollheim, who expressed some very good arguments as written by John B. Michel, but degenerated these arguments into a political issue. For over an hour, pros and cons were rung on the subject by D. A. Kyle, J. B. Michel, D. A. Wollheim [and others] who were apparently talking about the possibilities of a world state. Mr. [Lloyd Arthur] Eshbach squelched the discussion very effectively by proposing that a motion be made that the convention be adjourned. He came, he said, to listen to a science fiction discussion and not a pseudo-political argument. The motion was carried and the meeting was called to an end."

A week later, in the *Fan*, Wollheim implicitly disagreed with his friend Wilson's evaluation by claiming the report was completely inaccurate and proof of the "utter stupidity of a large portion of the so-called fans" and "ignores all the intellectual aspects of the convention for the purely inane and frivolous." Thus began the bitter feud between Wollheim and Moskowitz which would grow at the next convention, in 1938, and climax later at the First World Science Fiction Convention, in 1939.

My participation in the Third Eastern convention, as I hazily recall, was not concerned with the personalities involved, but with examination of the philosophical idealism of science fiction and its optimistic visions of the future and the expression of revulsion over the rise of Fascism. Damon Knight, in his fascinating book *The Futurians*, explained: "Others in Wollheim's circle were indifferent or hostile to Communism. David A. Kyle, who lived with his family in Monticello, was brought up a Republican, and although he enjoyed playing at being a Bolshevik — wearing a red hat [beret] and marching in the May Day parade — he never took it seriously."

Perhaps the Wollheim-Michel extremism was the commencement of Will Sykora's own extremism with Wollheim and his coterie, which would soon fester in the spring of 1938. With the destruction of the ISA by mutual antagonism of its leaders, Wollheim now had an even greater conflict than with Moskowitz brewing — he and Sykora were hardening into mortal enemies. For these reasons, the continuity of the Eastern Conventions became, by default, the project of Sykora, with Moskowitz's help. The radicalism and personal animosities that surfaced at the Third Eastern were the sour fruit which would inevitably ripen at the Fourth Eastern.

And so it came to pass that on Sunday, May 29, 1938, the First National Science Fiction Convention, ostensibly the Fourth Eastern, was held at the Slovak Sokol Hall in Newark, New Jersey. This was Moskowitz's territory — the convention site was the same place where he would rule the roost

with the Eastern Science Fiction Association for years afterward. Sykora had planned well, and the event was widely advertised. Fanzine editors had been enlisted in the cause, and special issues proliferated at the convention. Speeches had to be submitted for approval in advance, which eliminated Wollheim and Michel from the program — instead, they each had printed booklets of their controversial messages for distribution. The attendance was the largest yet, well over one hundred. *Astounding*'s new editor, John W. Campbell, jr. himself, showed up, plus many popular professionals, including Standard Publications editorial director, the legendary Leo Margulies.

The program was varied and enjoyable, with Campbell revealing himself to be very interested in fandom. Sykora soon took aim on 1939, and moved for chairman Moskowitz to appoint a temporary or permanent committee to plan a world convention. When questions were raised and debate developed, Herbert Goudket, in the interests of harmony, succeeded in having the motion tabled. After a recess, when most professionals had left, Sykora replaced Moskowitz as chairman and took up the issue of sponsorship. Bearing in mind the pending idea of a world convention planning committee, I moved that an organization be formed for that purpose, and the motion passed unanimously. But then, Sykora entertained a motion that would authorize himself to appoint a temporary committee, which in turn could choose a larger, permanent committee. There was a lot of argument, as this would do away with the original committee from the Second Eastern that was headed by Wollheim, but in the end, the motion passed. Sykora then appointed a five person temporary committee that included himself, along with Moskowitz, Goudket, Chester Fein, and Walter Kubelius.

That was when I caused trouble. I protested that a group wasn't being represented, thinking of the Wollheim-Michel-Pohl faction. Sykora maintained that he recognized no group distinction and should there be any such oversight he could always remedy it in the permanent committee. I do remember that I got quite upset and vocal about this, but discussion ended with a contested adjournment when a majority of the disinterested audience chose to end the bickering. I hurriedly wrote out a petition of protest and solicited signatures. Many signed, some passionately, some indifferently. The convention leaders, however, unfairly charged that I fraudulently obtained signatures by the simple deception of asking for autographs. At any rate, the result was notarized and later passed around to others, but as far as I know it was never published, and the original is now long lost.

From that point, Sykora and Moskowitz moved quickly. Fearful of the Wollheim-Michel clique, the dynamic young Moskowitz convinced Sykora of the need to create a counter force called 'New Fandom'. Moskowitz was deeply involved in the fanzine world, so he built on a moribund fan organization, obtained needed fanzine publicity, and debuted an impressive new fanzine to win the acceptance of the critical professional magazine editors and publishers. By the autumn of 1938, the two were indisputably in control for the big event in the following year.

In this reminiscence, the *Mimosa* editors insisted I include "some description of these conventions [the First and the Fourth] ... two of the most important fan events of all time." I could write more, but this is enough.

The First National also marked the period when fanzine publishing reached a crescendo of sound and fury. My protégé, Jimmy Taurasi, inspired perhaps by my ambitious Phantasy Legion cooperative publishing ideas, became a whirlwind of action. Except for some encouragement and the use of my mimeograph machine, I had little to do with his *Cosmic Tales* and a raft of magazines in a year which had an explosion of fanzines. Jimmy was a hard worker of some talent, but he couldn't match up with his exceptional competitors. However, his imperfect weekly, *Fantasy News*, developed into an important regular publication. Wilson's *News Letter* was an extremely literate and well-produced product, but Taurasi's *News*, crude as it was, did actually become a true news source.

When the summer of 1938 ended, I went to college at the University of Alabama. In my first month in the south, the Futurians officially came into existence, back in New York City. Under the dignified name of 'The Futurian Science Literary Society', its first open meeting was held on September 18th. The Futurian Society was not a club

like a branch of the old Science Fiction League, the ISA, or the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society, but rather a group of like-minded and very independent fans. As an absent compatriot, I automatically became a member. One week later, Taurasi, encouraged by Sykora, created the Queens Science Fiction League chapter. Taurasi's enthusiastic help in promoting New Fandom in his weekly news sheets was very effective and the QSFL chapter rose to great prominence. As a result, Taurasi earned the right to be the third member of the Moskowitz-Sykora-Taurasi 'triumvirate'. Wollheim valiantly fought the opposing tide for control of the upcoming World's Convention, but in the end, eventually ungraciously threw in the towel. He and the rest of the aborning Futurians were out in the cold.

So that was 1938! It was the year the biggest fan feud of all time started. But it was also the year when the Martians invaded the earth...

Great melodramatic moments in history brand themselves on the human mind. That's what happened for twenty-four hours starting on the evening of October 30, 1938, in my second month as a 'Bama freshman. On that night before Halloween, panic swept across America — well, among enough people, that is, to cause a worldwide stir. Intelligent men, women, and children who were listening to the radio that evening really believed that Martians had invaded earth, and that the east coast of the United States was being destroyed by tentacled metal machines and deadly heat rays.

It was a realistically-presented science fiction story that had caused all the commotion, of course.

Two people with sound-alike names were responsible: a precocious Orson Welles had presented H.G. Wells's famous *War of the Worlds* in a new, modern form. And by nine o'clock that evening Welles had made himself a notorious reputation. I was unaware that it was even being broadcast. One of my college roommates rushed into our room, rather breathless and disturbed, to announce that the earth was being invaded and that I should turn on the radio set and listen. It didn't take long to recognize the story and to note the Mercury Theater disclaimer. I was sorry that I had missed most of it.

Incredibly, the next day was awash with all kinds of repercussions. Some northern students had phoned home in panic. The morning newspapers had sensational headlines and detailed stories. My reaction was that of a smug teenager amused at the outburst of stupidity.

Near the end of 1938, I went home for Christmas vacation at the minimal cost of some gasoline money paid to a Jersey City student car-owner. In the inside pocket of my long overcoat was a pint of White Lightning, an illegal distillation I had purchased in a remote meadow which was its distribution point for University students. It was my holiday present to my close pal, Dirk Wylie, a.k.a. J. Harry Dockweiler, who fancied himself as a younger Ernest Hemingway, complete with trenchcoat, fedora, and manly habits.

I met Dirk in Manhattan on my way home, and we took the Independent subway to his home in Queens Village, Long Island. At the last stop, we went through the wooden exit gates, and somehow the bottle moved from under my armpit, and slid rapidly down inside my long coat. I frantically attempted to halt its race toward destruction. Failure! It smashed on the concrete floor, and from amidst the shards of glass rose an overpowering aroma. We were alone in the bowels of the 169th Street Station, shocked. We clasped each other's shoulders and wept — he, for his vanished drink and I, for my special present to a friend.

Not too many months later, on St.Valentine's Day of 1939, I marked my second decade of existence. Farewell, teens, farewell! I was an adult — I was now twenty. Ahead of me was the revolutionizing era of the world conventions... ☼

It's about time to wrap up this issue, but first some more Fan Anthropology. Fandom is filled with entertaining stories, but there are probably just as many interesting tales that could be told about things that fans do in their everyday lives outside of fandom. The following is a case in point. The writer, a previous and perhaps future Hugo nominee in the Fan Writer category, recently gained his fifteen minutes of fame in the real world. Here's how he did it...

It Pays to ADVERTISE?

by
Guy H. Lillian III

* * *

ENJOY THE ***SUGAR BOWL*** *IN* ***NEW ORLEANS*** *...*
BUT ***BRING THIS AD!***

If you get *in* trouble, we can help you *out*!
If you need a lawyer while in New Orleans, call us.

Guy Lillian * Dennis Dolbear
Attorneys at Law * (504)821-2362/(504)831-9271
* * *

Let me explain a brouhaha which made my friend Dennis Dolbear and I nationally famous — briefly, I hope — at the end of 1996. It was originally my idea: advertise in the home papers of tourists soon to visit New Orleans, some of whom would be bound to get in trouble on the streets of the Crescent City, and need lawyers.

It only makes sense. People flock to New Orleans for events like the Sugar Bowl and Mardi Gras looking for a Good Time. Such people sometimes take their quest for Fun a bit far, and run afoul of the constabulary. To put it bluntly, they get arrested.

They need lawyers. Strangely enough, I need something too. *Money*. When I was a boy, all life used to begin with play. Now all life begins with *work*, for the paying of bills is the root of all evil. How — to quote *Star Trek* — could the needs of the many (the desperate tourists) be reconciled with the needs of the few (me)?

You *hustle*. Central Lock-Up is the facility where new arrestees are booked and bonded. The hungry lawyer meanders through the door, casting his eye about for civilians with a desperate, deserted set to their countenances. To the trained eye such expressions connote one thing: *"My boyfriend's been arrested and I don't know what to do!"*

It happens all the time, of course. Her boyfriend may have done nothing more deadly than imbibe to excess, and/or fail to find proper facilities for the sanitary disposal thereof ... but our constabulary is not known for turning a blind eye to such transgressions. He ends up in handcuffs and she in hysterics. What does she do? Her usual course is to pay a bond at Central Lock-Up — about $500 for the usual minor malfeasance. The boyfriend is released after a few hours and given a time to appear in Municipal Court. He either pleads Not Guilty on that occasion and receives a trial date, or Guilty and receives part of his bond back, the rest being kept as a fine. (Or blows the whole thing off and skips town, forfeiting the entire bond.)

Or. She can hire *me*. In that case I call Dennis Dolbear, who calls his contact with clout (hereafter known as 'Our Man'), who calls the jail and gets the boyfriend *paroled*. This means he is released without bond. The money which would have gone

to the bond goes, instead, to *me*. In exchange, he gets a lawyer to stand up for him at his arraignment, get his trial date, and fight the forces of oppression. Actually, since we only dun our clients to the tune of $250, they save half their money — and get legal representation, to boot. A better bargain, really. The trouble is getting people to realize it. So, step two is invoked: you *advertise*.

This is ethical. There's nothing wrong with lawyers advertising as long as they adhere to certain standards promulgated by the Bar Association. A lawyer can't guarantee results, for instance, or outside of a few specific disciplines proclaim himself a 'specialist'. There are lawyers who push the envelope and tout themselves like toothpaste, but when I advanced the idea to Dennis that we try to pick up some business from the Sugar Bowl, and he gave his enthusiastic okay, I vowed to cling to the canons and say nothing iniquitous. When I wrote the ad, I called the Louisiana Bar Association to clear the wording. The decree of the Liaison for Lawyer Advertising was abrupt and unequivocal: "Run it!"

Next question: Run it *where*?

I found the names of the student newspapers at the two schools competing in the Sugar Bowl football game, Florida State University and the University of Florida, and called 'em up. I'd missed the deadlines for each school's final papers of the semester, *but* Tallahassee had another outlet, *The Florida Flambeau*. A nice kid named Carlos assured me that *they* had available space, so I faxed them the above, and they ran it, and *all Hell broke loose*.

The phone *hurled* itself off the hook... but not with clients. With *media*. Apparently advertising in out-of-town newspapers was such a unique and original idea that my little amateur ad was *news*. The calls came roaring in from Florida radio stations and Florida newspapers. All had similar questions: **Why are you doing this?** "Make money and serve the public." No use denying the former, and it didn't hurt to schmooze the shmucks with the latter. **Why didn't you advertise in Gainesville papers?** As if we were stating that only FSU students ran the risk of getting busted. "Missed the deadline." **Will you do this again?** "If we make some money, we'll try it again for Mardi Gras... and *saturate* Southern colleges."

The tone of all the interviews was also similar, and not good. I sensed *offense*. Part of it was the usual, tedious loathing for our profession: lawyers being slimy shysters, how dare such vermin try to make money off innocent, pristine, and guiltless college kids? I began to worry a little. That worry cascaded into dizzying panic when the call arrived from WDSU-TV, the local NBC affiliate. *They* wanted an interview.

Dennis arranged for the TV station to sit us down in a downtown office where, presumably, we'd look lawyerly. Harried from a busy end-of-the-year work day, and a run of several blocks from the nearest parking spot, I arrived to find him smiling with an exquisite young black girl — originally from Dallas, which befitted her look of money — and a cameraman. They sat us down, set us up, and let us talk.

I watched the broadcast through a mesh of fingers, and I must say that Dennis looked good on tape. Me, I appeared — here it comes — thoroughly *fubbo**, though I don't know how anyone could tell that I'm broke just by looking. We *sounded* okay, although I could have garroted Dolbear when the girl asked what crimes we anticipated, and he proudly answered, "Public urination."

Then *Sports Illustrated* called.

The guy asked all the standard questions and got all the standard replies (with a request on the side for more stories about Jimmy Connors, my sports idol). When I scored the issue and scanned the squib in "Sportstalk," I didn't care for its tone; it mentioned Shakespeare's line about 'killing all the lawyers' and was headlined "Ill Legal Pitch." Well, *SI* never treated Connors right, either. (My cousin Johnny read it and called from California, pretending to be an arrestee from Florida State. Nice try, chum; I recognized the voice.) But... *Sports Illustrated*! How many *lawyers* who have to scrimp and save to *buy* an issue of *SI* end up *in* it?!?

It was all too much. Gratefully I fled north for the holidays. Safe at my mother's house in Buffalo, the only fallout was welcome: a call from Southern trufan George Inzer, who had read the national feed after our first radio interview. He said they were

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* *fubbo*: fat, ugly, bald, broke, old. *C'est moi*, I'm afraid.

calling us 'smart lawyers'. Now *that* I could handle!

As '96 waned and the Sugar Bowl approached, I returned home. Waiting was a letter from a Florida fan (no return address), its upshot that true Gators and 'Noles aficionados would save their money to *bribe cops*, not pay shysters. Mentally wishing the writer much opportunity to explore this possibility, I set up a strong communications link with Dolbear (that is, I kept my phone by my side) and prepared for New Year's Eve.

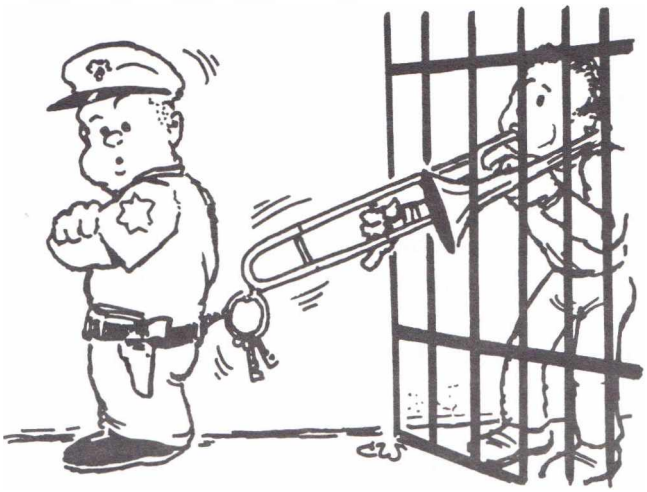
The phone *melted*. Call after call came in. Three former clients asked for loans. My neighbor Cindy called twice to tell me what a great time she was having at her boyfriend's sister's party. However, no students, jailed or otherwise, bothered me.

I was feeling pretty glum about the silence, but New Year's Eve fell on Tuesday and the Sugar Bowl itself wasn't until Thursday. We had another night of mad French Quarter revelry to look forward to... with *plenty* more chances for ~~arrests~~ work. Also, the New Year opened with another request for an interview — this time from a *Florida* TV station. I pulled on a sports coat and hung a tie around my neck and met the pleasant sportscaster at the Hyatt Regency. *His* tone I liked. "Which school do you think will have more arrests?" he asked. "Actually," I replied, "I expect the kids from both schools will spend the entire weekend engrossed in *prayer*." Big laugh, big hit.

The local tube claimed there had been only five arrests in the Quarter on New Year's Eve. Hard to believe! True, the city had borrowed police from all over this part of the state and the Vieux Carre was literally crawling with cops. But to me that meant *more* busts, not fewer... so that low figure sounded like public relations bushwah to me. I resolved to forget about the phone and keep a personal eye on Central Lock Up, where arrestees would be brought. Good move.

I was there at seven o'clock the next morning. Bead-bedecked college kids covered the place, dejected, exhausted, bleary, worried. Without *seeming* to pounce (since Bar Association rules forbid lawyers from approaching potential clients for work*) I spoke to several. Most were washouts — they'd already paid the bond and would face the judge without lawyerly representation. Rotsa ruck. But one sad-faced trio...

Like them, their 'downed bro' was a member of the FSU marching band. He had been caught using informal bathroom facilities in and upon the streets of the French Quarter. After his arrest for this 'lewd conduct', the lad was frisked and lo, a pipeful of marijuana was found. "We can get him out," I told the kids. "Here's my card." Still glum, they taxied off. A couple of hours later, they called. "Here's our friend's father's 800 number," they said. "He wants you to call him."



Daddy was an Orlando pharmacist, a solid citizen who, more than anything, wanted his boy to march in the Sugar Bowl. He was understanding of the occasional imbecilities of youth, and smart enough to realize the value of an attorney when you've been thrown in jail. He wired the fee to my bank and DD and I rushed to the courthouse, in search of a judge. At three o'clock in the afternoon on January 2nd, you can imagine how many still thronged the halls of justice. But we found one, and spilled the sad story of a wayward boy losing the chance of a trombonist's lifetime... and he made the call.

Dennis and I returned to CLU to wait for the kid's release. We didn't have to do this. But I'd promised Pops that I'd do everything possible to get Junior to the game, which meant, if the need arose, hauling him there from jail. So we sat and sat and sat, and while we sat picked up two other cases.

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* This rule is mainly designed to deter ambulance-chasing in civil cases, but also applies to criminal law. So what the hungry attorney must do is stand around, look lawyerish... and wait for the client to bite his lure. *ahem*

One involved a beautiful young lady from Mississippi and her boyfriend, busted for fighting with a butt-squeezing local; the girl had been thrown down, slugged, tit-grabbed and called filthy names. By the *cop*! No no no no. I'd have something to *say* about that!

Anyway, the tinkling trombonist was eventually freed, and DD and I puttputted him to his hotel. He got to toodle his horn in the Big Game and watch his team get porked, 52-20. I told his story in our second WDSU interview... and gamely autographed an issue of *Sports Illustrated* for another lawyer, who allowed that he, too, might start spending holiday nights hanging around Central Lock Up. Just what we needed: competition,with Mardi Gras just around the bend.

* * *

Actually, it turned out to be a *good* Mardi Gras, despite my ambition to make money from it, and despite a week of lou'ring clouds and temperatures fit for chilblains. Carnival, it seems, continues to conquer all.

Not like it used to, of course. Not like the early years, when Carnival was new to me and catching every bead had the success of the season riding on it, and every Rex doubloon was a valued treasure instead of a meaningless disc of anodized aluminum. Or when Dennis's immortal GrasCon was in swing, and a glut of partying maniacs would descend onto Nawlins, shouts of *"EH-pic!"* echoing, and the call of this town to the prodigal grew stronger and stronger... No, not like those days, for one has since become jaded with the repetitive parades, and the jostling, howling crowds, and the interminable waits, and the gawdawful traffic. Now, none of *Our* People visit New Orleans for Mardi Gras (fans come to Jazz Fest, if they come at all), and the krewe that used to coalesce around fandom in this town has drifted along differing (and diverging) paths. Now, Mardi Gras is mostly a bore, a bitter reminder of the lost joys of youth... *and* a way to make extra money grubbing behind the demands of my exalted and squalid profession. Everything has changed with the years, practically none of it for the better.

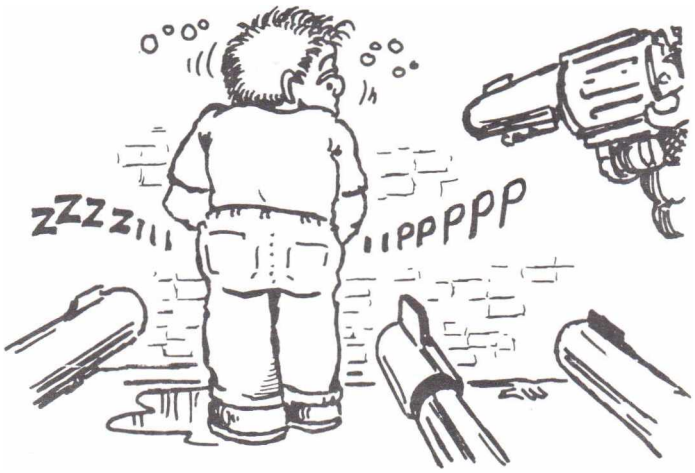
But still...

What was *good* about this Gras? Well, for one thing, I *did* make some money. Not a lot, not the tons that *could* have been collected, but enough to pay the odd bill or two for the month, which I'm old enough to regard as a triumph.

For Mardi Gras I decided to place an ad in the local fishwrapper. This act was called into question when the ad came out not on the eve of Mardi Gras' big weekend, but at the very start of Carnival, two weeks before. Porked again.

Carnival began. The early parades rolled. The minor krewes held their balls (so to speak). I ignored all. Not until the weekend before Fat Tuesday would the *big* parades hit the asphalt and the cops really get crackin'. Indeed, t'was on the afternoon before Bacchus, among Carnival's biggest and best parades, that I struck what gold there was to be struck.

Outside the gates to CLU a group of tourists stood, confused, upset, concerned, baffled... ripe for plucking. I sashayed up. They blubbered forth wonderful stories. You've heard what women do here for Mardi Gras beads?* Men can act with similar foolishness. One lady — very handsome gal in her late forties, wearing a parka with a flag on it — had seen her paramour hauled off by the gendarmes after he *whipped out his schween* in front of *Galatoire's*, one of the finest restaurants in this (or any other) city. *Nuns* were supping in the front window! She asked Dolbear — whom I quickly summoned — a zillion questions, but finally came up with the loot. The other folks told a more poignant tale.



The elder of the two was named Alison, and the

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* Ed. Note. The reader is referred to the photospread in *Challenger* #6, available from the writer of this article

younger was her daughter, although I could barely believe it. Alison possessed the smooth countenance of nubile youth but the bearing of adult care. That morning, on sheerest whim, she had joined her cute daughter and her daughter's boyfriend, and driven down from Biloxi, Mississippi. They'd had a fabulous day carousing in the French Quarter. And then some schmuck had put a move on the daughter in the French Quarter. The boyfriend had objected and naturally, it was him who had ended up behind bars.

In her own words, Alison had brought nothing but cigarettes. No money. No checkbook. No driver's license. No way to rescue anyone from jail. Despair! Despair! Alison was literally shivering with anxiety. ~~Buzz Lightyear~~ GHLIII to the rescue!

No money? No problem! Smitten to my idiot wits, I first offered to drive Alison — and her daughter, if she *insisted* on coming — home to Biloxi to pick up her checkbook. What's a three-hour jaunt to Mississippi and back on the busiest day of the season? For once saner, Dennis overruled me, and simply assured Alison that she could pay us *later*. The beautiful lady smiled, my heart split like a melon, and off went Dolbear to call Our Man, the elected official who would parole the miscreants out of jail.

He wasn't home.

Not to worry, Dennis assured me. Our Man is just out at the Bacchus parade. He'll call his answering machine anytime now, hear DD's entreaties, and free our clients. We went to dinner. DD kept his beeper by his ear. Nothing.

Not to worry, Dennis told me. Our Man is at a party, no doubt, and will call as soon as he gets home. Which will be *any time now*. We stared at the beeper. Nothing. We drove by Our Man's uptown house. It was as dark as the tomb. Had this ever happened before? No.

Now worry, Dennis said.

I did my best to reassure our clients, who were still at CLU, staring at the door, waiting for their friends to be freed. Undoubtedly our contact is... delayed. Not to worry, I smiled... through clenched teeth. Alison gazed up at me with concern softened by limitless faith. My heart oozed out of my chest and dripped over my shoes. Oh, that she could think me untrue to my word. Dennis called and called. Our Man stayed gone. We called three judges, reaching none. They were also incommunicado.

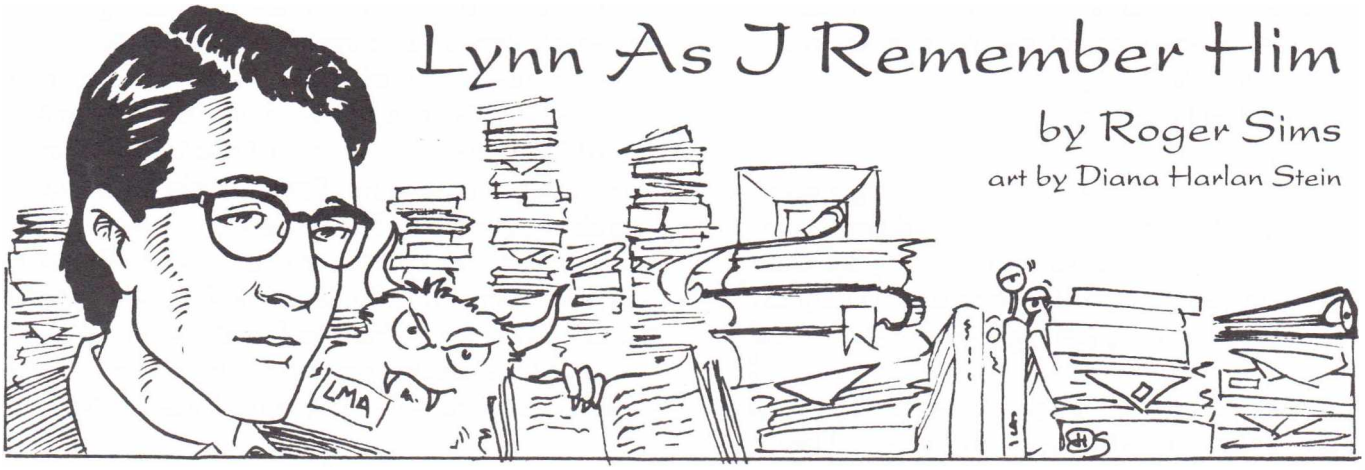
I fled home and to bed. Twice during the night the other clients called to bitch about the long wait. I told them all that I knew, and somehow garnered enough sleep to have enough wit about me to know that it was good news when Dennis called at seven o'clock. "It's done," he reported. Seems Our Man had indeed been to a party and had indeed taken advantage of the Mardi Gras ambience and had indeed passed out. His first act upon staggering home had been to make our calls for us. Breathing a great sigh of relief, I dashed to CLU and reported same to our weary but comforted clients. In fact, I took Alison and her daughter to breakfast — their first meal in twenty-four hours. I was doubly a hero.

Later, Dennis and I got to meet the felons who had put the ladies through such an ordeal — a chubby, fortyish, bald-pated fellow and a skinny kid with a pierced ear. You, I told them, are lucky men. Not because they'd spent the night in jail, of course; but because they had such splendid people on their team. (Think about it. Say *you* were in a strange city and got arrested for an *embarrassing* offense. Who could *you* call? Who would ride to *your* rescue?)

So: were our experiments in advertising worthwhile? We didn't cull a single *sou* that could be distinctly traced to the advertisements... but we *did* get famous. Eve Ackerman, a fan friend who owns a radio station in Florida, told me that I'm *still* known as 'that New Orleans lawyer' to wags in Gainesville. For whatever that's worth, the ad was a triumph.

But I think I'd trade it for a kind word from Alison.

Archeology is the study of antiquity. Fandom is now into its eighth decade, and the unfortunate truth about the aging of fandom is that every year brings us depressing news of the deaths of more and more of the those who, in previous decades, were the shapers of what fandom is today. This past couple of years has been especially cruel, with the passing of Charles Burbee, Redd Boggs, Bob Shaw, Ethel Lindsay, Ed Wood, Joni Stopa, Elsie Wollheim, and just recently, Sam Moskowitz. We're ending this issue with a remembrance of another well-known fan of many decades by one of his friends.



Lynn As I Remember Him

by Roger Sims

art by Diana Harlan Stein

My friend Lynn Hickman died October 30, 1996, at age 70, just eight short weeks after having been diagnosed with lung cancer. Sometime during the first week in August, Lynn decided that he wasn't feeling well. He also decided that he did not have an ordinary cold or even bronchitis or even pneumonia. It might just be something more serious. So, by his own standards, he did something very drastic: he stopped smoking — this, after being a smoker for his entire adult life. As the reader has already surmised, this action was much too late.

His wife, Carolyn, also aware things were not well, kept urging him to see his doctor. In early September, he finally did. Cancerous spots were located on his lungs and it was discovered that he had second stage emphysema as well as blood clots in his legs. It was determined that he was not a candidate for surgery, and was put on radiation treatments instead. A second examination after the radiation course revealed that the cancer had made considerable growth and the doctor gave him two to six months to live. Lynn cut that to eight days by eating and drinking almost nothing.

That is quite enough of his death. Let us now examine in some length his life and times. Lynn Hickman was born June 5th, 1926. He grew up with the pulps and science fiction fandom. He was truly a man of his times.

Lynn's early career in fandom took the form of writing letters to the pulps and to fans whose letters he enjoyed reading in their letters column. He had made a conscious effort not to attend a science fiction convention, although he did enjoy reading about the antics of fans who did. All this changed when Cincinnati won the right to hold the 1949 WorldCon, but even with Cincinnati winning, Lynn was still not sure he wanted to attend a meeting at which he might encounter over a hundred people, even if all of them would be fans! Now I'm sure that many reading this who knew Lynn may well be astounded by that statement. But the truth is that Lynn never liked being with a lot of fans at one time. This is the reason why he attended very few Worldcons during the last fifteen years. What probably made him decide to attend the Cinvention was that his good correspondent buddy, Don Ford, was to be the chair — that and the fact that the convention hotel in downtown Cincinnati had beds that pushed into the wall. In later years as he told and retold this story, it was not possible to determine which one of the two reasons had the most weight, but I do believe that it was the bed in the wall that pushed him over the edge, so to speak.

It turned out that Lynn had a great time at Cinvention. When Portland won the right to hold the 1950 Worldcon, he felt that it was just too far to go for a weekend and stayed home. But in 1951 he

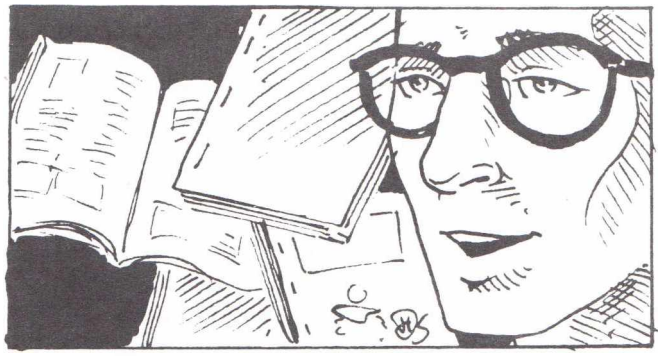
decided that New Orleans was not too far, and besides, his favorite music, Dixieland, was played all over town there. And so he went. After attending those two worldcons and a couple of Midwestcons (including the first one) there was no turning back. In later years he was proud that he had only missed one Midwestcon!

I suppose it's possible that Lynn will be remembered as a fan legend. His accomplishments in fandom are themselves certainly legendary. In the summer of 1950, Wilkie Conner came to visit Lynn in Statesville, North Carolina, where Lynn was living at the time. They decided to form a club that would give solace and unification to people who were stared at by mundanes as if they were little monsters when they were seen reading prozines, and gave it the whimsical name of 'The Little Monsters of America'. The club lasted for over a decade, and even sponsored some small conferences. There was even a club fanzine. And in October of 1958, Lynn was present at a meeting that established an even more famous fan group: First Fandom.

From reading various things after he died, I learned that Lynn first published a fanzine sometime during 1950. Over the next forty-five-plus years he published many fanzines and apazines. The two main titles of his general interest fanzines were *J.D. Argassy* and *Pulp Era*. *Pulp Era* was his serious zine, devoted to discussions of all of the pulp magazines. *Pulp Era* was considered an important fanzine for that reason, so much so that copies of all of the *Pulp Eras* are now in the Library of Congress.

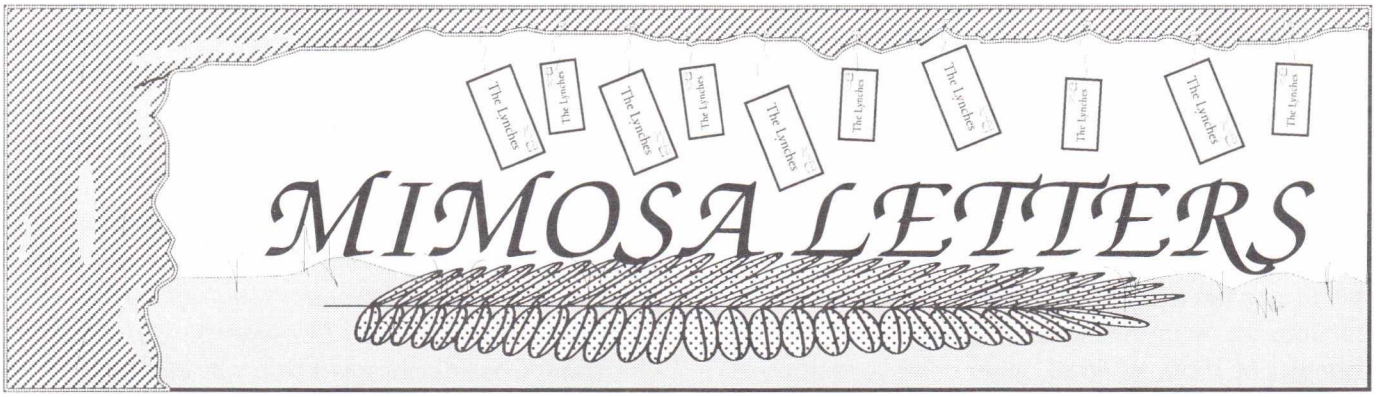
In 1972, Lynn invited four other pulp collectors to spend a weekend with him at his home in Wauseon, Ohio, to discuss all aspects of the pulps. At the end of the weekend, two of the others, Gordon Huber and Rusty Hevelin, decided with Lynn that this one-shot was too much fun to let die, so they made plans to hold a second one in nearby Toledo. This was the start of the annual Pulpcon conventions. Lynn was only involved with Pulpcon's operations in its formative years, but he always remained loyal to it, attending over half of the meetings. He and Darrell Richardson have been Pulpcon's only two Fan Guests of Honor. Sometime in the 1980s, Lynn was the receiver of the Lamont Award, which is given each year to the person who has made major contributions to the world of pulp magazines. In 1987, he talked 24 other pulp collectors into participating in an apa devoted to pulp magazines. He was its first editor.

In addition to *J.D. Argassy* and *Pulp Era*, Lynn published many fanzines with often interesting names: *Pack Rat*, *Wauseon Wonder Stories*, *Huckleberry Finnzine*, *The Goody Gumdrop Boys at Jellybean Mountain*, and *Gooseberries*. His reason for using *Gooseberries* as a title was he liked gooseberry pie and once made several bottles of excellent wine from the gooseberries in his backyard.



I first met Lynn at the first Nolacon, where he was the very first fan introduced there. It was friend for life at first contact. Between 1951 and about 1965 our contact was limited to the conventions that we attended, but after that he, I and our wives spent at least fourteen weekends a year together. In addition to the many hours that we spent at his kitchen table after our wives had gone to bed, we were privileged to spends many hours in bars in England, Scotland, New Zealand, and Australia. During these 'discussions', we would argue over the smallest details to the point that anyone in earshot would throw up their hands and walk away. In fact, sometimes in the middle, having exhausted our points of view, we would change sides and continue on. It is safe to say that neither of us made the slightest dent in the other's opinion on anything!

I will miss him more than I have ever missed another fan or friend. He truly was the brother I never had. For the rest of my life I will not be able to taste a new beer, or see a movie, or hear a new joke, or read a book without saying to myself, "Damn I can't share this with Lynn!"



{{✎ Letter, letters, we love to get letters of comment! They are the energy source that keeps fan editors like us publishing. We do appreciate all the letters we receive, and we want to let you know that **all** your comments, whether or not they appear here in the letters column, are collected and sent on to the contributors. So please keep writing! Our contributors value the feedback as much as we do.

We'll begin this time with the *M*19 cover, by Debbie Hughes. It was a bit of a departure for us, in that it had the appearance more of a painting or even a photograph, rather than a drawing. We expected it would get some interesting comments, and we were right... }}

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Martin Morse Wooster, P.O. Box 8093, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

I hope the cover of *M*19 doesn't get you in trouble with fannish fans. Most of your previous covers have been pretty traditional cartoon-style covers that tell the reader that *Mimosa* is a genzine. But there's nothing light-hearted about Debbie Hughes's artwork; it's dark, brooding, mysterious, and not very *Mimosa*-like. In fact, Hughes's cover and the saddle-stapled binding of the fanzine may lead readers to think that *Mimosa* is a semi-prozine.

{{✎ As you can see from her *M*19 cover, Debbie Hughes is an excellent artist. This was not her first cover for *Mimosa*, however: she had previously drawn the back cover for *M*3 a decade ago. Since then, she's been successful in the professional side of the SF art world. Nowadays she prefers to work almost exclusively with the computer as a replacement for the pen and paintbrush, her *M*19 cover being an example of this. }}

Forrest J Ackerman's article {{✎ "Through Time and Space With Forry Ackerman, Part 4" }} was, as always, very interesting. I've read a great many articles about how nice Heinlein was — how he once bailed Philip K. Dick out, how he gave Theodore Sturgeon a dozen story suggestions for free, etc. But it's also clear that, as Ackerman makes clear, Heinlein had his nasty side. Why couldn't Heinlein apologize or admit he was wrong? Did he think he was as infallible as the heroes of his novels? (And what happened to Heinlein's Hugo for *Double Star*? If Ackerman didn't have it, who did?)

{{✎ Nobody, actually. *Double Star* won the Hugo Award for Best Novel at the 1956 Worldcon; it was the year that the Hugo trophies were not completed in time for the convention. }}

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Brad Foster, P.O. Box 165246, Irving, Texas 75016

It's interesting to compare the cover for *Mimosa* 19 with the one for the previous issue, from Ian Gunn's heavily detailed line art to this softer, greytone cover. Makes for a nice visual shift.

{{✎ We mentioned to Debbie that, like you, many readers found her cover artwork for *M*19 visually stunning, but, unlike you, a bit incongruous with what was normally expected from us. Her response was interesting: "The piece is called 'Annabelle Lee', though it is a combination of *two* pieces I

did for Poe's most lovely poem. It was published originally by the Bookworm and Broderbund, i.e., as two pieces and in color. Incongruous? Well, we all need a bit of change in our lives." }}

Also, way cool letter column art from Julia Morgan-Scott. Can another incredibly impressive cover presentation for *Mimosa* be far behind from her? I hope not! You don't see a whole lot of scratchboard art any more.

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Vincent Clarke, 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent DA16 2BN, United Kingdom

Let's get the awkward bit over first. *Mimosa* 19 doesn't look a bit like the sort of fanzine I've grown to cherish over many years. Photo cover, slick printing, gold-plated staples ... well, not those exactly, but I feel a bit uneasy. Like swapping your wife for some slinky temptress. I guess that's progress said he, shrugging uneasily, but...

Luckily, the contents are in excellent form, as usual. Your opening comments were interesting {{✎ "The Road to L.A.Con" }}. I had a few words with Forry Ackerman at the hurly-burly of Intersection in 1995, and at that time he was still trying to find a city to provide a suitable site for his immense collection. Seems they all chickened out when they realised the security precautions they'd have to take. Now, *there's* my dream job — security guard at the Ackerman Museum. I wonder how much I'd have to pay him?

John Berry, in "Shaw to Please," was his usual fantastic self. I remember that can of beans being used as a carriage return spring. As you'd expect, the Belfast Triangle plus John were full of similar ingenious ideas. Walt Willis once thought of sprinkling rice grains on freshly inked pages as they emerged from his duplicator, thus preventing offset by separating them. It didn't work out. Probably Madeleine objected to good food going to waste. Don't think that even in that household they'd want their rice puddings flavoured with duplicating ink.

Quite a coup, getting the Harry Warner article. His "North By Noreascon" was, naturally, first class. But it made me wonder what's happened to all the tapes that have been made at conventions? Where have they all gone? And why isn't there a SF tape fandom nearly as big as a reading fandom? In the old days, with reel-to-reel recorders, there used to be little directories published in fanzines, telling you who had recorders and at what speeds they ran. In some circles it was thought of as the Coming Thing — in the Gernsbackian future, all SF fans would correspond by tape.

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Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Street, Newport News, Virginia 23605

Hilarious article by John Berry. The typewriter with the carriage driven by the weight of a can of beans was a re-invention of the original Remington carriage drive — instead of a spring it had a weight in a cord, and in fact several typists suffered injuries to their toes when the cord broke.

I guess I must be slow — until I saw George Flynn's letter in the *M*19 lettercol it never occurred to me that the title *Mimosa* was chosen because the zine was originally printed by mimeo. But I think 'Printosa' sounds silly — the current version appears to be printed by what is technically called 'lithography', so perhaps you should change the title to 'Lithium'...

{{✎ Is that your way of saying we need to get more happy? Actually, our method of reproduction has nothing to do with the name we chose. (How's *that* for an out-of-context line?) *Mimosa* was named after the ubiquitous tree that populates the South. }}

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Ken Lake, 1A Stephen Court, Ecclesbourne Road, Thornton Heath CR7 7BP, United Kingdom

Another unusual fannish cover, delightful but enigmatic, set me up to be perplexed by your Opening Comments: why should anyone, walking *down*hill for ten minutes, need a 'rest stop'? Then I recalled an American tourist fly-driving through the English countryside: finding himself in urgent need of a toilet, he finally found a country hotel and dashed in demanding the 'rest room'. Said the bemused receptionist, "Oi'm sorry, zur, we don't 'ave one o' they — but you can go in the lounge if you loike."

Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, United Kingdom

Your visit to San Francisco reminded me of our own experiences in that lovely city in 1982. We stayed in the Yerba Buena Hotel at the foot of Powell Street and it was a dump. The corridors were narrow and dingy, with boarded off windows to keep out burglars. Our room window gave a delightful view of the side alley where the garbage cans were loaded and unloaded throughout the night.

Just across the main road was a fire station which had a four-appliance turnout every couple of hours between dawn and dusk. Perhaps there was a City Ordinance against fires during daylight hours. One advantage, indeed the only one, was the fact that the hotel was quite near the transport centre at the foot of Powell Street. In the morning we foolishly breakfasted in the hotel, along with several helpings of Japanese tourists. Naturally, the cook was overwhelmed. Somehow, one meal got misplaced out of order and from then on, everyone got part of what the next in line had ordered.

{{✎ In our Opening Comments in *M*19, we had mentioned our displeasure with the Granada Motel. On the other hand, we were very pleased with The Monticello in San Francisco, and would gladly both stay there again and recommend it to others. It was also located very near the cable car turnaround at the end of Powell Street, but there must have been another City Ordinance in effect because there were no fire engine disturbances whatsoever. }}

4SJ's put-down of Heinlein was a real eye-opener. I enjoyed reading it, but it's a sad thing to find one of one's idol had feet of clay. Willis was superb, what more can one say. Likewise Dave Kyle's article {{✎ "Those Wonderful Turbulent Thirties" }}. He brought back many memories and made me wonder why I ever sold of my collections of *Flying Aces* (I still have five issues), *Amazing*, *Wonder*, and *Everyday Science & Invention*. As for Ahrvid Engholm's piece on fan slang {{✎ "A Smorgasbord of Fan-Slang" }}, it made me realize that not all SF fen use English as a first language.

Roger Waddington, 4 Commercial Street, Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 9ES, United Kingdom

One comment I can offer this time around on the cover is that as soon as my eye caught it, I thought "Steven Fabian!", instantly back in my early years when he was as much a fanzine artist. So herewith my compliments, if rather backhanded, to Debbie Hughes. And that saddle-stapled, wrap-round format is most professional; in fact, I didn't know whether to be relieved or disappointed that the layout inside kept to the same format as before.

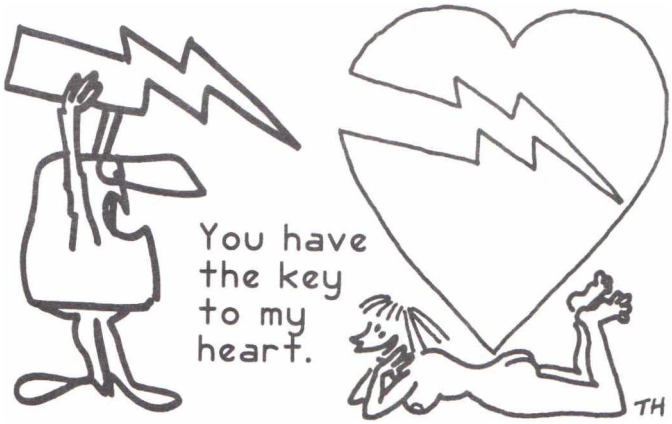
Reading Harry Warner's piece, I was greatly taken with the idea of putting convention programme items on record (and tape) for posterity, to catch at least some of the happenings and the atmosphere of the Worldcons, more than a written con report could give. Perhaps it could even be extended to minor cons as well. It would be an ideal solution for me; my first convention, the London Eastercon in 1970, was also my last.

{{✎ L.A.Con III proved it can still be done, but the logistics and resulting cost of recording a multi-multi-track program have got to be formidable. All the more credit to the L.A.Con committee for managing it. }}

Mind you, there's one aspect of science fiction I've never known through my sole reliance on the written word, of never being where fans gather; and that's "how do you pronounce the author's names?" My knowledge is encyclopedic otherwise; I'd be quite prepared to air it in public on radio or TV quiz show, if only I didn't foresee being covered in confusion when attempting to Name That Author. Right from the start, there's Poul as in Anderson and Vogt as in Van which still escape me, and when I came across Somtow Sucharitkul... no wonder his books are now labelled as S. P. Somtow. Is there a quick and easy answer, a Bluffer's Guide to SF?

{{✎ A bit of verse by Bob Shaw (originally from *Anvil* 55) comes to mind and seems appropriate here: "It's Zesty and Zingy, Is the name of Vinge; And a Cheerful ring, Attaches to Vinge. But something's so dingy, In the sound of Vinge; And surely they cringe, At the mention of Vinge." }}

Well, concerning Ahrvid Engholm's article (and how do you pronounce *that*?) as far as place-names go, 'gates' are very much in evidence over here as well as in present-day Swedish, thanks to our Viking heritage. You don't even need to go as far as the justly more-famous York. The four main roads of Malton are Castlegate, Wheelgate, Yorkersgate and Old Maltongate, reflecting one of a wave of colonisers; but the rest are streets. Through I do wonder how many of his constructions are able to be used in polite conversation and how many are limited to the pages of fanzines. Indeed, what of American fannish? A 'beanie' is easy enough and so is 'corflu'; you can stretch a point for 'fiawol', but has anybody managed to pronounce 'fijagh' without going into a coughing fit?



William Breiding, 103 North 6th Street, Fairfield, Iowa 52556-2840
wbreiding@aol.com

My favorite thing in this issue was the way you interlocked "Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman" and Walt Willis' "The Harp Meets #1 Fan." Forry's brief, but amusing description was a great lead-in to Walt's longer, affectionate piece about the meeting. Being almost entirely faanish, meaning not following the pros that much, I was surprised by Forry's descrprition of RAH's nasty behavior. I was aware that he had become somewhat irascible later in life, but had no idea that this behavior was apparently indemic to his personality. (By the way, I envy your visit to Forry's house!)

It occured to me while reading David Kyle's memoir (which continues to be wonderful, and engagingly written) to hope that this project is something he's commited himself to do with his entire fannish career, and would hope that he intends to publish it as a book, or at least as a complete fanzine. I, for one, would buy it without hesitation, happy to have it on my book shelf.

{{✎ We have some good news for you then: Dave is indeed planning a book comprised of his *Mimosa* articles and some related writings. The project isn't far enough along yet for us to provide any more information (or even a title!), but we're happy to hear that he will be adding his contribution to the growing accumulation of fan historica. }}

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Derek Pickles, 44 Rooley Lane, Bankroot, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD5 8LX, United Kingdom

Your description of the motel matches that of a pub we stayed in for a couple of days — the power supply for the TV was a long cable draped over and around a door frame and round the room, there were giant cobwebs behind the bathroom door and a mysterious white powder in the bath. We had booked for four days but got out as soon as we arranged accommodation at another inn in the little town. The new place was 500 years old, black oak beams and white plaster, immaculately clean and beautifully furnished and only $4 a person a night more than the doss-house.

The thing to watch out for is when the towels have *other* hotels' names on them.

Ahrvid Engholm says that English has borrowed from Scandinavian languages — English, especially Northern English has more than borrowed as very many place-names are clearly Nordic. Bradford's three original main roads are called Westgate, Ivegate and Kirk(church)gate and radiated from the old market square. The first mention of Bradford is in Domesday Book when it is described as having six townships (small settlements) spread over some thirty square miles. Bradford ('Broad-ford') is described as having a pasture half a mile long — alongside the 'beck', another nordic word — and as being 'waste', no inhabitants and derelict, which is not surprising after William's ravaging of the North of England when putting down the revolt of 1070.

Buck Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, Indiana 47348

Engholm is right about the advantages shared by U.S. and British fans. There are authors in other countries, but very few famous ones. Stanislaw Lem in Poland had fame for a while, at least, and several Russian authors had their books translated into English. Argentina had its own stf promag for a time but it didn't circulate much outside the country. Nor do the Japanese stfmags; I'm assuming there are some because I know there's a fandom there, and has been for some time. But to make money at the game, one needs to write in English.

{{✎ Probably so, but non-English science fiction publications are still very much in evidence if you look for them. For instance, we know for a fact that Poland has at least one promag because a fan club there sends us several issues at a time. *Nowa Fantastika* features short stories by big name authors translated from English, reports on movies, fan and professional news (this is partly a guess as it's all in Polish) and some really marvelous artwork, both in black & white and in color. It's a really slick looking production, and we feel badly we can't read Polish nearly well enough to enjoy it more. }}

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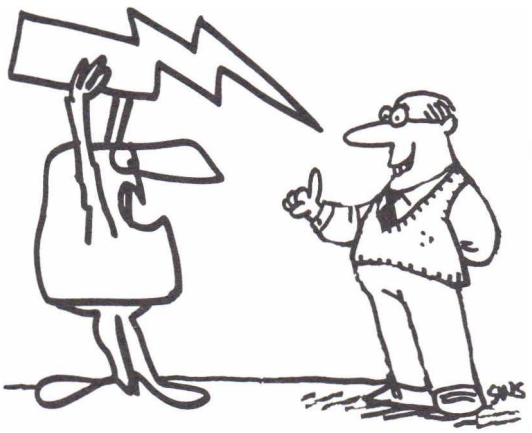
Ron Bennett, 36 Harlow Park Crescent, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG2 0AW, United Kingdom

Yes, many thanks indeed for *Mimosa* 19 and yes, another excellent cover. Beautiful shadow work over on the back cover. Definitely not a piece of work dashed off in four and a half seconds flat.

That was an inspired piece of editorial decision making, running Forry's account of his first meeting with Walt Willis back to back with the reprint of Walt's account of the affair. Two excellent articles.

Concerning Bob Shaw's speech about "Beer," over here, way back in the 1950s, we had a run of four consecutive Eastercons in the Midlands market town of Kettering. I think it was the second, in 1956, that Dave Hammond, who, at that time, was hiding from the Florida Mafia by serving in the armed forces under the name of 'Dave Jenrette', introduced British fandom to canned beer. Until then we'd known only bottles. Highly antiquated. The cans, of course, had to be prised open with a special piercing instrument, in two places to allow easy pouring. "The can must be shaken," Dave told us, "to ensure that the flavour is uniform throughout the can." Some poor sucker among us followed his dead-pan instructions to the letter. The can was shaken. The can was pierced. The jet of beer hit the ceiling. Those were the days...



"All right then, a burnt offering, three virgin sacrifices, and a glass of fine sherry every alternate Tuesday."

Pamela Boal, 4 Westfield Way, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7EN, United Kingdom

PJBoal@aol.com

I'd love to learn more about the techniques Debbie Hughes used for her interesting and atmospheric cover. As ever, the illos are of a high standard and apt. The most smile-worthy one for me is on page 38. I don't know how Joe Mayhew did it but that dragon is smug!

Hooray for Sharon Farber! {{✎ "Tales of Adventure and Medical Life #13½" }} It's a while since I saw an article in a zine that discusses science in fiction. Let's hope she starts a trend, that is, as long as people write with her deft light touch and from equally knowledge-based viewpoints. Much as I enjoy Sharon's medical reminiscences this article is, for me, her best yet.

Dave Kyle made me reflect that the delightful timebinding in *Mimosa* and some other zines is not only on a fannish level but for some of us (who may not be quite as mature as Dave but have seen a

few summers come and go) on a personal level. Dave's casual comment on the Cigar Store being the place where people could use the telephone really gave me pause for thought. Heck, I'm living in tomorrow's world. When I was a child, telephones were kept in red framed, glass boxes, on street corners. Girl Guides were taught how to use them in order to summon emergency services. I knew, of course, from films, that rich people, newsmen and businessmen could phone that far land of America by booking a call with the operator. Recently a friend mentioned that the cost of phoning home, when flying at 30,000 feet, was rather high. I can sit here at my computer and send letters that can be read within minutes in every corner (how about custom squaring a circle) of the globe. One of our grandsons asked me to help him with a school project: about aspects of life in grandparents childhoods and how the grandparents felt about some of those changes. That request came a couple of days after Dave's article had caused me to ponder that very topic. A new role for *Mimosa*, an aid to a British boys' school work?

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Joseph Major, 1409 Christy Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040
jtmajor@iglou.com

After reading your opening comments, I am surprised that you survived a baseball game at San Francisco's Candlestick Park. From picking up on Tim Lane's abundant baseball material, I have been informed that the 'Stick is the worst park in baseball — chilly, foggy, and especially windy. And coincidentally enough, Tim will be working on the equivalent of the Worldcon for baseball statistics fiends next summer. Not quite as interesting as belly dancers, I am afraid.

As for 4E's disagreement with Heinlein (in "Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman, Part IV"), part of it may have stemmed from Kornbluth's general disgust with humanity. Look at the descriptions of him in *The Way the Future Was* and *The Futurians*. And too, he was mortally ill (malignant hypertension, remember) and may have been depressed, perhaps even trying out the medicine, which made him unable to write. All which means that Kornbluth may have been going about a mission of spreading ill-will. (N.B. Contrary to Teddy Harvia's title illustration, I am certain Heinlein would like to have 4SJ, also Alexei Panshin, and no doubt several other people perhaps even including myself, stand on his grave and declaim. However, as befitting a naval officer, Heinlein was buried at sea.)

You are in trouble. Running an article ("Tales of Adventure and Medical Life #13½") that not only is not about the minutiae of the in-group of fandom but actually dares to comment on science fiction! That will lose you the approval of the trufans from Seattle to Falls Church, and you will be cast forth into eternal darkness, damnation, and mundania. What it primarily shows, however, is how one ill-thought decision made early on in the development of a work can lead to complications of massive proportions. Asimov, you will recall, decided that he could not do much more with the Foundation Series after finishing the story of Arkady Darrell because of this; he had made plot decisions and settings that excluded things, and the net total of his efforts was to get him in circumstances where he felt he really could not say any more. Sometimes one could wish that he had stuck to that decision.

As for the Bob Shaw memorial work ("Beer"), with its comments on "the chilled, fizzy drink which is served up in American bars and given the name of beer," it reminds me of a story. A man goes into the a pub in and orders a drink. He wants, he says, the closest thing to American beer they have. They give him a glass of water.

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Richard Dengrove, 2651 Arlington Drive #302, Alexandria, Virginia 22306
RichD22426@aol.com

I agree with Sharon Farber. It is fun to make consistency out of what is patently inconsistent, like the *Star Trek* canon. John Alkins in his book *Tomorrow Revealed* (1956) set an even more Herculean task for himself, to reconcile all the science fiction works with one another: the historical period in which *War of the Worlds* took place with the one where *The World of Null-A* took place. Somehow we wound up being ruled by 'sophocrats', and the great world power was New Zealand.

I also agree with Bob Shaw, that pundit of pungent humor: many things that are thought to be fun

actually make us miserable. And we grin and bear them like stoics. For instance, getting stone drunk and passing out. Also, flitting from relationship to relationship like butterflies; we remain uncommitted until they commit us to the nut house. And then there are things that are 'authentic'. They don't beat around the bush here; the philosophy is you VILL enjoy them. I can relate to Bob's insistence that the only authentic beer is flat and lukewarm. I grew up at the New Jersey Shore and remember 'authentic' saltwater taffy. You rejected taffy unless it was hard as a rock and you couldn't separate it from the wax paper.

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Somehow, I've escaped the emotional upheaval of attending a Hugo award ceremony in which I was a finalist. I'd probably be even more excited than Michael Burstein was {{✎ in "Worldcon, the Hugo, and Me" }}, if I'd experienced the tension. But I believe I attended only one worldcon in the same year that I was a nominee and I left that one before the Hugos were awarded because I wasn't feeling well and thereby missed the climax of losing to someone else in my category. His description of the 1996 Hugo awards makes me wonder if the trophies will continue to become more complicated and handsome every year. The one I won four years ago was a major advance in design over my earlier ones and obviously, this year's was even more exciting to look at and possess.

I'm glad to know you have more Forry autobiography material on hand, besides this exciting episode. Heinlein must have been a complicated person. He seems to have been kindness itself to some fans who came into his presence, like the one who showed up uninvited at his home near the end of his life and was given all the hospitality anyone could want. This contrasts with some things he said and did to other people in the field and the eccentricities of his conduct at certain worldcons.

I hope Sharon Farber resumes her medical narratives after detouring this time for attempting the impossible. Nobody could make anything in the *Star Trek* universe make sense under close scrutiny. It's just fairy tales coated with a thin layer of futuristic props.

Inspired by Shelby Vick's accurate suspicion {{✎ in "A Flame Flickered" }}, I looked up my fan history notes on fandom in Florida and he's right; I had nothing on the Florida Flames or an anything else happening in that state between the activity of Raym Washington, Jr., in the early 1940s and the creator of a university fan club or two in the early 1950s. Shelby unintentionally caused an old wound to reopen when he referred to his group's screening of *The Shape of Things to Come*. I referred to that film in *All Our Yesterdays* and someone at Advent thought I was wrong to call it *Things to Come*. The Advent representative thought the film had the same title the Wells book, and we went back and forth over the matter. I forget how I finally convinced Advent that the movie had a shorter title than the book. Now Shelby leaves me wondering if some prints used the longer title for the movie.

{{✎ Your memory can be put at ease, as *Things to Come* is indeed the correct title of the film. Makes you kind of sorry that Leonard Maltin wasn't a science fiction fan back then, doesn't it? }}

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Kim Huett, PO Box 679, Woden, ACT 2606, Australia

I was rather taken with your editorial comment in *Mimosa* 19 in regards to San Francisco. As it happens San Francisco is the city I've most enjoyed while visiting the US. In contrast to your experience, I find it almost impossible to imagine spending time elsewhere in California, especially LA. When Perry Middlemiss won DUFF I sent him a note of sympathy. As I wrote, bad enough that he should have to suffer the horror of a worldcon, but

to be sentenced to one in LA is just cruel beyond imagining. It came as no surprise to me that after such an experience he should join the ranks of the living dead and become chair of AussieCon 3.

Shelby Vick's remembrance of the Lynn havention is the article in this issue to catch my eye, mainly due to Shelby's doubt that there was any record of this convention made. Now such a wise and long standing fan as Shelby should know that all knowledge is recorded in fanzines. Consequently it should be no surprise that the Lynnhavention was indeed the subject of a conreport by Lin Carter, in *Quandry* #8 (March 1951) no less. Not surprisingly, nowhere in Lin's detailed coverage of the con is any mention of the costume party that Shelby remembers. Just goes to show that the practice of everybody attending a different convention started very early indeed.

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William Bains, 101 Beechwood Avenue, Melbourn, Royston, Herts SG8 6BW, United Kingdom

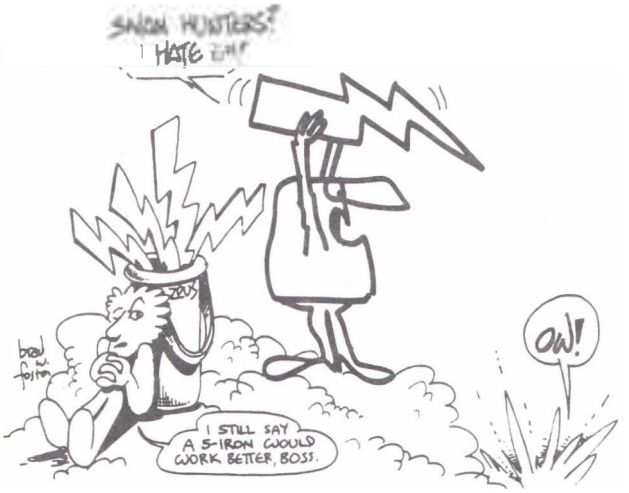
william@wbains.u-net.com

Thanks for *Mimosa* 19. Pretty impressive, just getting to 19 issues — some national newspapers have not managed as much. This does beg the question of what you are going to do for *Mimosa* 20. With your fan historical bent, you should clearly have the entire issue dedicated to articles on the history of — *Mimosa*. (But has Sharon Farber personally operated on you, to give the required medical tale?)

Anyway, 19 was very entertaining as always. I am struck by the difference your articles point up between fandom in the 1950s and the fandom of the 1990s. Mind you, I did not participate in the fandom of the 1950s — I was too young to read or write or, before 1955, exist. Nor do I really take part in fandom of the 1990s — I have too many jobs and young children. So, in fine fannish tradition, I am uniquely well qualified to comment on both. The 1950s seem much more, well, *cuddly* is the only word to describe it, like fandom was all carried on by a small coterie of close friends in a cupboard somewhere. Now it is 10,000-person worldcons and Internet fanzines that anyone can read and no one Locs. (Even *Mimosa* is on-line. In a moment of absent-minded egocentricity I typed my own name into Altavista and one of the hits was in the *Mimosa* 18 Loccol.)

I mean, is this just because I am an outsider, or has the nature of fandom really changed? Is fandom today made up of hundreds of cuddly groups of people in cupboards, or one huge, amorphous CyberMass? Young fen reply, please!

{{✎ Things have obviously changed since the 1950s with the enormous growth of fandom. It may not be possible to know 'everyone' as in the past because so many more people classify themselves as 'SF Fans' without actually being part of fandom as we've come to know it. }}



Fred Smith, Flat 1/3, 15 Mansionhouse Gardens, Glasgow G41 3DP, Scotland, United Kingdom

I should first explain that I'm another relic from the Fifties, never very active but I did publish my own fanzine, was a member of OMPA and FAPA, visited Oblique House (and played ghoodminton with Willis, Shaw and Berry), met Chuck Harris and James White, attended the Supermancon of 1954, was in our local SF club with Ethel Lindsay, etc. *And* have been in the Glades of Gafia since 1960 or so!

Naturally, therefore, many of your writers and correspondents are very familiar names to me and *Mimosa* is a real time machine. In Number 19, out of your ten contributors, for instance, seven are old familiar faces (although your artists, with the exception of William Rotsler, are new to me).

John Berry's article about Bob Shaw was, to me, one of the best things in this issue. I was shocked, along with everyone else of course, to hear of his death, especially at such an early age. I'm one year younger than Berry, but Bob was considerably younger than both of us.

Of the rest of the material in No. 19, Walt, Forry and Harry Warner are very enjoyable, although I have no particular comments to make. Same goes for Shelby, although, to nitpick, the *book* is *The Shape of Things to Come* while the *film* was simply titled *Things to Come*, as Dave Kyle enthused in his article back in *Mimosa* 13.

In the letters column, Vincent Clarke and Ken Bulmer struck some responsive chords in their recollections of early pulp reading, particularly *Flying Aces* which I too read around the time I discovered science fiction. Unlike Ken and Vince, I didn't stop buying the mag when I discovered *Wonder Stories* in 1936 (at age 9) which, as Dave Kyle says, *was* a great year! And, to me anyhow, continued to be a great year because I quickly discovered *Astounding* and I found I *liked* the new *Thrilling Wonder Stories*. Anyway, Dave's articles are great.

Looking back over the eleven issues of *Mimosa* I've been able to obtain, I can see a distinct progression — it gets slicker-looking. Actually, your mimeoing was impeccable — as good as I've seen — but the latest issue is really a work of art. The cover is beautiful. I hope I'll be allowed to see the next one.

{{✎ You shall! We should mention at this point that Fred obtained his entire run of eleven issues not from us, but from Greg Pickersgill's "Memory Hole" project. For the past several years, Greg has been running a 'middleman' service of gathering current and old fanzines, and getting them into the hands of fans who are interested in having them. It certainly is a good way to help fan editors locate new readers, and Greg certainly deserves some recognition for this activity. For those who have fanzines to donate, Greg's address is: 3 Bethany Row, Narberth Road, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA61 2XG, UK. }}

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Teddy Harvia, 701 Regency Drive, Hurst, Texas 76054-2307

Anticipating the criticism of my cartoon rendition of the Irish accent, I say it is filtered through deaf ears (mine).

{{✎ Not to worry — we didn't receive even one criticism of your cartoon. Or your accent. }}

Some other comments on art: Debbie Hughes' cover art looks like Maxfield Parrish and Roger Dean meet the West Coast. Airbrush can make things look so real! Brad Foster's amorphous being opening the sphere to an illuminating sense of wonder is brilliant in its simplicity. Bill Rotsler and Alexis Gilliland's masked man collaboration was eye-popping for what it *didn't* show. Titillatingly funny.

Sharon Farber's analysis of the alien battle of the sexes in the *Star Trek* universe brought back memories of my youth. I was *not* the only one with impure thoughts of Julie Newmar naked.

And I love Michael Burstein's description of his alternate Hugo. I want one!

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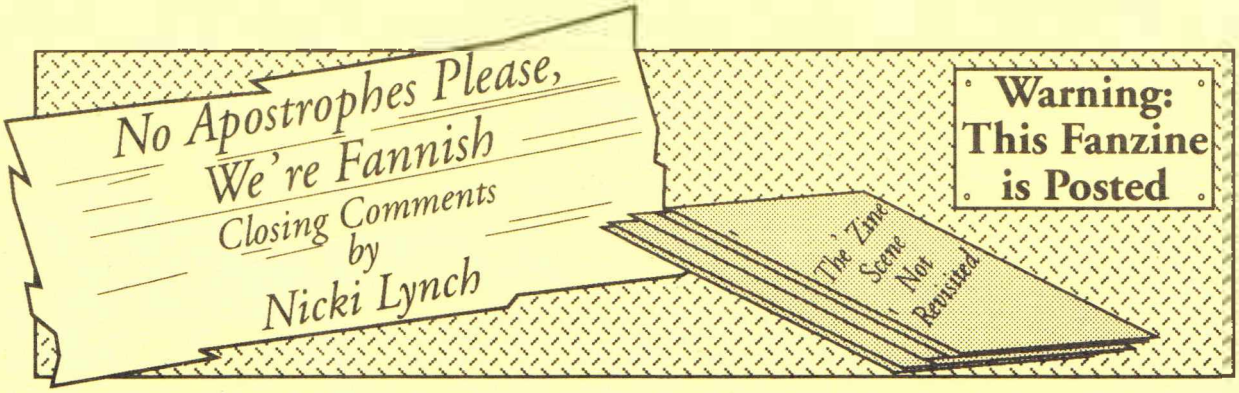
We Also Heard From:

Harry Andruschak, Martha Beck, John Berry, Mark Blackman, Al Bouchard, Les Cole, Chester Cuthbert, Ahrvid Engholm, George Flynn, Steven Fox, E. B. Frohvet, Bridget Hardcastle, Dave Hicks, Lee Hoffman, Ben Indick, Tom Jackson, Ali Kayn, Leigh Kimmel, Irv Koch, R'ykandar Korra'ti, Roy Lavender, Rodney Leighton, Mark Loney, Sam Long, Patrick McGuire, Ed Meskys, Perry Middlemiss, Catherine Mintz, Murray Moore, Lewis Morley, Pär Nilsson, Chris Niswander, Jodie Offutt, Sian O'Neale, Lloyd Penney, Marilyn Pride, Dave Rowe, Ben Schilling, A. Langley Searles, Ruth Shields, Alex Slate, Gene Stewart, Mae Strelkov, Alan Sullivan, Shelby Vick, Wolf von Witting, Henry Welch, Mike Whalen, and Walt Willis. Thanks to all!



Science fiction has become very acceptable in the United States; there's a cable channel devoted to it, the biggest movies all seem to be science fiction, and SF has a large following on television and the web. The old adage, "It's a proud and lonely thing to be a fan" no longer seems applicable. But in all this acceptance of SF and fantasy and the crowds of people tuned into what used to be that "strange Buck Rogers stuff," the actual SF fan seems to have been left behind.

Despite all the interest in SF, I have to wonder when, or if, this phenomenon known as SF fandom will be acknowledged by the world at large. True fandom is still an unknown. Will fandom, with roots back to the first WorldCon in 1939 or the first fanzine in 1930, ever be considered as a subculture? I'd like to think we have an interesting culture and some day an anthopologist might 'discover' us.

The media image of SF fans is that of people who dress up as their favorite TV characters or crazed UFO-New Agers who sit around spouting psycho-babble. Every time a TV series shows a 'science fiction convention', it's really a Star Trek convention. Even the SciFi Channel, a cable channel devoted to fantasy and science fiction, doesn't know much about us. Their special on the 1996 WorldCon was shoddy and somewhat insulting. The host, who spent more time chasing William Shatner's 'wig' around the con than looking at the events, seemed bewildered that anyone would want to sit in science panels and didn't quite seem to catch on that it was actually a *literary* convention. Even something as simple as listing the Hugo winners was filled with errors; the idea of the Retro Hugos was just too complex for them. Apparently, the SciFi Channel's idea of SF fandom seems to be limited to male teens whose sole interests are comic books and video games.

The saddest part about all this is that mundania is now taking over our best form of expression — the fanzine. Several years ago, there were articles in national newspapers about this new form the GenXers had taken up — *'zines*! (...as distinguished from the fannish *zine* with no apostrophe.) Even *we* were involved in this. I've previously written ["The *Zine* Scene" in *Mimosa* 14] about being contacted by the Washington *Post* on a story about fanzines. The writer seemed very interested in zines in general and I was hopeful that fandom would have some representation and recognition. When the article came out, though, it turned out to be about the GenXers and their 'new' form of communication — photocopied 'zines that featured a mishmash of images and words. There was nothing about the history of fanzines and no indication that there was a group of people who had been publishing them for decades, and who even had coined the word they were using.

On the web, the mundane 'zine is out there competing with the zines of fandom. Will the 'zines be as successful as fandom's zines? Somehow I don't think so. Our zines are more than just babble, they reflect our 'tribe' — who we are, from an anthropological sense — and the things that hold us together as fans, such as our history.

Our fannish history is important since it's what separates our conventions and zines from the popular view of science fiction fandom. Maybe someday we the real SF fans and our history will be known, but until then we'll just have to keep spreading the word ourselves. So, what are your waiting for? Write that article, draw that cartoon, pub your ish! It still is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan — even in a crowd.

SPQR
AERO-HORSE STABLE
FREE PARKING V HORAE WITH PURCHASE
SLAVE TRUTH DETECTOR
GET THE TRUTH FAST WITHOUT MESSY TORTURE
THE OVER-SEER
• MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY FROM YOUR SLAVES!
• MAXIMUM PROFIT FROM YOUR VILLA!
VENUS GARDEN
OFF-WORLD FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
EARTH APPLES
- RAW
- BAKED
- DEEP FRIED
- MASHED W/ GRAVY
JUST III ASES
VIN-O-MATIC!
RAINWATER INTO WINE
BRANDING IRONS
WORSHIP TODAY!
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