



Mimosas 26

ONE NITE - ONLY
LIVE IN THE BANANA LUNGE
MR EVLIS PERSLY

LEVEL 1 - MIMOSACON XXVI
SCIFI CONFERENCE

LEVEL 2 - TAU CETI-
NOISE ABATEMENT SOC

LEVEL 3 - INTERSTELLAR
XENOBIO CONTAGIOUS
DISEASE SEMINAR

LEVEL 4 - XPREE - W'UG
WEDDING

WELCOME SIRIAN JNR
BAGPIPE BAND

Evening Sun Times Daily Star

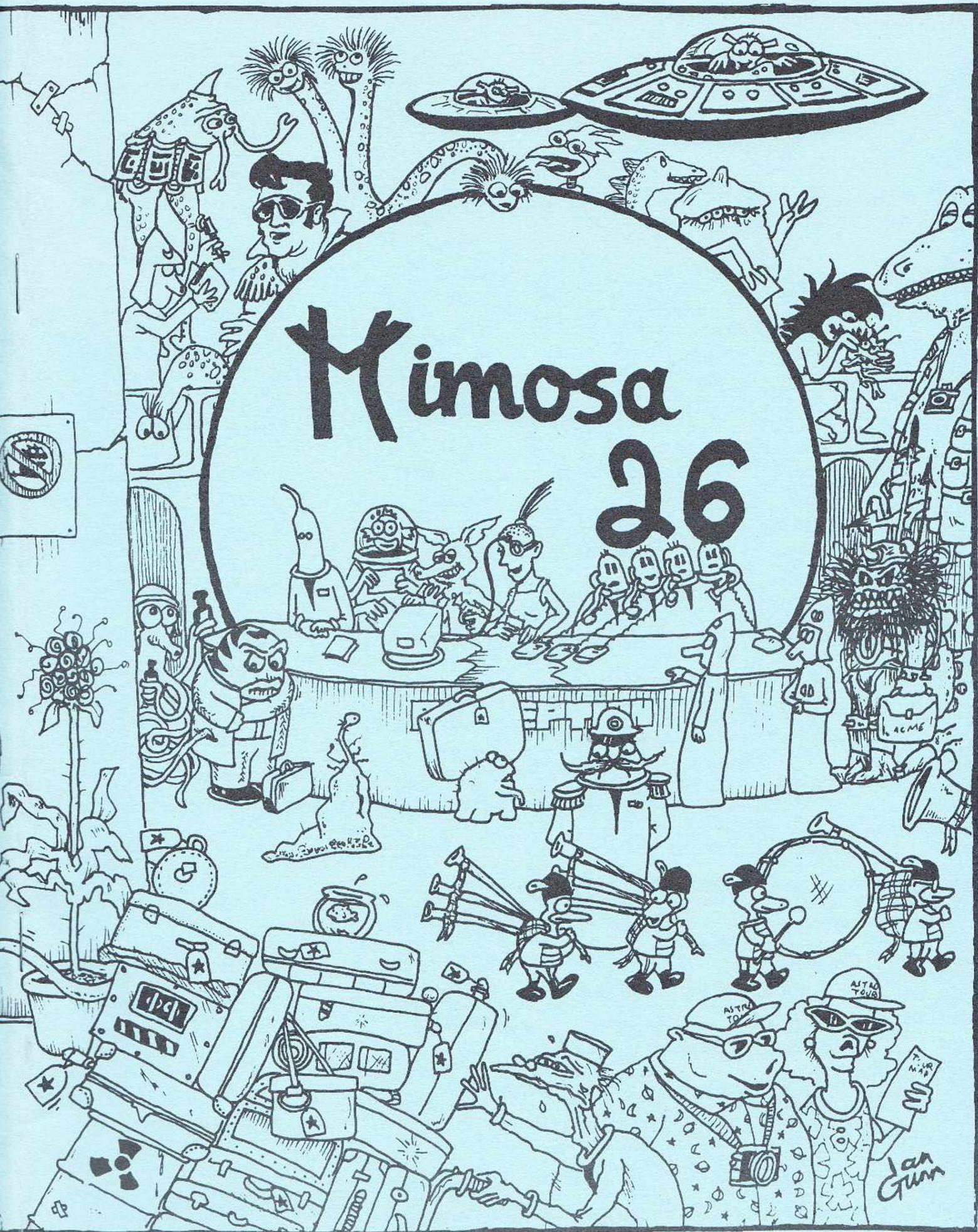
CITY HOTEL IN SCANDAL
SCANDAL COLLAPSE IMMINENT

CRIME WAVE HITS SPACE PORT

TRADITIONAL WEDDING RITES CONCERN POLICE
'CASUALTY' MUST BE KEPT IN MIMOSAS

SCIFI GLENS BEAM IN

Jan Gunn



Mimosa 26

Jan Gunn



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Mimosa is a fanzine very much devoted to the preservation of the history of science fiction fandom. This end-of-millennium 26th issue was published at the end of December 2000, and is available for four dollars (U.S. currency or equivalent), which includes cost of postage. Your letters and e-mails of comment on this issue are very welcome (we'll assume all correspondence we receive is intended for publication unless otherwise indicated); a letter or e-mail of comment, or a printed fanzine in trade, will get you a copy of the printed version of *M27*. Copies of most back issues are available; please write us for more information on price and availability. Our web site also has many of our back issues, converted to HTML format and available online. This entire issue is ©2000 by Nicki and Richard Lynch, with individual rights reverting back to contributors after this one-time use. 'Worldcon', 'NASFiC', and 'Hugo Award' are service marks of the World Science Fiction Society. 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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"Summertime an' the livin' is easy. Fish are jumpin' and the cotton is high." – DuBose Heyward (lyrics) from Porgy and Bess

On the calendar, summer here in the northern hemisphere begins on June 21st and lasts until September 21st, but we've always thought of summer as that part of the year between Memorial Day, at the end of May, and Labor Day, in early September. More specifically, we've always thought of summer as the time between Disclave and Worldcon, the two conventions we usually attended that occupied those weekends. Well, Disclave is no more, expiring in the aftermath of the Great Sprinkler Flood incident of the 1997 convention, and occasionally even the Worldcon itself wanders away from its usual weekend. When that happened in 1998, it produced some disorientation: subconsciously, we knew that summer was ending way too soon.

It's now been more than a decade since we moved from Tennessee to Maryland. Back then, we used to go to about ten conventions a year, most of them in mid-South cities not all that far from Chattanooga where we lived. One of them was Rivercon in Louisville, Kentucky, held each year in late July, the heart of summer. We feel a sort of a kinship to Rivercon, because Rivercons came into existence in 1975, the same year we attended our first convention, and because we had been Fan Guests there in 1986. About a year ago, we received a letter from Steve Francis, the chairman, that the 25th Rivercon, in July 2000, would be the last in the series and their plan was to bring back all the guests from previous Rivercons who were interested in attending – would we like to come?

Louisville is a lot farther away now that we're in Maryland. We usually make only one trip to the mid-

west each year and that's for Midwestcon, which most of the people we'd want to see at Rivercon also attend; in the 11+ years we've been in Maryland, we haven't been back to Louisville even once. Luckily, there was no Australia worldcon trip this year, so there was enough vacation time available. And we didn't want to see the convention pass into history without seeing the finale. So we were only too happy to go to Louisville as two of their many Guests.

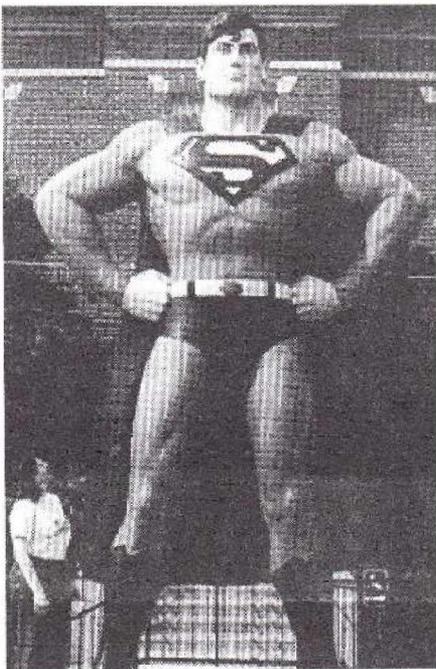
But there was more to do in Kentucky than just go to the convention. We had been wanting to visit the Museum of the American Quilter's Society in Paducah for a long time (Nicki, who is a quilter, especially so), so we extended the trip all the way to Western Kentucky. By the time the trip was over, about a week after we started, we had driven almost 2,000 miles.

If you consider the quilt as a work of art, there were some splendid examples in the museum. The contemporary collection, which was the largest of the three galleries, had many many of the quilts that had been selected as part of the 100 best, or at least most significant, of the previous century. (Supposedly the selectees were determined by polling a number of well-known quilters.) Many of the ones on display certainly were marvelous works of art and craft. The museum had on display the historic as well as the elegant – one of the other galleries displayed a collection of antique quilts, some dating back to the end of the 1700s. The Quilt Museum wasn't so large that it took more than a couple of hours to see it all, but it was without question worth the time and effort to drive the extra four hours out to Paducah. Besides, there were other things to see and do there, too.

You'd expect Paducah, by its location not far upstream on the Ohio River from its confluence point

with the Mississippi, to be an important inland port. Not so. It's situated on a bluff that does a good job protecting it from floods, but not so good a job providing access to the river itself. What Paducah seems to have become (at least the downtown area) is a home to antique dealers, little art shops, and lots of interesting cafes and restaurants. It survives on the presence of outsiders, apparently. Apart from the Quilt Museum, and the river itself, there really aren't too many reasons to come to the older part of the city. Other nearby communities have the same dilemma. But one of them, just across the river on the Illinois side, has found a unique way to attract visitors. It's become the home to the Man of Steel!

It takes only about fifteen minutes to drive to Metropolis, Illinois, from Paducah. But the trip took us back more than 35 years, back to the 'Silver Age' of comics in the early 1960s. A few decades ago, the small river town of Metropolis, in southern Illinois, successfully petitioned DC Comics to become recognized as the 'home town of Superman'. Once you find your way to the center of the town (which is more difficult than you'd think – there aren't very many road signs), the first thing you see, right next to the county courthouse, is a statue of the Man of Steel on a rectangular stone that reads, 'Truth, Justice, The American Way'. He's big! We were unprepared for how large it was, probably 20 feet in height – *much* larger than life, just like our childhood memories of his exploits were.



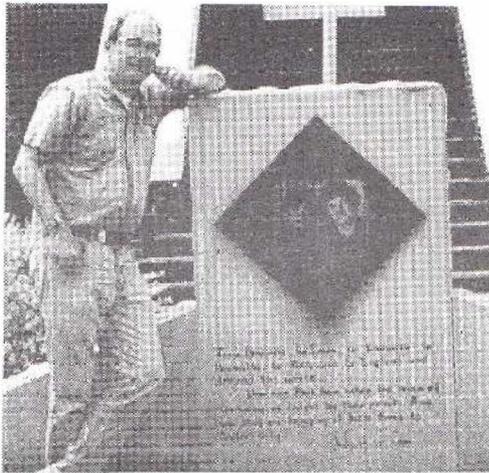
"He's big!"

Across the street is the Superman Museum, which is housed on the first floor of a somewhat rundown-looking storefront building, right out of the 1960s. Inside, it's a rabbit warren of Superman memorabilia, including costumes worn in the movies, toys and collectibles from decades past (now worth small fortunes, no doubt), and photos and stills from some of the movies and television shows. It didn't take more than about half an hour to see it all, but what memories it brought back – the 1950s and '60s were our childhood and adolescence. That time seems so very far away now, but the museum was a time machine to bring some of it back again. Being in the museum was like stepping into a large time capsule, which we guess in a way it was!



The way back to Louisville from Paducah took us along the Western Kentucky Parkway through lots and lots of wilderness, or at least what used to be wilderness. For the past several decades it's been turned into lots and lots of coal mines, and you can see some of them from the road. At about the middle of the Parkway is Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, which Rich came to know very well during the eight years he worked for the Tennessee Valley Authority. The county seat is the optimistically-named Central City (which has a population of only a few thousand); we stopped there on the way back to Louisville not so much to see if there had been any changes in the past decade (there weren't many), but because we'd seen a sign on the Parkway that mentioned there was an 'Everly Brothers Monument' there. We got off at the exit and drove through the town (which didn't take long), but somehow missed the memorial; we had thought there would be another sign or perhaps a park with some sort of statue. No such luck. We even drove down the dirt road of the museum-to-be (construction hasn't started yet) and didn't see anything. So we stopped at the Dairy Queen and the woman at the counter told us the memorial was back up the road, just past the stop light, in front of the City Hall. "You can't miss it," she said. "It looks just like a tombstone." And she was right! It turned out to be a

big slab of granite engraved with images of the singers as young men. All it lacked were the dates.



Turns out that the Everlys were originally from Central City, or at least from a now nonexistent town that used to be near Central City. Land has been cleared next to the Parkway for some kind of museum, and there's now a one-day music festival each year over Labor Day weekend in Central City that features the Everlys and guests such as John Prine. The festival began the year after we moved to Maryland; about eleven years ago the Central City police and fire departments were trying to raise money for new emergency radios and were having a hard time finding all the money they needed. Somehow, news of this reached the manager of the Everlys, and soon after that the Mayor got a telephone call telling him a check for all the money he needed would be coming to him soon. Apparently, the Everlys had been wanting to go back and Do Something for their old home town for a while. And it didn't stop there; the next year, the Everlys agreed to come to Central City for a benefit concert, and it has been continued every year since then.

We learned all this from the wife of the Mayor of Central City. The door to city hall (where the monument was located) was open, so we went in there for a look around. Turns out the Mayor's wife is in charge of the Everly Brothers Foundation that oversees the Festival, is planning for the museum, and sells postcards, t-shirts, and other souvenirs. She seemed happy to talk to us for a few minutes and tried to convince us to come back for the Festival (we told it we couldn't because we had another commitment that weekend, in Chicago). As we got back in the car and headed back to the Parkway, we agreed that this is the kind of thing that would make a great independent

film documentary – loads of human interest on the struggles and successes of a small rural town.

We had time the day before the convention began to do one more bit of touring. In the decade since we'd moved to Maryland, the Hillerich & Bradsby Company had moved their main baseball bat production facility to downtown Louisville from where it had been across the river in Indiana. And they had also opened a museum next door to it – the Louisville Slugger Museum. You know when you're near the place, because the world's largest baseball bat is in the plaza outside (with the world's largest baseball 'breaking' a large mural of a window at the plate glass company next door).

The museum itself was somewhat interesting, but would have been more so if it stuck more to the topic of baseball bats instead of trying and not really succeeding to be more of a general interest baseball museum. On the other hand, the tour of the bat production facility was fascinating. You could see, right there in front of you, each step of the process for converting a wooden cylinder into a finished baseball bat, right down to the 'autograph'. (In fact, for all the hard-core baseball fans and for a not-too-unreasonable fee – about \$50 – it's possible to get an honest-to-god Louisville Slugger wooden baseball bat, major league quality, with *your own* signature engraved on it! Rich was tempted, but it seemed just a bit *too* self-reverential in the end.)



The largest baseball bat in the world.

Rivercon itself was a nice, pleasant convention, and with over 1,000 people, the most well-attended. We were only on a few program items, which left lots of time to talk to people (our favorite convention activity). We're starting to get to know the fans from NESFA pretty well, and many of them were there promoting their Boston-in-2004 bid, which looks to be a good one. It was a fun convention, especially the parties and dinner expeditions. There are some very fine restaurants in Louisville, and meals with friends like Joel Zakem, Bob Roehm, Dave Rowe, Carolyn Doyle, Ned Brooks, and Ben Yalow, made the dining all that much better. Two of our friends, Mike and Christa Sinclair, gave one last "Say 'Da' to Moscow" party, which featured flavored vodkas and all the trappings of (formerly) communist Russia: Mike, Christa, and some other friends had once run a series of these parties, at conventions across the midwest, promoting Moscow in a semi-serious bid for the 1995 Worldcon. By the time that the bid, such that it was, had run its course, the L.A.Con people had copied some of the shtick, such as a passport-style book holding stickers from various convention parties, in their successful bid for the 1996 Worldcon. And there was even a surprise for us – at that party Mike and Christa presented us certificates, signed by Jefferson County, Kentucky, Judge/Executive Rebecca Jackson, that proclaimed us Honorary Captains of the Belle of Louisville riverboat!

This was likely to be our last trip to Kentucky for quite some time – there just isn't anything, especially now with the demise of Rivercon, to bring us back there again any time soon. The friends we have there we'll see again in other places, but the city has always been a pleasant place to visit. We'll miss that.

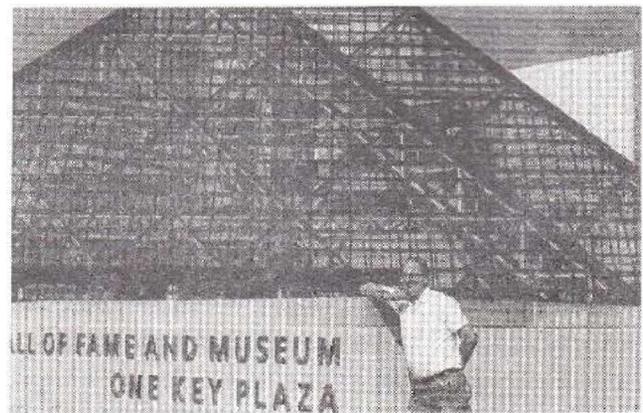
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"Are you going to drive this car all the way back to Maryland?" – Bellman at Hyatt Regency Chicago

It seemed like an odd question to be asked as we packed our car in preparing to leave the Worldcon in Chicago. We weren't sure if he was commenting on the condition of the car or our ability to endure a long trip. Later we realized he must have meant to ask if we were going to make the trip in one day. Many people seemed surprised that we had driven to Chicago rather than fly, but we were bringing along a mimeograph and electrostenciler to give to Dick and Leah Smith, and those are not the type of things to take on a plane. And if we'd flown to Chicago, we also wouldn't have been able to make all the stops

along the way that we'd planned.

This year, we've made our vacations do double duty. Instead of just driving to a convention and back, we've been seeing sights along the way and taking side trips while we're "in the area." Our trip to Midwestcon in Cincinnati at the end of June included a side trip to the Bob Evans Farm in southeastern Ohio for its annual Quilt Exhibition. In July, the drive out to Louisville for Rivercon took us well out of our way to Paducah before heading back to Louisville for the convention. But on the drive at the end of summer to Chicon 2000, we didn't have to detour miles and miles to see the sights – they were right on the way. And the one we wanted to see most was the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland.



The Glass Pyramid of Cleveland

The most obvious thing about Cleveland is that it's a city in transition. Shiny new buildings belonging to computer companies and health care groups shoulder up to abandoned buildings on the route into downtown. The waterfront area is different, though; the renewal has already taken place. There's now a big new stadium for the professional football team. And there's also the Museum.

If you haven't seen pictures of it, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is housed in a spectacular glass pyramid on the shore of Lake Erie. It's not large by Smithsonian standards and, being a pyramid, the above-ground exhibit space gets smaller as one ascends. At the bottommost level, where the main exhibition area is located, there are many displays filled with historical artifacts. Snippets of rock and roll are everywhere, bombarding you and constantly overlapping – every ten steps, what you were listening to gets drowned out by the next piece of equally loud music. The artifacts, though, were pretty interesting, and included such things as the Beatles' Sergeant Pepper

uniforms and the suits they wore on the cover of their debut album cover, as well as music play lists from various concerts, guitars galore, and stage costumes from Madonna, David Bowie, Kiss, Michael Jackson, and many, many others. But the continuous assault on the senses takes a toll and sensory overload happens quickly; it's not long until the next costume or piece of sheet music doesn't mean much.

One thing that we quickly noticed is that the museum seems to use pretty much a scattergun approach, with bits of this and some of that. There seemed to be a lack of coherency and connectivity; perhaps it's because trying to capture the whole of rock and roll in one place is a bit futile. And that leads to a larger question: how is it decided what belongs in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame? Maybe this was captured somewhere else in the museum; to see everything, to sit through all the videos and listen to all the recordings, would have taken far longer than the time we spent there. You could spend the entire day just in the various video venues and in soaking up the music. But there are other things to see.

The actual Hall of Fame itself is on the third level, but it mostly consists of a hallway where signatures of the honorees are on display; it was kind of disappointing. There was quite a bit on some of the more famous Hall of Fame inductees, like Springsteen and Billy Joel. There was also a theater where you could view the best moments from some of the past Hall of Fame Induction concerts, and even a computerized listening station where you could bring up digital recordings by everybody who had been inducted. We'd thought it would take only an hour or two to see the museum, but after four hours, had managed mostly just a superficial look at much of what was in there. After that, it was mid-afternoon and time to head farther west.

Seeing all those artifacts from rock and roll's earlier days in such an expensive and magnificent setting, though, made us a bit envious. The closest thing to it in the science fiction world are personal collections like Forry Ackerman's that are made available for public viewing only because of the largesse of their owners. Someday, perhaps, SF will get its own museum where we can see its roots and marvel at original typed pages from Heinlein and Asimov, jackets from Cliff Simak and Harlan Ellison, and program books and badges from all the worldcons. Until then, we'll have to settle for temporary traveling historical exhibits like the one at Chicon 2000.

* * * * *

"This is the oddest but most entertaining event I've ever been to." – **Galaxy Quest** director Dean Parisot

Chicago is an interesting city to walk around in. There's always lots to see and do there, more so when there's a worldcon in town too. As you might expect, there's lots more to do in Chicago than in Cleveland. Chicago is much like New York, in that the downtown area is active and interesting well into the night (even on a Sunday night), whereas in Cleveland, the whole downtown area pretty much shuts down after dark. We arrived on a Wednesday, which happened to be the free-admission day at the Field Museum, so that's where we went. We wanted to see Sue.



Nicki meets 'Sue'

The Field Museum is a Natural History Museum, similar in many ways to the one here in Washington that's part of the Smithsonian Institute. But the Field Museum has something the Smithsonian doesn't – a nearly complete fossil skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus Rex. It's the largest and most complete ever found; it was discovered about a decade ago in Montana, and ever since then it's been called 'Sue', after the first name of the paleontologist who made the discovery.

There was more at the Field than just dinosaurs, of course. The *Star Wars* display we'd seen at the National Air and Space Museum more than two years ago was there, and there was *no* line! There was a roomful of jade from China that was interesting (but dimly lit), and a recreation of an Egyptian tomb – actual stones with hieroglyphs, a display of burial objects, and a Book of the Dead. The museum is pretty large, and there were alcoves and displays we didn't have time to explore. The Field is part of an extended museum complex that also includes the

Shedd Aquarium (which we also visited the last day we were in the city) and the Adler Planetarium. The scenic park area they occupy becomes a peninsula that extends out into Lake Michigan; the day we were there it was windy enough where rather large waves were crashing up against the breakwater.

Another place in Chicago where the wind often blows is 1060 West Addison Street on the north side of town – Wrigley Field. Rich been there only once previously to see a baseball game, back in April 1988, when it was so cold that there was a threat of snow that day. This time it was almost the opposite – it was so hot a day that the public schools stayed closed: if we'd had tickets in the bleachers or down the left field line where there was full sun, it would have been very unpleasant. Chicon had purchased a block of seats and resold them to the worldcon attendees; there were maybe 15-20 other people from the convention there, enough where we even got scoreboard recognition! As for the game itself, it was a bit of an anticlimax; the Cubs played poorly and were routed. Sammy Sosa, who was leading the majors in home runs, struck out twice. It was just our luck to catch him on a bad day: if we'd been able to attend the previous day's game, we'd have seen him hit two homers.



At the friendly confines of Wrigley Field

The worldcon itself was as worldcons usually are, a human kaleidoscope – a whirl of activity, parties every night and friends everywhere. It's something that's sure to wear you down after a few days, but on the other hand, you never really get tired of it. And, admittedly, we look forward to it. Worldcons are the only place where we are likely to see many of our friends each year. Lowell Cunningham and Dorothy Tompkins from Knoxville were there; we've known each other for probably close to twenty years, long before Lowell gained fame as the creator of the *Men In Black*. Many of our contributors for *Mimosa* were

there, such as Dave Kyle, Julia Morgan-Scott, and Teddy Harvia, and some of our time was spent trying to line up some contributions for this very issue. *Mimosa* was not the Best Fanzine Hugo winner this year, as it turned out. That went to Mike Glycer's newszine *File 770*, his first win in over a decade. We were not all that disappointed that we didn't win; Mike has been publishing some very fine issues and finished second (behind *Ansible*) in the category last year in Australia. But wait til *next year!*



*Mike Glycer and the
Chicon 2000 Best Fanzine Hugo*

If we had to single out any particular highlight of Chicon 2000, we're not sure we could do it. Neither of us was on a single programming event, the result of not receiving the program questionnaire that had apparently been sent out much earlier. Not that it really mattered: there didn't seem to be many, if any, panels that we were much interested in or felt we could contribute to in any meaningful way. Much of our time was spent in the Fan Lounge in the Concourse area, which, for once, was well-designed (and also well-located, not far from the convention registration area). It was set up to look like a fan's living room. The couches and overstuffed chairs were suitably old and tacky (especially the green slip-covered chair and footstool combo) and the section was bounded by cinder block and wood bookshelves which held paperback books and prozines. There was even some programming there – Dick and Leah Smith gave a get-your-hands-dirty show-and-tell about fanzine reproduction methods of old, including even the now-leg-

endary hectograph. It made us nostalgic for the past, but at the same time grateful we live in the present.



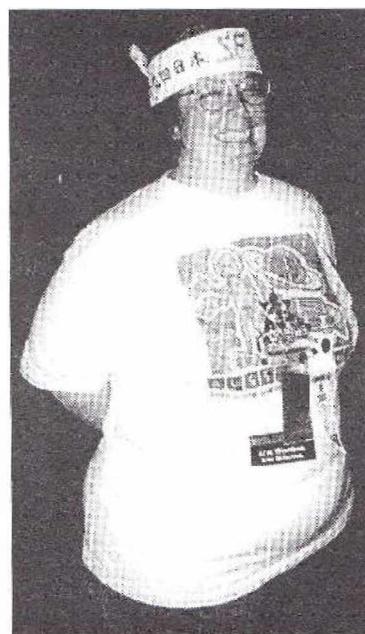
Dick and Leah Smith demonstrate hectography

The Fan Lounge was also used for other impromptu events, such as a 'Meet the TAFF and DUFF Representatives' party. We managed to do neither, though. Neither Sue Mason, the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund delegate, nor Cathy Cupitt, who represented the Down Under Fan Fund, made Washington, D.C., part of their travel itineraries, and our paths just didn't seem to cross with them during the convention. On the other hand, Janice Gelb, the North American representative of the DUFF, was omnipresent and scored a coup by overseeing one of the most financially successful fan fund benefit auctions ever at a worldcon. Outcomes of auctions like these are hard to predict: even though there are more people at a worldcon than a regional convention, much of what gets donated for a fan fund auction is usually more suitable for a more select audience that might be found at a regional convention.

The auction at Chicon 2000 included the usual aggregation of books, fanzines, and collectibles that had been donated (and which found new homes for a few tens of dollars), but much of the success resulted from the auction of two big-ticket items – Mike Resnick and Harry Turtledove both agreed, on very short notice, to use the name of the respective winning bidder as a character in upcoming science fiction stories they would be writing. Bidding was brisk, and after all the dust had settled, the two auctions netted \$650 and \$666, respectively. It led Rich to wonder aloud, "Why are we even bothering with all this other penny ante stuff?"

On the other hand, the parties at Chicon 2000 were hardly 'penny ante'. Some significant money was spent over the weekend by all the various world-

con bidders. Hot barbecue was available every night at the Charlotte-in-2004 suite, while the rival Boston bid had wonderful desserts and microbrew beer. The Scotland-in-2005 bid had single malt scotch. The most interesting of the bid parties, though, was by the Japan-in-2007 bid. At every worldcon there's a contingent of fans from Japan, including their mentor, Takumi Shibano. Japanese fandom is so highly regarded at worldcons that they are allowed to present their Seiun Awards, for best science fiction story and novel translated into Japanese during the previous year, at the Hugo Awards Ceremony. They have enough knowledge and experience on what happens at and is expected of worldcons that it seemed only natural that they would one day bid for one. They held bid parties two nights at Chicon 2000, giving out samurai headbands and saki to bid supporters; they were actually a bit *too* successful – hundreds of people signed up as pre-supporters and by their second night they ran out of headbands and had to close down early.



Our friend Hope Leibowitz as a Samurai

After five frenetic days of Chicon, we finally reached the point where we were about ready for it to be over. The last party on the last night of a worldcon always seems to signal the end of summer and the beginning of autumn, and it was time to go home. We took back with us pleasant memories of friends and good times, and the desire to do it all over again next year. After all, it was only 51 weeks to the Millennium Philcon... ❁

Joe - A Brief Remembrance

by Rich and Nicki



"Joseph T. Mayhew, 57, a retired Library of Congress employee and an award-winning science fiction cartoonist, died of complications from encephalitis June 10 at the Washington Hospice." – excerpt from obituary in The Washington Post

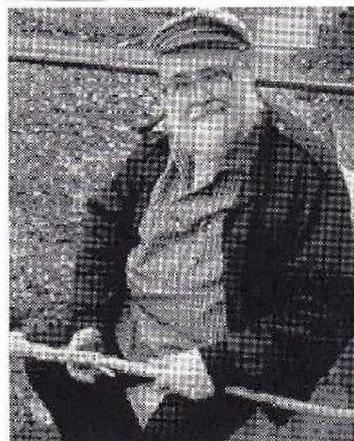
We can't end these opening comments without some words to remember a lost friend. For those who didn't know much about him, Joe Mayhew was a member of the local fan club, the Washington Science Fiction Association, and was a very prolific fan artist – his cartoons were a feature in many fanzines, including *Mimosa*. He had been nominated for the 'Best Fan Artist' Hugo Award four times and had won the Award twice, in 1998 and again this year at Chicon 2000. Joe was also a fan historian of sorts – his fan activity dated back to the 1960s, and he was always willing to talk about events long past and people now mostly forgotten. He'd written an article for us featured in the most recent *Mimosa*, "My Own Personal First Fandom," that we'd hoped would be the first in a series about BaltWash fandom.

Joe was opinionated, but polite about any disagreements he might have with you. He could be irascible and annoying at times, but never so much that you could stay angry at him, or he at you, for very long. He was one of the rocks of Washington fandom, someone who you looked forward to seeing at club meetings or at conventions. It was at Balticon, on Easter weekend, that Joe first showed outward signs of the rare illness that would kill him; soon afterward he was hospitalized and rapidly started to lose higher brain functions. By the end of May he was only able to speak a few words, though he showed some recognition of all the people who had come to see him. Two days later, he'd lost even that ability, and a few days after that he lapsed into a coma. Joe had plenty of visitors throughout his hospitalization, though at the end it had pretty much turned into a vigil. We'd all realized long before than that Joe wasn't going to get better, even though the doctors hadn't yet found out what the cause of his decline was. When Joe first

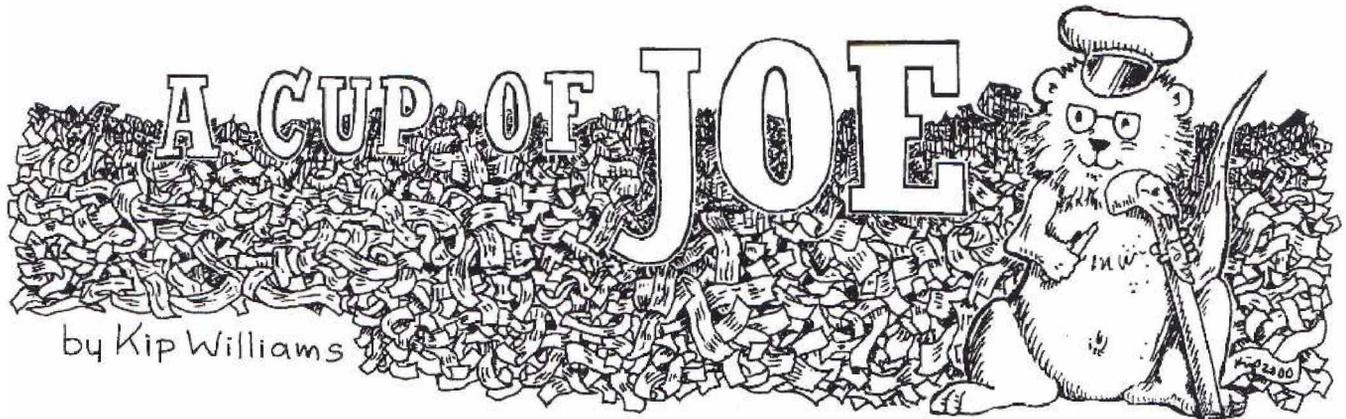
became ill he had started behaving a bit erratically, so it was assumed that he'd had a stroke. When that was ruled out, the doctors had thought there might be some kind of tumor that was affecting his central nervous system, or perhaps a virus of some kind that was causing a form of encephalitis that was resulting in his dementia. The cause of the illness wasn't determined until a few days before Joe died, after a brain biopsy was done on him – it was Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, a relatively rare form of spongiform encephalopathy that causes rapid and irreversible deterioration of the brain.

Joe was one of the first fans we met after we moved to Maryland at the end of 1988, and one of the first friends we made here after the move. It wasn't pleasant to see him just before he died, but as another of his friends said then, that wasn't really Joe at all; the real Joe had already left the building by then. Our memories of Joe will be of happier times. One of them is his visit to our house on a Thursday evening in early March, just three months before he died; in response to our request for help he made the long drive from Greenbelt where he lived around the Beltway and up I-270 to Gaithersburg to do some last-minute illustrations so that we could get *Mimosa* 25 to the printers on schedule. There was lots of pleasant conversation and a nice dinner expedition.

Hard to believe he's gone... ✨



Joe Mayhew may have departed the world in June, but he was still a presence at Chicon 2000 a few months later. There was a wake for him there, and the reading of his name, at the Hugo Awards Ceremony, as the winner of the Fan Artist Hugo Award was an emotional moment for all of us there. It's likely Joe's presence will continue in fandom, and not only from the amount of artwork he's done that's still to be published. Joe's influence on other fans was as large as he was, as the following article shows.



by Kip Williams

What can you say about a man who saw the funny side of dying from Mad Cow Disease?

For starters, you probably can't say as much as he would have said. People wouldn't stand for it, coming from someone else. If Joe'd been standing next to me at his funeral, though, I would have heard some one-liners that never could have come from anyone but him. And it was only after we lost Joe that I started to know why.

I'd known Joe in fandom for several years. Probably ten or more – sometimes the beginnings of things aren't obvious. What I seem to remember is looking at a pile of his illos and realizing that Joe had a viewpoint that I really liked. He looked at things I saw every day and saw ways of twisting them just enough to make them off-kilter. In addition to that, it seemed that a room with Joe in it had more potential for fun. To some, it seemed that Joe was full of himself, and maybe he was, but he couldn't have been that much fun to be around without understanding the people he was with, and finding what made them laugh.

While Joe was still sick, I wondered whether he was wearing himself out supplying art. My reply came on May 26, when Joe's friend Elspeth Kovar wrote to me:

Kip, in answer to your remark about his work, no, I don't think that cartooning wore him out. Joe creates cartoons the way trees create leaves; it is part of his nature and he's delighted when they bring pleasure to others. His latest work can be seen in the Chicon progress report and is full of his usual sly humour. He has won one Hugo for best fan artist and is nominated again this year. His writing, which has been published in several magazines – I've forgotten at the moment which ones, and perhaps someone else can supply the

names – has attracted less notice, to his regret. He has also reviewed science fiction, most notably in *The Washington Post*, and was the librarian responsible for science fiction at the Library of Congress until his retirement. He gives unstintingly of his time and creativity to fandom, and specifically to a number of conventions.

Seems odd now to see someone writing about Joe in the present tense. I still catch myself saying, "he carves these canes..."

He can be stubborn, acrimonious, rude and arrogant. At least once I had to consciously and deliberately repress the urge to leap across a table and strangle him; the knowledge that I probably couldn't fit my hands around his neck helped. At the same time he has an incredible mind, full of a vast and deep range of knowledge. He is a wonderful talker and storyteller, richly humorous, and, as you reminded me, a warm and generous person. I have a full file of email from people saying how much he has done for them, how much they have enjoyed his company, which I will print out and take to read to him when I next visit. It is a pity that more people have seen his faults than his many attributes but even I, who love and respect him, know that his faults were often in the forefront. I ask that people try to do the same as I am doing, to overlook his failings and remember and celebrate the person he is at heart. I am sorry, for him and for them, that more people don't know that person.

That's the man I remember. His certainty could be maddening. One of the earliest memories I have is him driving someone else I knew to tears on an obscure point that was in her area of expertise and not his.

For me, Joe was a fountain of encouragement. He would ask to see my artwork faster than I could thrust it on him, and sometimes quoted my old punch lines back at me. And he was always carving something, and I'd ask him the same questions each time, and he'd explain again what sort of push knife I needed, and demonstrate the basic stroke. And it only took about eight years, but I did get a knife kind of like the one he had. I still don't have the dedication he showed, though. He was a one-man sawdust factory wherever he went, and I'm told that he loved carving in bed and had declared himself the world's largest mammal to sleep in wood shavings.

We lost Joe a little at a time. He was weaker at each convention I saw him at, and this spring I started hearing that he was in the hospital. Diabetes, stroke, something else... no one was sure, but he was slipping. The last theory I heard was that Joe was taken out by a rare form of Creutzfeld-Jakob Disease: a relative of the 'mad cow' sickness that flared up a while back. According to Bill Mayhew, his brother, Joe's last word was "moo."

So, Cathy and I drove up to the funeral to pay our respects. I looked around for a coffin, and discovered that Joe's cremated remains were in a sort of canister. Despite the fact that my father, a church organist, has played hundreds of funerals, I'd never been to one before. Once again, Joe broadened my horizons. I watched the proceedings with the interest of a novice, and hoped I was comporting myself properly.

Two of Joe's canes were at the altar, along with a cheery self-portrait. One of the canes was a sinuous abstract form, carved nearly hollow. The other a very narrative cane that he made for his storytelling brother Bill, with overlapping forms topped by a long-tailed bear, with little characters below it like a bearded bard, and a little egg with a beak just starting to poke out, with the words 'ONCE UPON A TIME' calligraphed below, wrapping around the stick several times. I didn't notice until Bill pointed it out to me that there was a band around the bottom containing 'BEOWULF' in carven runes.

We listened to harp music: appropriately, Joe requested it. The priest delivered a service that gave proper credit for his accomplishments. He stumbled on some of the words: 'fanzine', 'worldcon', and one or two others. Here I learned for the first time some of the details of Joe's spiritual quest. Seminary? Joe?? Yes, it's true. Hmmm. 'Reverend Mayhew'. 'Father Joe'. Alas, in Joe's phrase, he "flunked obedience school" and went into the secular world.

When the service was done, we went downstairs to the rectory, where food filled the table and people

filled the room. On the far wall from where we sat down (and were quickly hemmed in) were tributes, including Avedon's, and a large collection of photos. I looked at these for some time, as many of them showed a Joe Mayhew I'd never seen. Here was Joe the actor, decked out in Shakespearean regalia. There was Joe the seminary student. There was '60s Joe, with short hair, horn-rimmed glasses and a shaved chin. We talked, ate, talked some more, looked at pictures, and marveled at how little we had known this man.

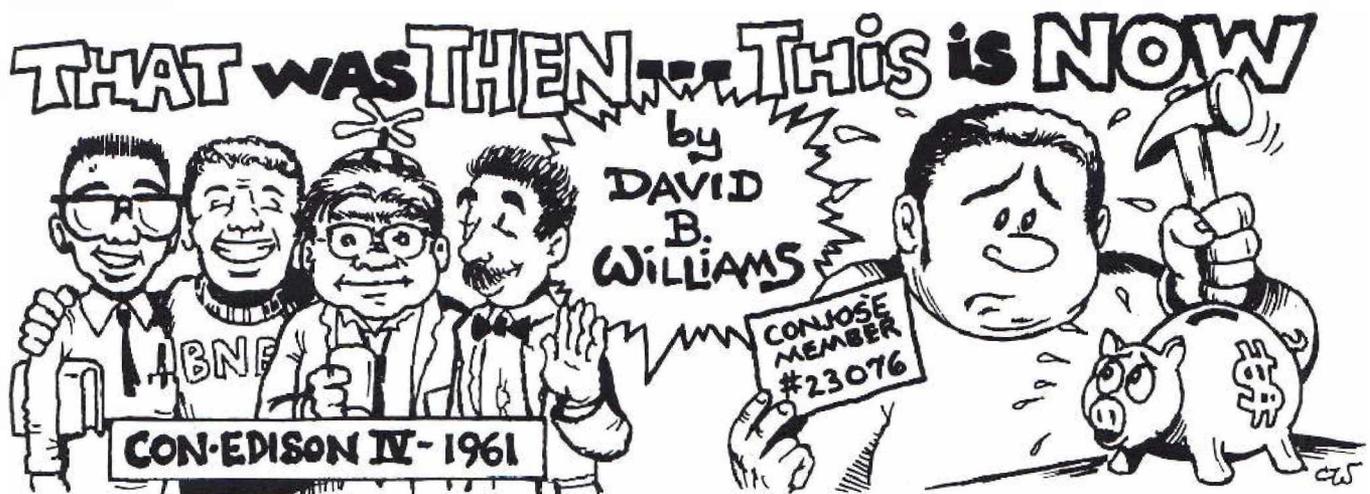
A couple of months later, we journeyed up to Beltsville to talk to Bill and Maren Mayhew, and to take pictures of as many of Joe's carvings as I could. Bill let me pick out a cane from a small number that were going to different people, and when he found that I'm planning on trying woodcarving, he let me have three cane blanks that Joe had prepared but hadn't gotten to the fun part yet. I've taken a couple of tentative whacks at one of them, but so far have nothing to brag about.

I had had my own personal memorial for Joe the day before the funeral. Our classical radio station has a request show on Friday, and I had it in mind to hear something in Joe's honor. I stewed over it for a bit, then made a snap decision to call in and ask for the final, uncompleted, fugue from Bach's "Art of Fugue." I asked the host to pick one out that didn't try and finish the piece, and he obliged with an orchestral arrangement I hadn't heard before.

As it played along, I began to get into the piece more and more, with melodic lines threading through one another and building to grander and greater heights. Then I started dreading the final part where the music simply ends, in the middle of a bar, where the composer died. I stated thinking about Bach, who had probably written the whole fugue in his mind, including the part no other human has ever heard, but at the end his failing eyesight kept him from writing all the notes down. As I listened, I heard Bach's musical signature – the 'B-A-C-H' theme, which he wove into this fugue – and it reminded me again of Joe, and his invertible 'MayheW' signature, and other admirable bits of visual and thematic cleverness that Joe was so good at, and gave that extra lift to his work. The difference between a smile and an endearing smile.

Seconds later, the music up and ended, and the silence hit me like a wall, and Joe was dead, just like that. It was one thing to read the words that said he was gone, but when that music stopped, I knew it inside, and I closed my eyes there at work and missed him. ☉

We mentioned in our Opening Comments that one of the things we enjoyed about Chicon 2000 were all the reunions; it seemed like there were friends everywhere. One of the people we missed, though, was Bob Tucker, who, after 60 years, has now retired from convention-attending. His only 'appearance' was a brief one, at the Opening Ceremonies, in a videotaped interview. If you examine the personal histories of many fans, even those who are not familiar faces at worldcons, it's likely you'll come across a connection to Bob Tucker, as the following article shows.



I've read that the 2002 Worldcon, ConJose, is going to offer an installment plan to help us fans pony up the registration fee. I'll tell you why that makes me think of Anne Rice's vampires, but first some background.

I was born the day Roosevelt died. Throughout my childhood, we lived just a couple of blocks from the campus of Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois, and for several years my parents rented the spare rooms on the second floor of our big old house to students. One summer in the mid-1950s, a grad student in entomology left behind a paperback copy of Arthur C. Clarke's *Expedition to Earth* anthology. Being a voracious reader, I picked it up.

I was already familiar with science fiction from *Captain Video* and movies such as *Forbidden Planet*. (I named one of my homing pigeons Walter after seeing that film.) So at the age of 11 or 12, I didn't find Clarke's stories incomprehensible, I found them mesmerizing. That discarded paperback planted the incurable spore, and I have suffered from chronic scientifiction affliction ever since.

In 1959, I became a home delivery provider (paperboy) for *The Daily Pantagraph*, Bloomington, Illinois', esteemed journal of record. That meant I had disposable income. Each Saturday morning I went down to the newspaper office, turned in the week's proceeds, and took the profit to a nearby newsstand. It was one of those old-fashioned places

you don't see much anymore. It had everything — candy, cigars, curling ribbons of flypaper hanging from the ceiling, a grumpy old Jewish guy behind the counter. The walls were covered with magazine racks, the floors crowded with freestanding carousels for paperback books.

Just inside the door was a rack with all the sf prozines — *Astounding*, *Amazing*, *Fantastic*, *F&SF*, *Galaxy*, *If*, even the Columbia twins before they folded. One Saturday morning, I bought one. The next week, I bought another. After that, science fiction became a weekly habit. Of course, in those days you could buy a prozine and an Ace Double for a dollar and get change back.

An ad in one of those prozines or paperbacks led me to the Science Fiction Book Club. The SFBC performed an invaluable service in those days by keeping many of the golden oldies in print. All the stories that had created modern science fiction in the 1930s and '40s had been published in the pulp magazines, and paperback reprints hadn't picked up much of the slack yet. If you wanted to read Lovecraft's "The Color Out of Space" or van Vogt's "Black Destroyer," the SFBC was your time machine.

And speaking of pulps, I took another jaunt in time when I bought 50 sf pulp magazines from a New York huckster for \$5. It was the best \$5 I ever spent. It took many days to leaf through all those copies of *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Planet Stories*, *Amazing*,

Startling Stories, *Famous Fantastic Mysteries*, and others dating from the late '40s and early '50s. Those magazines were battered and musty, not the kind of stock offered to collectors, but they were a window into the barely bygone era of the pulps. Today's neofans have no idea what that Bronze Age of science fiction was like, but I came along early enough to catch a glimpse.



THEM PULPS EVEN SMELLED GOOD ...!

As an avid reader and incipient collector, I was primed when P. Schuyler Miller reviewed Dick Eney's *Fancylopedia II* in *Astounding*. It sounded interesting, so I ordered a copy. What a monumental achievement! A hidden world was revealed, and I acquired a master's degree in fannish lore.

One item of information caught my particular attention. *Fancy* informed me that there was a BNF named Bob Tucker who was a movie projectionist in Bloomington. My mother had been a cashier at the Irving Theater in Bloomington, and yes, she recalled some such person. I mentioned this coincidence in a note to Eney, and he must have forwarded the news, because I soon received a hefty bundle of fanzines, return addressed from the famous P.O. Box.

Tucker didn't stint on the selection. There was *Cry of the Nameless*, *Yandro*, *Shangri-l'Affaires*, *Science Fiction Times*, *Fanac*, *Void*, and a dozen other fanzines of the day that I would recall if you mentioned them. And most of them contained reviews of other fanzines, which I sent for. When *Cry* published my letter of comment and sent me an official *Cry* Letterhack card, I became, literally, a card-carrying fan.

My early fannish and stfnal career peaked in

1962, when I attended Chicon III in Chicago. It seemed like everyone was there (except Harry Warner, of course). If you stood on a chair in the Florentine Room of the Pick-Congress Hotel, you could spot everyone you had ever heard of, from the filthiest pros to the biggest BNFs.

What's worth noting is that in 1962, a kid with a paper route could afford to attend a World Science Fiction Convention, including train ticket, hotel room, banquet, the works. And if you read the prozines and the leading fanzines, you were familiar with everyone who was significant in prodrom and fandom.

The next year I was off to college, and my engagement with sf involvement waned until, by my senior year, I wasn't buying every issue of every prozine — ouch, a gap in the collection! But I bounced back after graduation, when I began reading for fun again.

I attended a second Worldcon thanks to bizarre good fortune. My first job after college was in St. Louis, and every day I rode a bus past the Chase Park Plaza Hotel. One day I glanced up to see the 27th World Science Fiction Convention proclaimed from the hotel's marquee. "Well, that's convenient." I thought. I rode the bus home, got off, walked back to the hotel, and registered at the door. How often do the Secret Masters of Fandom schedule a Worldcon just a quarter mile from where you live?

In 1970, I relocated to Chicago and my fannish career attained its second peak. I subbed to a plethora of fanzines and actually became an official columnist in Dick Geis' *Science Fiction Review* for two issues before he underwent one of his cyclical publishing gaffiations. I even attended a couple of local fan gatherings, at George Price's apartment and Mike Resnick's place out in Libertyville.

I also noticed that sf and fandom were changing. A growing number of fanzines were becoming 'semi-professional'. Worldcons were drawing attendance in the thousands rather than hundreds, and local and regional cons began to proliferate. *Star Trek* generated the first of the major parallel or sub-fandoms, the beginning of ur-fandom's suburban sprawl. Paperback publishing boomed, shifting the genre's center of gravity away from the cozy community of the prozines.

This all seemed pretty exciting at the time. Sf was conquering the world. Sf was commercially successful, and that made it increasingly acceptable if not respectable. And it was just plain increasing. For the first time, I couldn't keep up with the effusion of

new books and had to pick and choose what I was going to read.

During the 1980s, other interests consumed more and more of my attention, and from the late '80s to late '90s I successfully gafiated. I kept reading sf, but selectively (thank you, Jack Vance!), and I saw the big movies, of course. But I lost touch with fandom and didn't know how to reconnect until the World Wide Web appeared. The first thing I tried on my search engine was 'science fiction'.

A lot seems to have happened while I was away. All the trends of the 1970s have sprouted from seedlings into rain forests. For this displaced 1960 fan, there are too many books, too many authors, too many awards, too many conventions – too many fandoms!

I thought things might be going too far in 1966 when they created the Nebula Awards. Now there are probably more awards presented each year than new sf books published in 1960. And speaking of books, 38 new sf and fantasy novels were published last month, plus anthologies, collections, reprints, etc.

I recently encountered a fan who has attended 271 conventions (isn't there a German word for the mental sensation composed in equal parts of admiration and horror?). I scan all these con listings and I don't recognize most of the guests of honor. This summer our local con had two days of solid programming – comics, gaming, anime, SCA and other role-playing activ-

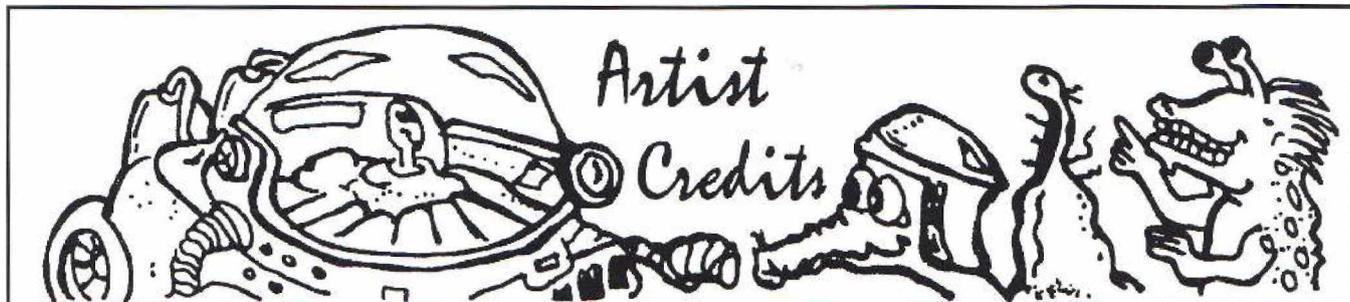
ities, neo-paganism, *Star Trek*, costuming – everything but plain old science fiction.

And this brings me to Anne Rice's most puissant insight about vampires – they, like the rest of us, are children of their times. The world in which we spend our youth is 'normal', and everything after that is increasingly strange and difficult to encompass.

As we age, we can remain flexible and adaptive for quite some time, if we try, but ultimately, the more the world changes, the more estranged we feel. Humans are lucky enough to be mortal. But for the vampires, the time comes when the world doesn't make sense anymore, and they succumb to insanity or self-destruction. The immortal vampires die from future shock.

I haven't reached that state yet, but an installment plan for Worldcon registration fees is just one more reminder that I'm not in Kansas anymore.

Recently, I was bemused to realize that my favorite part of *Locus* is the obituary section. Here are people I've heard of, and each entry is a capsule of sf or fannish history. And best of all, I get to know how the story ends. I like that. Maybe that's why I like science fiction. It's a way to consider the future and, ultimately, how it all ends. Inquiring minds want to know! So in that sense, I guess I'm not like Anne Rice's old and despairing vampires – at least, not yet! ☉



Illustrations:

Sheryl Birkhead – pages 2, 3, 15, 18, 44
Kurt Erichsen – pages 21, 23, 25, 33, 34, 36 (top)
Alexis Gilliland – page 54
Ian Gunn & Joe Mayhew – cover
Teddy Harvia – pages 16, 36 (*Chat* cartoon), 42, 45
Dave Kyle – pages 29, 30 (top)
Joe Mayhew – page 10
Julia Morgan-Scott – pages 26, 27, 28, 30 (bottom),
39, 41
William Rotsler – pages 47, 48 (top), 49, 50,

William Rotsler & Alexis Gilliland – pages 46, 48
(bottom), 52 (both), 53, 55
Charlie Williams – pages 13, 14, 19, 20, 37, 38
Kip Williams – pages 11, 31, 32

Photos:

Nicki Lynch – pages 5 (top), 6
Richard Lynch – pages 4 (both), 5 (bottom), 7,
8 (right), 9 (both)
Evan Phillips – page 10
Joel Zakem – page 8 (left)

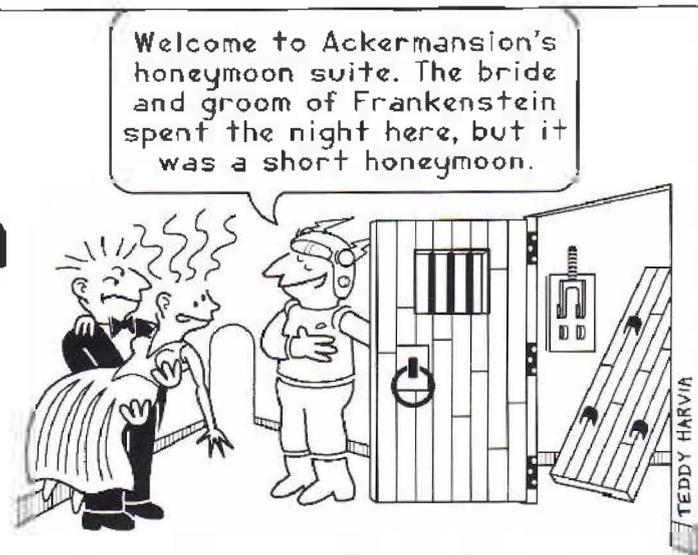
With Chicon 2000, there have now been six different Chicago worldcons, and only three people have attended all six. One of them is the writer of the following article. Previously, in *Mimosa 18*, Forry described the beginnings of his famous science fiction collection. In this issue, he gives the history, as well as a tour, of the place where his collection is kept.

Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman

PART XI

THE SECRETS OF THE
ACKERMANSION

by Forrest J Ackerman



In 1929, three years after that first issue of *Amazing Stories* jumped off the newsstand and grabbed hold of me, the first sign appeared that I was destined to become a science fiction collector. In those days magazines more or less spoke to me, and said things like, "Take me home, little boy, you will love me!" How true that turned out to be! But in 1929 my mother was quite concerned; she told me, "Son, do you realize how many of those magazines you have? I just counted them. Why, you have twenty-seven! By the time you're a grown man you might have a hundred!"

* * *

People think the house I live in now, the 'Ackermansion', is where my collection has always been housed, but that's not so. It was once crowded into a much smaller place, a thirteen room home that had also been called the Ackermansion. About thirty years ago, one night when my wife Wendy opened the refrigerator, instead of food she found cans of film. It was then she realized the end had come, and it was time to look for a bigger place to live. She located two homes that seemed ideal, one which I preferred and one which she preferred. But we thought, this is not going to be satisfactory; whoever gives up will always be moaning that the other would have been better.

We almost didn't end up in my current home on Glendower Avenue. We had decided, finally, to buy one of those two houses and were about eleven days into a twelve-day option period when I received a

telephone call from Wendy: "Quick, come here!"

I went, and 'here' turned out to be an eighteen-room home in which the movie actor Jon Hall originally lived. And it turned out that Jon Hall had a connection to science fiction and fantasy! He played the poor man's Tarzan, Ramar of the Jungle, on television and was in at least one science fiction movie, a film about an invisible man and Nazis that was written by Curt Siodmak {{ed. note: *The Invisible Agent* (1942)}}. The place was spacious, with lots of room for my collection; it was absolutely ideal, and we both loved it. It took 2,000 boxes full of material, a fairly large truck, and the help of some fans to move everything. The night when we moved in, I gave a symbolic kiss to the lock on the front door and said, "I christen thee 'Son of Ackermansion'." It turned out, though, that the 'Son' part didn't last very long; nowadays everybody once again calls it the Ackermansion, or sometimes the 'Ackermuseum'.

I've always enjoyed having people visit me, even before moving into the present Ackermansion. Ever since 1951, I've been holding an open house about forty times a year. On a recent Saturday, thirty-five fans were here; on this past Fourth of July, several fans from Italy turned up – and two of them were celebrating their honeymoon! I have an interlocutor at my desk, so when fans arrive and I hear a buzz from the gate, I say, in a deep voice, "Who dares disturb the sleep of the Acker-monster!?" Generally, after hearing that, there's a lot of laughter out there,

so then I say, "This is no laughing matter!" More laughter. Then I buzz them in, and as they come down the stairway I intone to them, "Leave the gate open for the next victims!"

The first room you enter in the Ackermansion after the entrance hallway (which I call the 'Paul-way' after the famous artist Frank R. Paul) is the living room. And the first thing you notice, once you're there, is that you're not alone – with you is Ultima Futura Automaton, a recreation of the robotrix from the film *Metropolis* that was produced by its original creator, Walter Schultze-Mittendorf. But there's more in the living room than just her – across from her, on the north wall of the living room, I have one wall entirely of Virgil Finlay's artwork. And on the south wall, there's artwork by Hannes Bok and an illustration by Elliott Dold, Jr.

Somebody once asked me what was the first piece of original art I ever acquired; it's the frontispiece, "Midnight Mail Goes to Mars," from the first of only two issues of *Miracle Science and Fantasy Stories* back in 1931. You might wonder how on earth I got hold of that treasure. In those days, when a kid wrote to an artist to tell him how much he or she admired an illustration or painting; sometimes the artist was so flattered he would just give it to the first person who asked for it. That's exactly what happened when I sent a letter to Elliott Dold, Jr., and now I have that piece of art. The most famous Bok piece I have is sadly not an 'original', or even by Bok, though it is an outstanding piece of art. When I first met Hannes Bok, before he was known at all, he was just a young man thrilling us in the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society with his drawings and paintings. I acquired one of his originals but in 1939, it was stolen right off the wall of the living room in my apartment. I've never seen it again. Fortunately, I had made an eight-by-ten black & white of it which I let Ray Bradbury use for the 4th and final issue of his fanzine, *Futura Fantasia*, and that's where the piece has gotten its fame, as that cover. A few years ago I got out that black & white and gave it to a Texas artist, Anton Brzezinski, and described to him as best as I could remember what the coloring had been. It was just magnificent how he brought that Bok to life. Somewhere in the world I suppose some villain has my original which, with time, probably has deteriorated somewhat and the colors have faded. I'm still disappointed that I don't have it, but this Brzezinski is really a prize winner.

At this point, my visitors are usually ooh-ing and

ahh-ing, so I tell them, "Now, don't get too excited, you've still got seventeen rooms to go!"

Then we move on into the dining room where I have 255 different editions, in various languages, of *Frankenstein* and about the same number of *Dracula*. Behind glass, I have a unique edition of *Dracula*. This one is a first edition, signed by the author, Bram Stoker, but that's not what makes it unique: it's also signed by Bela Lugosi, and Vincent Price, and Christopher Lee, and John Carradine, and Lon Chaney, Jr., and just about every other motion picture person who ever played the role or characters associated with the role. I even took it to Dracula's castle in Transylvania, in Romania, and had the curator there sign it! In that same case is another rarity: I've got an edition of *Frankenstein* where the title was changed to *The Man Demon*. In it I've laid in the signature of the teenager, Mary Shelley, who wrote it, as well as a leaf from her garden in Switzerland, where she dreamed it up, and even a leaf that was atop her tomb in England. It's an incredibly unusual copy.

And then we move on to a room that I have dedicated entirely to Lon Chaney. I'd seen his now-lost film, *London After Midnight*, the very first day it played, back in 1927. It was the only movie he ever appeared in where he played a vampire. I have the beaver hat that he wore in that film, and also the ghoulish teeth. In that room you are totally surrounded by 'The Man of 1,000 Faces'. There are various paintings of him, and I even have an edition of a newspaper which announced his death.

After that, I usually take my visitors downstairs into my office where there are 125,000 stills from *Frankenstein*, *Dracula*, *Metropolis*, *Close Encounters*, *King Kong*, and other fantastic films of the last hundred years from all around the world. I've also collected all of the books that have been made into these fantastic movies. And, also in my office, there are complete runs not only of the more famous science fiction, horror, and fantasy magazines such as *Weird Tales*, *Amazing Stories*, *Science Wonder*, *Galaxy*, and *Analog*, but also all of the minor magazines like *Astonishing*, *Super Science Stories*, and *Spaceway*.

There's much in the Ackermansion about the movies. There's a room of artifacts, and there you see the last Martian machine from *War of the Worlds*, and from *King Kong* the pteranodon that was trying to fly away with Fay Wray and the brontosaurus that chased the ill-fated man up the tree. I have many three-dimensional models created for the movies by Ray

Harryhausen, from the animated dinosaur that he made when he was 13 years old that ruined the Golden Gate Bridge in *It Came From Beneath the Sea* to the models of the Washington Monument and the dome of the U.S. Capitol with flying saucers crashed into them for *Earth vs. the Flying Saucers*.

And there's more! I have life masks of Karloff, Lugosi, Carradine, Price, Peter Lorre, Lon Chaney, Jr., Charles Laughton, Tor Johnson, and even the Golem, Paul Wegener. I like to point out the top row, between Karloff and Lugosi, where there's also a mask of me when I was alive! And from Japan I have a little puppet of Yoda. I point out to people that this was made by automobile manufacturers, so it's obviously a 'Toy Yoda'. Then I ask if anybody has ever heard of the artificial language, Esperanto. Usually, some have and some haven't; I give them a little sample of it and then I show them some of the books I have that are in Esperanto. The Tolkien books have been translated into Esperanto, as have some by Edgar Allan Poe, E.R. Burroughs, H.G. Wells, and Harry Harrison. Then we continue along the hall and we

come to a bathroom, and I say that this house was originally owned by Jon Hall. And with that, I open the door and say, "In his honor, this is the 'John' Hall."

As I mentioned, there's much in the Ackermansion about the movies, but besides that, many of the rooms are devoted to books and I've got many themed sub-collections. In one room, for instance, there are more than 600 books about Atlantis; in another, there's my 'numbered' collection, from *Zero* by Col-linson Owen to *Twenty Trillion Light Years Through Space* by Leo Virg. A trip through the Ackermansion takes a couple of hours to see everything, and by the time my visitors finish the tour, they've seen probably the largest collection of science fiction books and memorabilia in existence. But before they leave to go home, inevitably, somebody asks me, "Surely, Mr. Ackerman, you haven't read *all* these books?!"

And they usually look incredulous when I say, "I've read every last word in every book in my collection." And it's true! When I get a new book I turn to the last page - and read the last word! ♣



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It turned out that the very last person we saw at Chicon 2000, as we were heading out from the Hyatt Regency Chicago on the long drive home, was Mike Resnick, who left just ahead of us on his own long drive home. For this issue, Mike takes a break from his "Worldcon Memories" series to describe his early days as a professional writer, but in a somewhat different genre than science fiction.

HOW I SINGLE-HANDEDLY DESTROYED the SEX-BOOK FIELD for FIVE YEARS and NEVER EVEN GOT a THANK-YOU NOTE from the LEGION of DECENCY --! by MIKE RESNICK



There has always been a field where a writer who was fast, facile, and willing to work under a pseudonym could make a quick buck or two. In the 1930s, it was the hero pulp field, where various diverse hands became Maxwell Grant to write *The Shadow* and Kenneth Robeson to write *Doc Savage* and *The Avenger*.

By the 1960s the money was to be found in the adult book field, where Bob Silverberg, Barry Malzberg, Marion Zimmer Bradley, myself, and a number of other future science fiction writers learned our trade while paying our bills.

I wrote a lot of sex books under more than 150 pseudonyms. But early on it occurred to me that I could make even more money by building a little creative factory of writers who were just as fast as I was, and even hungrier.

It worked like this: I'd find a new sex book publisher, and write two or three books for him. (It was always a him... and given a choice between good and Thursday, he always wanted it Thursday.)

He'd pay about \$1,000 for the book – royalties were never mentioned, and certainly never received – and after I'd sold him a few to prove I could give him what he wanted and make my deadlines, we'd usually come to an understanding: he would guarantee to buy a book every four (or six, or eight) weeks from me if I would guarantee to deliver the proper number of pages on time.

Then I would find (and, usually, train) writers who were hungrier than me to write these 200-page masterpieces for \$500. After I edited the first couple, I'd pay a trusted assistant \$50 to edit all future books, and then I'd pay a typist \$50 (a quarter a page, the going rate for a book back then) to type the edited manuscript – and I'd make \$400 for setting it up.

I'd pocket that \$400 two or three times a week, in addition to what I was making with my own writing and editing, which wouldn't be too bad today and was incredibly lucrative for a kid in his mid-20s back in the late 1960s.

It was a nice set-up. I had maybe three guys writing full-time, another one editing part-time, and we kept two work-at-home typists busy. There was only one fly in the ointment: Greenleaf Classics.

Greenleaf was the biggest publisher of dirty books around. (And when I say 'dirty', I mean soft-core. All this stuff pre-dates Linda Lovelace, Larry Flynt, *Screw*, and that whole crowd.) They published close to 500 new titles a year. Their publisher, Bill Hamling, was the former publisher of *Amazing and Other Worlds*. Their editor, Earl Kemp, had won a Best Fanzine Hugo for *Who Killed Science Fiction?*, and also chaired the 1962 Worldcon in Chicago. I knew Earl, having joined Chicago fandom just before he left to edit sex books in California.

So what was the problem?

Greenleaf only paid \$600 a book. Once I farmed a book out for \$500, paid \$50 for the editor, and \$50 for the typist, I had broken even – and after I paid for postage, I was in the hole.

It drove me crazy. There *had* to be a way to get Earl to come up with \$1,000 a book or more. I had the manpower to supply him with 50, even 100 titles a year, but at his prices I simply couldn't afford to do so.

Now, while I was doing all this free-lancing, I was also editing a weekly tabloid called *The National Insider*, which was second only to *The National Inquirer* in circulation. And one of the things I did as editor was to buy photos of 'nудie' movies (not the *Deep Throat* kind, which hadn't captured the public yet and was confined to stag smokers, but rather the Russ Meyer kind, with lots of nudity but no legally actionable obscenity).

The guy I bought them from was a fellow named Marv Lincoln, who took publicity photos for about half the nudie movies that were made in California. After I'd been dealing with him for awhile, I thought I saw a way to give Earl something so special that he couldn't get it anywhere else and would *have* to fork over four beautiful digits for it. I asked Marv to find out how much it would cost me to buy 100 black-and-white photos from a nudie movie, plus the rights to novelize the script. (Well, actually, I never saw a script; I was happy to novelize it from the publicity brochure, which probably had more words than the script anyway.)

He came back to me a couple of weeks later with a price: \$400.

Okay. I would pay Mark \$400. But now, with 100 8x10 photos, I only needed a 100-page book



WORTH A THOUSAND
WORDS
(OR \$4 EACH)



~~\$500 ea~~
NOW \$250.00

rather than 200 pages, so I could pay my hungry writers \$250 instead of \$500. And my editor and typist would each get \$25 instead of \$50. So my total expenses would be \$700.

I called Earl and hit him with the idea. He offered \$1,200 a book and we were in business.

I delivered about 20 books to him in two months. It felt like stealing.

Then the first couple came out. I had a couple of science fiction paperbacks on the stands back then: they sold for 50 cents apiece. Sex books were going for \$1.95. Earl charged \$3.95 for the sex books with the 100 photos in them – and they sold like hotcakes.

I always wondered who took the publicity photos for the *other* half of the nudie industry, the half Marv Lincoln didn't take.

I soon found out. It was none other than Bill Rotsler, long-time fan and perhaps the greatest cartoonist in the history of fanzines.

And pretty soon Bill was selling Earl just about as many of these illustrated novelizations as I was. (I have no idea if he wrote them himself or farmed them out – but farming out was a pretty common practice back then.)

Title after title sold out. And of course there had to come a day when Earl and Bill Hamling asked themselves *The Question*: if we can charge \$3.95 for a book with *some* text and 100 photos and sell out, what can we charge for a book with 200 photos and *no* bothersome text at all?

They printed up a handful of such books and sold out at \$7.95 apiece. Their next step was to explain to me that they no longer needed any novelizations, and then they contacted all the photographers directly.

Publisher after publisher followed suit. After all, why sell 50% of your print run at \$1.95 when you can sell all of it at \$7.95 and not have to pay any writers for the privilege?

And that was that. No writer could sell a sex novel in the field for the next five years.

Oh, eventually they began publishing hardcore photos and one by one they were busted and shut down, and a few years later adult novels ("the kind Frenchmen like") made their reappearance, but by then I had stockpiled enough money to quit the field – thank Ghod! – and was preparing for a full-time career as a science fiction writer.

And that's the story. Except that, almost 30 years later, I'm still waiting for my commendation from Jerry Falwell and my medal from the Legion of Decency. ✪

Time now for a trip back to the 1950s and the 'Golden Age' of British fandom. This year's Chicon 2000 was the most recent of six Chicago worldcons, but none have been closer together than nine years so it's probably fairly easy for any attendees to remember which events occurred at which Chicons. This is not the case for other conventions, for example the British Eastercons of the mid-1950s when four in a row were held in the city of Kettering. So many memorable things happened at that series of conventions, it could easily become a bit of a jumble.



It doesn't matter in the slightest, of course, but when one looks back across the years to some fond memory, there's often a tendency to fix that memory in a time frame. Aunt Agatha being eaten by a had-dock that time in Blackpool helps peg and secure the incident in the memory, and we can allow our memory to branch out from there.

And, of course, it's a tremendous help if we've only been to Blackpool once in our lives (yes, yes, I know that some would regard the experience as once being once too often). And it's the same with conventions. Ah, yes, there's Richard Lynch at the Anchorage con in nineteen whatever. No problem at all, but when conventions take place in the same venue over a period of years which are not too far apart, like the five or six (See! One even loses count!) in Liverpool's Adelphi Hotel, the memories begin to merge.

And so we come to the amalgam of the British annual conventions held in Kettering from 1955 through 1958. Four in a row and I defy anyone to remember exactly which events took place in which year. The scenes which spring to memory are simply a pleasant jumble. I have the feeling that very few people in fandom outside the small but select Kettering group headed by the then equally unknown Denny Cowen had even heard of the place, a quiet, small, market town nestling in the rolling Northamptonshire heartlands.

There had been some discussion in fanzines and

correspondence prior to the first con about the high room rates being mentioned. "You'll never get anyone to pay more than £1.00 a night," was the cry. The rate was twenty-one shillings, one guinea, equivalent at the time to a whole \$3.00.

The hotel itself, the George, was quiet and peaceful, too (the sort of place which served jam scones and tea at four in the afternoon), a state of affairs which caused Terry Jeeves to comment, upon arrival, "It's a pity to do it in a place like this." There were two wings to the building, the old and the new (which held some bedrooms which were – rare in those days – *en suite*), linked by a downstairs lounge and an upstairs corridor. I found myself in Room 201 in the new wing and had the same room during all subsequent conventions, including the informal weekend gathering in 1967 a short time before I flew out to take up my post in Singapore.

Soon British fandom of the day had descended in force: Ken and Pamela Bulmer, Jim and Dorothy Ratigan, Ron (Pam Bulmer's brother) and Daphne Buckmaster, Vince Clarke, Joy Goodwin, Walt Willis, Chuck Harris, The Cheltenham Group (Eric and Margaret Jones, Bob Richardson, and Les Childs), Shirley Marriott, Tony Klein, Bill Harry, Eric Bentcliffe, Bobbie Wild, John Brunner, Dan Morgan, Ken Potter, Irene Core, Archie Mercer, Ken Slater, Don Allen and Con Turner from Gateshead, Cyril Whittaker, Jill Michiewhite and artist Jack Wilson (all three

from Spalding), *Nebula's* Peter Hamilton, Ken McIntyre, Norman Wansborough, Mike Wallace, ATom, the entire Liverpool shebang (Norman and Ina Shorrocks, Stan Nuttall, Don MacKay, John Owen, John Roles, Pat Doolan, Frank Milnes, and the city's in vogue pro, Dave Gardner), Jill Adams, Laurence Sandfield, Ted Carnell, Paul and Joan Hammet, Dave Cohen (who was reporting the weekend for the *Vargo Staffen Magazine*), Jimmy White, Ethel Lindsay, Brian Varley, Frances Evans, Phil Rogers, Mal Ashworth, Shiela O'Donnell, Syd Bounds, Frank Arnold, Charlie Duncombe, Nic Oosterhand (the editor of the Dutch pro-mag *Planeet*)... far too many for the George to accommodate. And so for what I think was the first time, overflow hotels, the Royal and the Sun, just along the road, were employed.

The programme items were held in a reasonably-sized hall situated at the back of the hotel across a small yard which was used as a car park. (Though not many fans in those far-off days owned a car.) The programme wasn't the continuous multi-layered "I want to see seventeen items and they're all on at the same time, 3.30am" affairs of today. Nice and gentle, as I told you. Kettering itself was, on the lines of, "We'll start at eleven. Most people will have been up and will have finished breakfast by then." And, dutifully, virtually every fan would take his or her seat for whatever fare was being offered.

It didn't take some fans very long to explore the town and arrive back at the hotel full of the joys every collector would like to experience on a daily basis. The enjoyment might be in the chase and the hunt, but in the final netting of the game (who says I mix my metaphors?), it's pure *ecstasy*, man, pure *ecstasy*! Eric Jones was the first to arrive back at the George and show his purchases to the group sitting enjoying morning coffee in the downstairs lounge, a small pile of Clayton *Astounding* which he'd uncovered in a small place along the road. I don't recall finishing the coffee before we all hurried out to find this treasure trove, which turned out to be the Collectors' Shop. What a place! Butterflies in cases, cigarette cards, coins, stamps, old magazines... *Old magazines!* In no time at all, we'd denuded the place of old pulps and were happily carrying our goodies back to the George.

When some years later I found myself a used book and magazine dealer who was sliding over into the world of comic books, I visited that shop on a number of occasions and even had an irregular correspondence with its owner, who had the same name as the Scottish collector, fan, and letter-hack, Fred Smith. I was honoured by being allowed in the shop's upper storey, which housed items like a roomful of Agatha Christie paperbacks, and an adjacent room

stacked from floor to ceiling with piles of silver age comic books. They weren't there long!

The conventions themselves have become a tangle of memories. There were lots of photographs taken by everyone. I have a picture of myself sitting cross-legged, wearing a towel round my head to act as a turban and playing a wooden recorder on the flat roof outside the upstairs corridor. Spread out before me are the pulp magazines I must have purchased down the road. Don't ask me what deep and significant meaning all that was supposed to have, but I do remember that the snap was taken by Bill Harry, who later became editor of *Mersey Beat*, the Liverpool weekly which charted the rise and rise of the Beatles. Several photos I have show Eric Jones, who later initiated the Nobel Order of the Knights of St. Fanthony, inside a gigantic mock-up of an Arthur "ATom" Thomson BEM.

One programme item at one of the cons stands out from the rest, a demonstration of hypnotism by one Harry Carr, who had Eric Jones and Hal Kennedy, a Newcastle fan of the day, arguing about the result of a football match. Ted Tubb tried to enter the ranks of those being hypnotized, remarking that he could do with the sleep. I've no idea why, and I'm not asking for suggestions, thank you very much, but on one occasion I was carried, upside down, with my head banging on each step (there are some things one just can't forget), by Norman Shorrocks and gang of eager helpers. Somehow – with one bound he was free – I managed to escape and was chased by the screaming horde. (Actually, there was probably more laughter than any screaming, but, well, a lifetime of reading purple prose...) I dodged round a corner, threw open a door leading to a down staircase and whipped speedily across the corridor into one of the bathrooms. The Screaming Horde rushed past and clattered down the stairs. Yeh, and crept silently back again, didn't they, so that when I emerged, triumphantly, from the bathroom, there they all were to pounce on me once again.

Zap guns – water pistols to the mundane – were much in evidence. One fan made a great point of insisting he zap opponents in the mouth, which didn't cause too many objections once it was discovered that he was using gin instead of water. One fan, a highly respected doctor in the mundane world, upset the owner of the screen which had been brought in for the film show by ruining its silver coating with an errant zap but bought the thing on the spot, thereby negating any complaint.

About this time, Don Allen was producing a fanzine, *Satellite*, from the Newcastle area in the north-east. It ran a regular column by someone hiding behind the pseudonym 'Vitriol'. The columns were

made up of snide insinuations about fandom in general and certain fans in particular, though no fan was ever named. And, as you might imagine, they were the topic of conversation in many letter columns and much correspondence. I'd discussed the topic with Con Turner when he visited Harrogate, and he rolled with laughter. 'Vitriol' was actually a fan named Ted Mason, who was unknown outside the local area and was simply having a bit of fun. He made up the 'insinuations' in a general way without having anyone in mind, and was constantly amazed at and amused by the manner in which fans projected these fictitious 'insinuations' on to actual personalities.

It seemed a good idea to parody this little *Satellite* enterprise and I wrote a short piece for the Leeds fanzine, *Orbit*, entitled "Acid Drops," under the by-line 'Redd Grayson' in which I invented various happenings at Kettering. One of the questions I posed was to ask what had happened when a certain young lady had visited the bedroom of a well-known fan editor who had supposedly been taken ill. Almost immediately, Pamela Bulmer sent along a letter of comment in which she made plain her annoyance and disgust. Apparently there *had* been a fan-ed taken ill at the con and he had spent a day in bed. And yes, he'd been visited by his girl friend. Pamela had been with her and nothing improper had occurred and to suggest, even to *suggest*, that anything had...etc etc. It was the first I'd heard that anyone had even been taken ill or had spent some time in bed and I told Pamela so, but she wasn't convinced. Perhaps I should have referred to "Shaney" Marriott returning to her bedroom one night to find that a young fan had managed to persuade one of the hotel staff to let him in the room, and was naked in bed, awaiting the very attractive femme-fan's return. She threw him out bodily into the corridor. His clothes followed some time later.



Very welcome at the different conventions were the various overseas visitors: Lee and Larry Shaw (on their honeymoon), Ed Hamilton and Leigh Brackett, Dick Wilson, and Dave Kyle, who impressed us with his sharp-edge no-nonsense delivery when he outlined plans for the 1956 New York convention, of which he was chairman. It was our introduction to Dave, who has been a regular and welcome visitor to these shores over so many years. He wore sunglasses when he stood up to deliver his talk and pointed out that they were "good for three hours' sleep – in appearance."

I have a fond memory of Dave visiting Harrogate and coming along to meet me at the school at which I was teaching. I introduced him to our deputy head-teacher (vice-principal), "This is Mrs. Crowther, our deputy head," I said.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Head," Dave said brightly, holding out her hand. It really amused her, and she always commented on the incident whenever I met her in later years.

It was at the '56 convention, too, that the first fan from the continent made an appearance. There was Germany's Anna Steul and also Belgium's Jan Jansen, who was co-editor (with Dave Vendelmans) of the English-language *Alpha* and who later began to publish *Contact*, the first fannish newsletter. Enthusiastic about sf and fandom to a ridiculous degree, Jan had a keen sense of humour and, as an excellent linguist (in addition to his native Flemish, he spoke English, German, French, and Spanish), was regarded as something of a novelty, and was in great demand.

I'd first met Jan the previous year when I'd attended the mid-summer Antwerp convention. I made a return trip the same year (a trip during which I was also kindly hosted by the Benford family down in Frankfurt and spent a couple of days on the Rhein-Main Air Base itself, having been smuggled on it by Ellis Mills). And of course when I later had a three year stint working near Mons in southern Belgium, Jan and I were frequent visitors to each other's home. On some occasions, Jan would come south to Mons by train and I'd run him home in the evening. The idea was merely to drop him off – this about midnight – and high tail it the eighty miles to Mons, but I'd invariably accept the invitation to a cup of coffee – and would get back to Mons at goodness knows what time in the early hours. (I once drove the return journey in a couple of minutes under the hour, and this, mind you, necessitating a drive through the center of Brussels!) Sadly, earlier this year I paid another visit to Antwerp, but this time for Jan's funeral.

It was in Kettering that I descended into the low world of gambling; I was introduced to three card brag, the British army's own version of poker. The

game caught on wildly, Ron Ellik particularly being a keen protagonist. It was at one session that Norman Shorrocks, who was a stamp dealer, ran out of ready money during one hand and placed in the kitty an 1840 Penny Black on which he put a certain value. Perhaps I shouldn't own up to winning the hand with a flush. And yes, I do still have the stamp. And no, I'm not giving it back.

Dave Jenrette, who came to the con with his wife, Rusty, in 1956 was bitten by the brag bug. He also introduced us to canned beer, which had to be opened with a small piercing tool. "Shake the can first," he said, "so that the flavor circulates." When the can was pierced the resultant beer spout hit the ceiling. Dave was posted over here at the time, flying nicely-primed nuclear bombs around in the skies for SAC. His colleagues were shipped home on a regular basis with nervous breakdowns. He hailed from Florida and had been well-known in fandom under the surname of Howard, the adjustment being made when he joined the Air Force and the authorities insisted on his original name, rather than that under which he'd been brought up after his mother had remarried. This pleased his wife. "Anyone can be called Howard," Rusty said, "but how many people are called Jenrette?"

The couple invited me down to stay with them and drove me to their Norfolk home from the convention where we spent an afternoon trying to work out the chances of obtaining the different hands in three card brag. During the visit it occurred to us that we were the only fans who had actually met the popular but very reclusive Alan Dodd and so the plot was hatched, not to create a fan as Sandy Sanderson had done with Joan W. Carr, but to *un*create one, namely Alan. We immediately produced a small fanzine in which we announced that because a German fan named Helmuth Gebogen had paid a visit to 'Alan's' home in Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire and had discovered only a relative of mine living there, we had decided to 'come clean' and admit that there was no such person as 'Alan Dodd' – he was a hoax! (I don't think that Alan was best pleased.)

The 'Joan Carr' hoax perpetrated by Sandy has been well documented, but for the single reader who doesn't know the ins and outs: Harold "Sandy" Sanderson was a sergeant in the army and was stationed in the Middle East, in Cyprus and in Egypt. While he was there, he wrote back that he'd met a woman, also a sergeant at the same posting, who was keen on sf, and that he'd introduced her to fandom. In no time she was in correspondence with virtually every British fan. Except, of course, that she didn't exist; the letters had been written and signed by Sandy using green

ink instead of the colour he usually employed. Only a few femme fans and two or three of Sandy's friends in his home town, Manchester, sf group were in on the secret and great lengths were made by them to keep the hoax going. Sandy even managed to have 'Joan' posted with him when he moved from one station to another.

At that time, I was living in Liverpool and had one evening gone over to pay a social call on the Manchester mob. During the evening I'd mentioned that no, I wasn't married; the 'Joan Bennett' (nicknamed 'Jinx') about whom I'd written in various fanzine stories was simply a fictitious character concocted for the stories. I told them that I wasn't intending to fool anyone into thinking that she was real (it could have been somewhat awkward when I struck up a relationship with a girl friend). My reply seemed to satisfy everyone that I wasn't trying to create a female fan hoax. "Anyway," one of the well-oiled group of Manchester fen told me, "it's already been done."

This, of course, referred to Sandy's invention of 'Joan Carr', and as different accounts have recorded, the hoax had now been blown, and fandom sat back, or leaned forward, or whatever fandoms do in such a circumstance, and waited with baited breath for me to blow the whistle. It could be waiting still. Someone out there was bestowing upon me a degree of perspicacity, awareness, and intelligence which I simply didn't, and don't, possess. If that careless remark had meant anything to me at all, it was that somewhere in fandom's untapped past, someone had invented someone. Heavens, as noted by Harry Warner in the previous issue of *Mimosa*, one fan had even invented a fan personality which was, in reality, his cat! {{ed. note: see "The Summer of '39" in *Mimosa* 25}} And Joan was, after all, a real person to us all, and that the remark referred to her simply didn't occur to me.

Apparently, at one Kettering room party – perhaps the occasion when Dave Newman shaved off half his handle bar moustache and went down to breakfast the following morning in order to win a bet and raise funds for TAFF – a reference was made to Joan and Sandy, and those in the know looked across at me to gauge my reaction and, with baited breath (it must be catching), wonder whether I was about to blow the whistle. Ah, they could all have breathed easily. The hoax was out shortly afterward, however.

But tape recording was definitely 'in'. For the 1956 convention, Sandy had managed to hitch a space available flight (known over here as an 'indulgence' flight) to arrive at Kettering and burst into the lounge just as the Liverpool Group's taped play, *Last and First Fen* was being played and reference was being made to the happy couple. The Liverpool fans had,

er, pooled their tremendous innovative and creative talents to produce a play which actually had some sort of a plot and in which the dialogue referred to dozens of fans and fannish events and legends. John Owen contributed most of the different voices and accents and immediately became known as 'The Man of a Thousand Voices'. The tape began with a voice purporting to be Dave Kyle's welcoming fans to the U.S., "home of the brave, land of the free. Can I sell you a ticket to a lynching?"

There was also a similar Liverpool tape the previous year, *The March of Slime*, spattered throughout with mock 'commercials' for a wonder product called 'Blog'. "Brush your shoes with Blog," spouted the announcer, and later, "Clean your teeth with Blog." How I wish I'd taken, and kept, notes of all the references. The hotel barman concocted some vile brew and sold it as Blog to inquisitive locals who happened to wander into the hotel bar during the weekend.

Round about that time there was much talk in British fandom that we were becoming a little insular and, as it were, inbred. "We need to bring in new blood," was the cry. After all, there *had* to be more people 'out there' of similar ilk whom we would welcome and whose company we would enjoy. There was also the chance of course that we would be providing them with a coterie of friends who would benefit them, really rather an arrogant outlook on the face of it, but the idea really was altruistic.

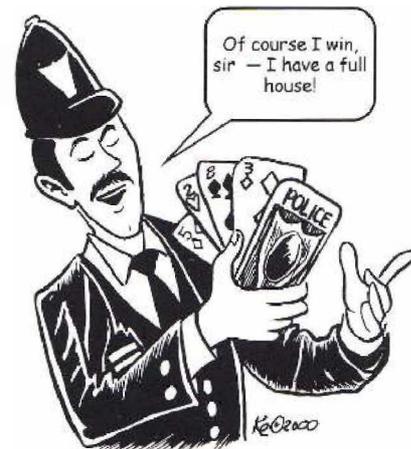
So it was that at one Kettering con, attendees spent the afternoon discussing the best way to achieve this double-edged aim. Eventually, after the entire afternoon's serious debating (what a waste of time – we could have been playing brag), a way forward was achieved, the formation of the British Science Fiction Association, and how many of its hundreds of members today realise or even suspect that the Association was formed primarily to bring people into fandom? "Heavens," said Ted Tubb, as we streamed out of the lounge where the discussion had taken place, "you know what we've done? We've *organised!*" Definitely a dirty word.

Odd memories flood back... the gentlemanly hunchbacked night porter whom some fan cruelly labelled "Boris"... of actually being offered the job of *Nebula's* assistant editor by Peter Hamilton... Birmingham's Pete Emery spending all night sitting on some corridor stairs, telling a string of shaggy dog stories... the different card sessions... In those days, gambling in public places was illegal and we went a little worried when a friendly local copper came in during one session in the early hours, only for our fears to be allayed when he removed his tunic and took a seat at the table. I'm sure he won.

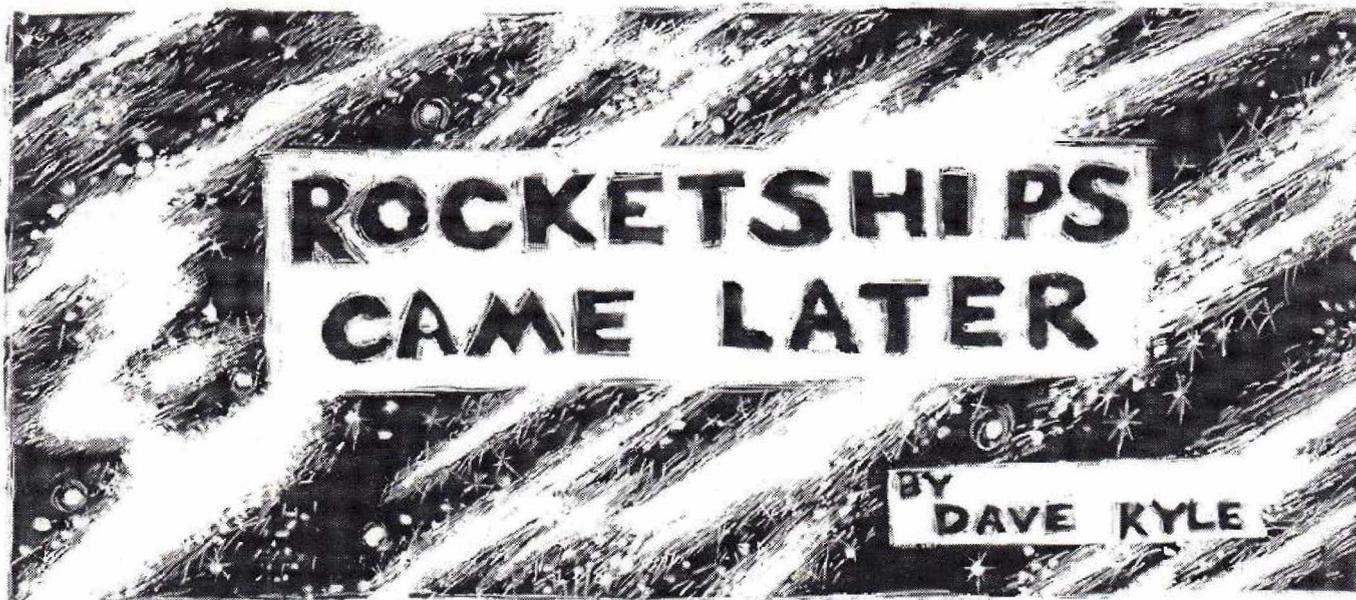
Or how about the time I went to Phil Rogers' room to tell him that a card session was about to start and found him there with a young lady fan and one of the hotel maids? A short time later, the card school came a-knocking at the door and the maid flew into a panic. "They can't find me in here with a guest," she flustered, so, naturally, we stuck her in the wardrobe and squatted on the floor with a pile of cards and a dummy kitty. Holding a hand of cards, I opened the door. "They're already playing brag," exclaimed John Roles, squatting down to join the game. After a while, he shifted his position and leaned back on the wardrobe door, which flew open to reveal the hide-away. (You simply can't make up that sort of thing!)

And there was the time when I'd left a party one evening to produce an APazine on the flatbed duplicator I'd brought with me. (One had one's warped priorities in those days.) Quite a party, which happened to be interrupted by the local constabulary, not, however, the brag-playing variety, who were rather put out to find a young damsel dressed in a gym slip knocking back a few gin and tonics. (This was Joan Hammet, a very attractive woman who was actually in her twenties but who certainly looked about fourteen. Amazing.) The coppers were bent (sorry, I shouldn't use that word) on checking which guests at the party were resident in the hotel. The law was such that alcohol served after 10.30pm could be sold only to residents. The fuzz had the hotel register with them and asked each fan at the party his or her name and room number. Don Allen, who wasn't resident at the George, had been helping me with the APazine production but had gone downstairs to join the (real) fun for a while. Ah, quick-thinking Don. Having only recently left me rolling away inkily in my room and having made sure that I hadn't come down to the party, he gave the police *my* name and room number.

"Blimey," said Chuck Harris, when this was explained to him, "I'd rather go to jail than be Ron Bennett!" ✪



As we mentioned earlier, there are only three people who have attended all six Chicago worldcons. One is Forry Ackerman and another is the writer of this article (we'll leave the identity of the third as an exercise for the reader). Dave now continues his autobiographical series with an article about his different careers as an artist, writer, and small press publisher, and the links from each to the science fiction world.



From time to time I've been a professional science fiction artist. I'm currently an old-guy, a non-practicing member of ASFA with my glorious artwork days in the distant past. And what wonderful exciting days they were, too! I once 'earned a living' as an sf illustrator sixty years ago when sf magazines were numerous and commonplace. My friends and a few editors knew me affectionately as 'the poor man's Paul'.

Frank R. Paul, as any true fan knows, was for a half century the world's foremost sf artist. He was a giant presence in all of Gernsback's publications. We were thrilled to have him chosen as the very first Worldcon Guest of Honor. All of fandom – I'm certain to say without contradiction – everyone in those early days truly honored him. And he still is. A *Wonder Stories Quarterly* magazine, on which for me, the worshiping teenager, he signed his name with such a distinctive flourish so different from the simple 'PAUL' on his work, now hangs in a frame on my wall. This old-world kindly man, with his close-cropped grey hair and smiling face, warm and kind to every fan, is a legend for us old-timers. No wonder that when I started drawing illustrations, it was Paul who was my inspiration.

Don Wollheim, as an editor, was instrumental in my career of illustrating. I had frequent illustrations in his *Stirring Science* and *Cosmic Stories*. When my

best friend Richard Wilson (an eventual Nebula Award winner) and I shared a cold water flat (Ravens' Roost) in Manhattan while barely out of our teens, the five bucks cash I would receive for pay-on-delivery artwork kept us in potatoes and oatmeal. If it wasn't for the need for money, I doubt that I would have produced as much as I did, because in my indolent life I tended to be a lazy youth. Editors Robert A. W. "Doc" Lowndes (*Science Fiction* and *Future Fiction* magazines) and Frederik Pohl (*Astonishing Stories*), contemporaries of Dick and me and part of the precocious group of teenagers who became the Futurians, also used my artwork regularly. However, for Doc Lowndes I worked more at and became better known as a detective story writer for his *Smashing Detective* and other Columbia Publications after World War II. I started accepting assignments from F. Orlin Tremaine, who had revitalized *Astounding Stories* and had started his own publication, *Comet Stories*, but circumstances limited such participation.

Next to Paul, I most honor the memory of Elliott Dold, another extraordinary man of many talents. Paul was always recognizable with his double-bit drawing-pen shading. Dold's shading also was distinctive. He loved shadows, and the cheekbones of his heroes always had an unmistakable flair. When I met him in his declining years he was almost blind, but warm and friendly and not at all bitter.

In those early expanding days of sf publications in and around the decade of World War II, a number of fan artists such as John Giunta and Damon Knight got to do professional work. Dick Wilson's wife, Leslie Perri, also did drawings, and there were others, as well, whose names at the moment I can't recall. Most famous of them all, of course, is Hannes Bok. His work rose in readers' respect to rival the exceptional drawings of Virgil Finlay and Stephen Lawrence and even *Weird Tales* cover artist Margaret Brundage. Hannes was a genuine fan but a loner who never attended the famous Hydra Club social get-togethers. He lived alone in his small apartment on West 108th Street in Manhattan, amid simple surroundings. When I knew him best was in the mid '40s, and he had yet to make any substantial money, and subsisted regularly on basic fare such as beans. Hannes had male friends and his personal life style was something I neither knew about nor cared about, but he was one of the nicest fellows I knew. He had such incredible talent. I wish he could have enjoyed the fame and fortune from his work which was not really there in his lifetime. His creativity encompassed practically everything, in art and crafts and writing. Had he lived along enough, I believe he would have become world famous outside of science fiction.

Hannes once did a large painting for a book display of the Associated Fantasy Publishers. We were the small, pioneering book publishers of the late 1940s: Arkham House, Avalon Company, Fantasy Publishing Company, Inc. (FPCI), Gnome Press, Hadley Publishing Company, New Era Publishing Company, Prime Press, and Shasta Publishers. The huge oil painting, about five or six feet long on a masonite panel, was a truly marvelous work of art. Years later, an attempt to find it by me led to a dead end. Then, last year, NASA retiree Fred Durant, an Arthur C. Clarke collaborator, sent me a copy of a picture of us publishers in front of the painting. And then, within months, I learned from him that an sf art collecting husband and wife team, who have published a book about their material and have a traveling exhibit (the Frank Collection), actually have recovered a sizable piece of the painting which had been dismembered.

How did I get to become a sf artist myself? Like most children, I loved crayons and I was a demon with them. As a product of my times, I found 'The Great War of 1914-1918' awesome and was fascinated by great guns and ships and planes, and thus imaginary pictures flowed from my sticks of color.

I did have proper restraint, however. I didn't

attack the house walls nor destroy my books. But I consumed reams of paper and numerous composition books. Battalions of soldiers marched across my pages. War tanks blazed out fire and projectiles, their spray marked by the inevitable dotted lines. Submarines appeared here and there. And biplanes filled the skies, black Maltese crosses and red-white-and-blue cocardes or roundels flashing everywhere. Obviously I was on my way toward the veneration of mechanical things. There, in my fascination, was the glimmering of science fiction gadgetry. But no rocketships — rocketships would come later. These were the days when 'science fiction' didn't exist for me, nor, for that matter, did it exist for anyone. The term wasn't even gestating in the mind of Hugo Gernsback who was just beginning to create 'scientifiction'.



Gernsback didn't give me artistic talent, but he certainly pointed me in that specific direction. First came the pre-Gernsbackian era when *The American Boy* magazine suggested to me the coming of science fiction. The futuristic serial "Haunted Airways" and its illustrations captured my fancy. I'm not certain whether or not the artist was William Heaslip or the better-known aviation illustrator Clayton Knight. Even more outstanding were the illustrations for Carl H. Claudy's fantastic stories in that magazine. Such material helped me evolve into the rabid science fiction fan of the following decade of the 1930s.

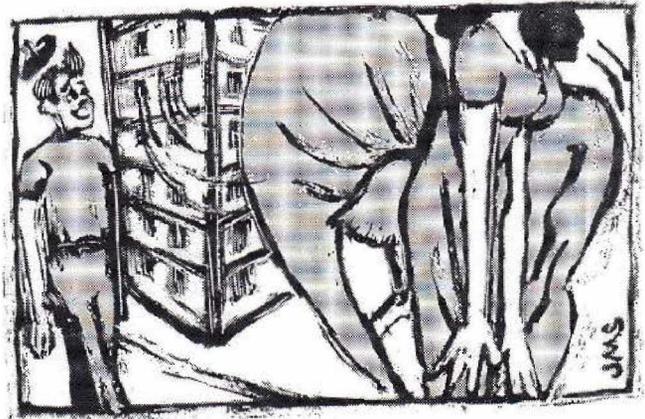
I wrote amateurish sf stories for classes in high school, illustrating them for my own amusement. And then came the time to go to Dartmouth, which

sadly I couldn't afford. As comic page artist Alex Raymond and his Flash had nudged me into experimenting with my father's hand mimeograph machine and thus doing *Fantasy World* fanzine, my artistic talent beckoned, offering me an alternative. (Hectograph was plenty of fun with colored inks and pencils – but cutting stencils into line drawings was arduous and not very satisfying.) No college for me. Too bad, but at least there was a trade school to attend – in art, inevitably. Serendipity, however, was at work. That lack of money has utterly shaped my life because it pushed me on the path directly into fandom!

In 1936, attracted by a small advertisement in some respectable publication, I chose the Art Career School in New York City. The school, with an additional name of Commercial Illustration Studios, was in the penthouse of the Flatiron Building facing Madison Square, two blocks away from my 'home' in the McBurney 23rd Street YMCA. (A fantastic coincidence is that several science fiction book publishers are now housed in the Flatiron Building, including Tor Books and Tom Doherty Associates.) Across the street from the Y was an old and faded hotel, The Chelsea, for years Arthur C. Clarke's U.S. hangout. Active fandom lay before me.

The Flatiron Building in Manhattan, shaped that way by the crossing of Fifth and Sixth Avenues, is a towering iceberg still floating in my sea of life. There are many memories around this 'first skyscraper in the world', half-forgotten, like an iceberg, out of sight below the surface. A few, however, shine prominently on the top, such as the weekly nude class mentioned in a previous article {{ed note: see "Phamous Phantasy Phan" in *Mimosa* 24 }}. We young artists in training were embarrassed at first, then more or less indifferent and bored, which leads me to a remarkable aspect of human behavior not heretofore mentioned in my reminiscences. After life class ("You've got the anatomy all wrong – go up and take a good look!" – a comment which greatly amused us young fellows), we would descend from the penthouse school to street level and head around the prow of our granite ship. And we would hesitate, titillated by what we frequently saw. The corner made a natural wind tunnel. The gusts of air struck the pedestrians with unexpected force, and females, taken unaware, fought back, not all the time successfully. Their skirts flew up. Their legs were exposed. Sometimes their knees were bared. Undergarments momentarily flashed into view. We ogled. We giggled. It was a much *much* better show than life class.

There's a lesson there about life which I have never forgotten. Today's culture has destroyed old-fashion thrills. And I very much regret it.



In those early years when I was more interested in drawing than in writing, I knew quite a few professional illustrators. Some of them, often venerated by fellow student John Forte and me, were part of the popular art world, usually the Sunday comics before the rise of the comic books. Because he and I were rabid Alex Raymond fans (*Flash Gordon*), we were intolerant of his contemporaries. They probably were nice people, but we poked fun at them behind their backs. Charles Flanders, who drew *The Lone Ranger*, was our favorite target. He very much attempted the style of Alex Raymond as influenced by the famous illustrator Matt Clark. Drybrush was a popular technique for shading, and Clark was a master of it. Raymond eschewed it, with his fine pen-and-ink drawings (although he used it much later). Flanders not only used it for shading, he actually drew with a brush – we were revolted by the Flanders touch. And then there was Zack Mosley with *Smilin' Jack*. Hands are the hardest objects to draw and Zack knew it. So, his characters would stand around with their hands behind their backs, or they would sit behind tables or other objects to hide the hands. We admired *The Phantom* and *Mandrake the Magician* – those artists didn't really compete with Alex Raymond. And we liked Clarence Gray's *Brick Bradford* even though we considered it inferior to *Flash Gordon*. As for Lt. Dick Calkins' *Buck Rogers* – awful! His crude drawings with stupid, silly machines were abominable. And yet... And yet, they captured the romance of deep space and the 25th Century. So we didn't laugh at his work. We could feel in it the power of early science fiction.

After attending art school, I went back to Monticello, New York as a weekly newspaper editor and

didn't pursue the training I had been given except for odd jobs. I did some newspaper column headings, such as one for the New York State Police with a traffic light beam highlighting Captain Fox's weekly articles. My most interesting effort was a wooden quarter about the size of a beverage coaster I designed for Monticello's special celebration. Locally it was considered legal tender.

I mentioned in an earlier article that I had unsuccessfully attempted a magazine illustration for my "Golden Nemesis" story for the 1936 *Wonder Stories* {{ ed note: see "A Hugo Gernsback Author" in *Mimosa 7* }} but it was not until the 1940s that my work was good enough for publication. Fortunately I have most of my original drawings. Of those I don't, one was reported to be in a book store in Seattle, but that's all I know about it. Then, in the summer of 1999, I was flabbergasted by an unexpected gift at Pulpcon in Dayton, Ohio, by Robert Weinberg. It was a full page illustration – I didn't recognize it, but it bore my signature. It was very good. I sort of remembered it. (It's reproduced below. Perhaps someone will identify where it appeared. I am still in the dark.)



My favorite illustrations are "Blue Moon," mostly for the Flash Gordon look-alike trying to evade the sharp teeth of a crocodile, and "The Martians Are Coming," because I've caricatured both me and Dick

Wilson in the TV screen and showing the masthead of the newspaper I worked on. I put the "Martians" illustration in my *Pictorial History of Science Fiction* (Hamlyn, 1976), but another favorite, "Time Capsule" for the story by Ralph Milne Farley, was inadvertently left out of my *Illustrated Book of Science Fiction Ideas and Dreams* (Hamlyn, 1977).

As the 1950s began I was back in New York City in my own apartment on the West Side. I was now fully occupied with two time-consuming facets of my life: I was running Gnome Press with Marty Greenberg (the fan, not Martin Harry Greenberg the academician) and I was heavily pursuing my Bachelor's degree at Columbia University. For Gnome Press I did the editorial writing and editing and acted as production manager and art director. Marty was the business manager and story consultant.

When the first books were printed in my family printing shop in Monticello, I had little practical experience but a lot of enthusiasm and energy. Courses at Columbia University helped immensely in steering me along the way. Using my artistic talent and training, I designed the original colophon or special identifying design for Gnome Press – a gnome sitting under a toadstool reading a book, inspired by the design used by my father for Merriewood, a mountain residential park. The early books were designed by me and the quality was kept very high. I believe that the little touches which cost a bit more, such as my little symbol embossed in the cover of Asimov's *I, Robot*, the chain design for the title page of Heinlein's *Sixth Column*, and the split binding and special embossed rocketship on anthologies, made Gnome books distinctive.

I designed and wrote all the copy for the early books, drawing designs when appropriate. Professional book printers were used, especially Colonial Press in Massachusetts which had an office on 42nd Street opposite the New York Public Library. I collaborated with Edd Cartier in several ways, the best being the illustrations for my story of the "Interplanetary Zoo"; this was an interesting project because the full color signature or folio in the anthology *Travelers of Space* was actually done from black-and-white drawings. All color was laid in by a talented printing plant technician who worked with me for the final results. He had done similar work for Lloyd A. Eshbach in the production of some of Lloyd's Fantasy Press books.

I did something similar in color work for Gnome when I worked with Challenge Printing Company

printers in New York City for the printing of the dust jacket for Raymond F. Jones' *Renaissance*. I made separate drawings or overlays in black for each of four colors. Then, as each color was printed as visualized by me, the final jacket took shape. What the finished product would look like was only in my head – only as the colors went on did the design begin to materialize. Voila! Four colors without the expense of color separation.



I did the same thing for Gnome's L. Ron Hubbard book, *Typewriter in the Sky and Fear* – I drew separate plates for each color. It was not as complicated as *Renaissance* and I had a better control over the end result. That jacket is one of my favorites, but some colors in the spine after exposure to years of light have faded badly. I used the same innovative process for the Conan books – the crown for Conan had some intricate color work to highlight the jeweled headpiece. These were some of the ways I cut expenses for Gnome publications, for dust jackets with color separation technology were extremely expensive yet absolutely necessary to make a book attractive and saleable. After all, it wasn't easy even in the 1950s to be able to sell a hard cover book of high quality for only two dollars and fifty cents!

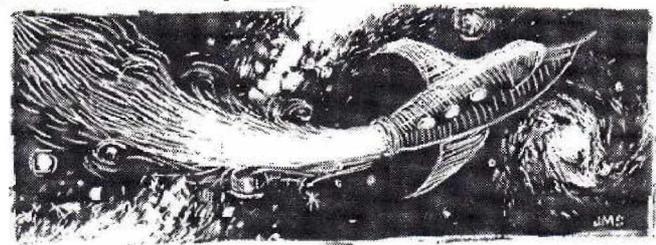
Of all the books published by Gnome Press, the Conan books are specially noteworthy from an art design viewpoint. I drew a special end paper which was attached to the inside of the cover and the first page. This was a map of The Hyborean Age, which depicted the geographical world of Conan overlaid on the map of Europe and North Africa. I worked from an original drawing which Robert E. Howard himself had made. I still have my original. The worthiness of it is attested to by the countless number of times it has

been reproduced in many editions. I'm proud of that. Not so nice, however, is the way it was treated – my name was removed, no doubt to avoid any idea of payment to me. And some of the ornamentation was either removed or reworked in an inferior fashion. Ethics and courtesy so often is submerged by the crass world of money and unaesthetic publishing.

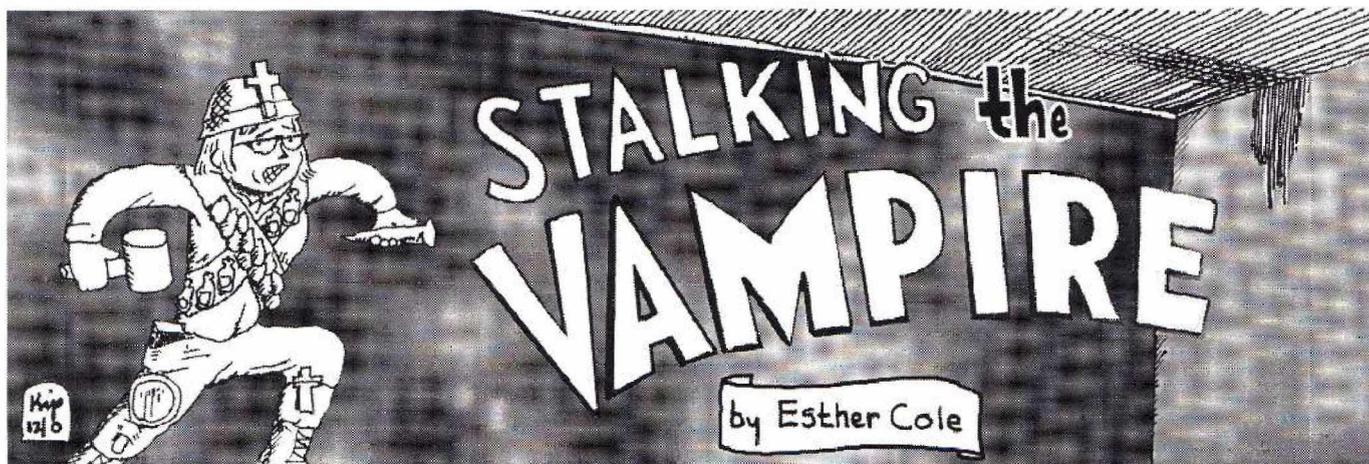
My book designs and jackets were hard work but fun to do and compare favorably with all books and jackets of that time. My black-and-white drawing for Isaac's *Foundation* was a very large piece of art, attempting to capture the sweep of his epic tale. The color plates were made from celluloid overlays for each color. The result was not the best, but I was experimenting at the time with different techniques in an era before our high tech copying machines. I was amazed recently to be offered so much money for the original drawing and hugely honored to know it will hang among other works in the collection of an astute sf art collector.

My wife Ruth frequently chides me for not doing artwork anymore. We go to conventions and she sees the elaborated art shows. She sees all kinds of arts and crafts for sale in the huckster rooms. Why, she wonders, don't I participate and contribute and, conceivably, sell my wares. Indeed, why don't I? I've too many other things to do, I say, but I really know my talented is limited, scores of artists are better than me, and, quite honestly, I'm out of practice.

Ruth finally won. Last year, just days before Lunacon, she convinced me to do some artwork for the huckster table she had reserved. She loves astronomical scenes. I painted three rather simple ones. I put them on our table. "Why aren't they in the art show," said a friend. That Friday afternoon he took me to the administrative table and next thing I knew I was hanging my paintings in one of the bays. I sold one. Ruth did it. Now I'm thinking: Should I get serious? Should I do what I've so often thought of doing and never do? Should I again become 'the poor man's Paul' and do some paintings like I remember the way Frank R. Paul did them? Not crayons with planes and war tanks. This time astronomical. This time it's rocketships! ☺



Time now for a look at some of the previous Chicons. The second one, in 1952, at the Morrison Hotel, remains to this day the most legendary of the series. Walt Willis was able to attend, thanks to the 'WAW with the Crew in '52' fund that brought him to America. Hugo Gernsback was the Guest of Honor, and suggested in his speech that ideas that appear in science fiction stories ought to be patentable for the authors. And there was also the 'penthouse fandom', the small contingent of fans from the San Francisco area who had come to Chicon to bid for the next year's worldcon, but instead endeared themselves to everyone as party hosts. Here's more on that.



It was a dark and stormy night. Lightning flashed through the curtains. The window was open and bursts of air roared through the room. This was the 42nd floor of the Morrison Hotel – the penthouse suite – and the suite was swaying. Added to the cacophony of the storm was the frantic flapping of a giant moth with giant wings. I saw him outlined again the curtains when the lightning streaked. Suddenly, with horror, I knew this was not a moth, but a bat. And not an ordinary bat. A vampire bat!

Among the various bodies sleeping in the room was my 4½-month son Dana; a helpless infant. That bat was going to suck the blood out of my baby! Probably even turn him into a vampire. I screamed and woke up Les. (Les Cole, writer, husband, and father to Dana.)

How did we get into this predicament and how were we going to get out?

This predicament was the 1952 World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago. At the Morrison Hotel. And at the top of the hotel in the penthouse suite were eight of us from Berkeley, California, representing the Elves', Gnomes' and Little Men's Science Fiction Chowder and Marching Society. Les was president, and the group was lobbying to bring the next world's science fiction convention to San Francisco.

At the time, bringing an s-f convention to California seemed like an important thing to do. The year before Les, representing The Little Men had filed a

claim with the United Nations for a hunk of the moon {{(see note: see "The Men Who Claimed the Moon" in *Mimosa* 18 }}. At that time, claiming a hunk of the moon seemed like an important thing to do, too. The attendant publicity (from around the world) made it seem, if not important, at least, noteworthy. Les and The Little Men had gotten the attention of organized science fiction. In order to win the next convention, we'd need representation in Chicago.

However, we were responsible adults, with a young baby, and no assets. Getting to Chicago was beyond our means. Until... until our friends, David and June Koblick, announced they would be driving and if we wanted to ride with them, it would cost hardly anything. Then the Chicago convention committee told us about the penthouse suite. It had three bedrooms and with eight people splitting the exorbitant rate of \$100 per day – we could almost afford that, as well. Les would have to quit his job to go on the trip, but he didn't think it would take him long to find another once we got back. We counted our assets and found we'd have enough money to support us for a month after our return. Being responsible adults and parents, we decided to take the Koblicks up on their offer.

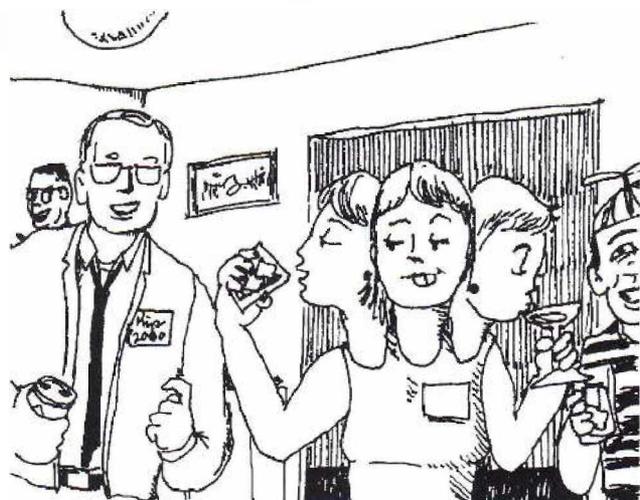
With four rotating drivers, we drove straight through from Berkeley to Chicago in two and a half days. The rest of us got cranky, but baby Dana was a trooper. I was still nursing him, and we had found some early models of disposable diapers. He was a great traveler.

Grungy, bleary-eyed, grouchy, we checked into and up to the penthouse, and perked up. One hundred dollars a day in 1953 bought us: 3 bedrooms, with bathrooms and dressing rooms en suite; a 30 x 20 foot living room, a 30 x 20 foot dining room, and a lounge-bar upholstered in faux leopard, a kitchen with two sinks, two refrigerators, two stoves, and dishes and flatware for 300 people. The kitchen was handy for the peanut butter and jelly sandwiches we lived on for the next couple of days.

The hotel elevator came right up to the penthouse suite. There was a small foyer, but since there were no other accommodations on that floor, at first we didn't bother to lock the door. Then people started to wander through. First people from the convention and then other people who had spent wedding nights and other memorable occasions up there.

Then we got approached by a group who wanted to throw a private party. As long as they were paying for food and drink, we had no objections. Before the evening ended, the private party included most of the conventioners – about 350 people.

Science fiction folk are a little bit strange. They like to dress up in costumes, and soon you can't tell the people who are dressed up from those who aren't. One lady wore three heads. She had ingeniously fashioned two life-like heads on either side of her own. She came up to visit us and caught one of the heads in the elevator doors. You guessed it, her real head.



Our roommate, June Koblick walked around with three breasts. I still can't swear if any of them were phony.

So it went. The Berkeley bloc was hustling people to bring a convention to the West Coast. Fans hustled writers, writers hustled editors. There was a

floating poker game that was no fantasy. Everything normal until the night of the storm and the attack of the vampire bat.

Remember? There was this big, flapping thing, and innocent Dana, and my shaking Les to get up and do something. Les doesn't wake up easily. Especially since we had hosted our own party the night before and we'd all gotten to sleep about 3am. Les mumbled and groped. He finally got the idea that something was wrong and he was expected to put it right. I told him about the bat. He finally got the idea and then got one of his own.

That year, birdcage purses were popular. They looked like lettuce twirlers. A wire framework that opened from the top. You dropped a scarf into it, so small objects wouldn't fall through the frame. Les had this brilliant idea. At a science fiction convention, a pet bat would be a great accessory. He would, fearlessly, capture that threatening bat, place it in my birdcage purse, and I'd wander with it throughout the convention.

Only one problem – by the time Les was semi-alert, and had worked out his plan of capture, and we had awakened all the people in the penthouse, there was no longer any sign of the bat. We were thorough, but totally unsuccessful in our search. We didn't get much sleep that night; I tended to hover over Dana.

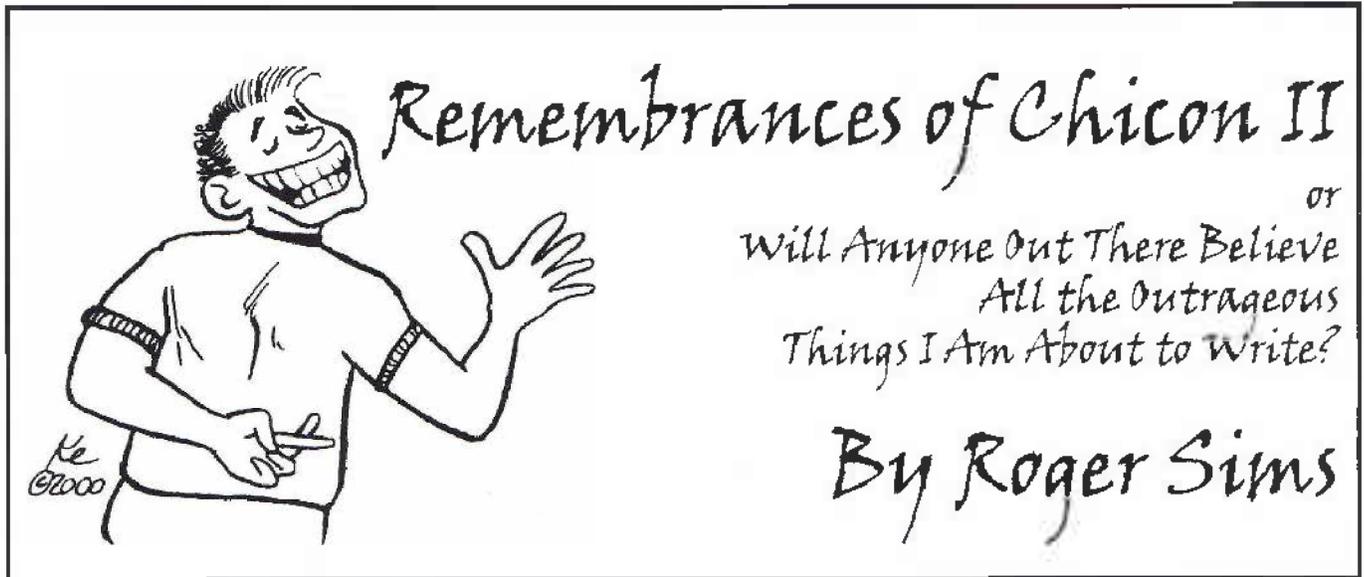
There were no more storms, and no more invasions. It finally became clear to me what had happened to that vampire bat. All he had to do was return to his normal form as Count Dracula. He could have wandered through the convention. He would have blended in amid all the other costumed folk, no one ever the wiser. He was safe as long as he kept away from the penthouse suite and the bat stalkers with the birdcage purse.

Anyway, it turned out that we didn't win the bid for the 1953 Worldcon (Philadelphia did), but my memories of that Chicon aren't about what we weren't able to do. We had a wonderful time! The four days we were at Chicon went by too fast, and too soon it was time for the long trip back to Berkeley. So when the morning came to leave on the long drive home, we were all tired, edgy, and yet keyed up. We expected that the return journey would be a bit more leisurely, and except for stops at Mount Rushmore and Yellowstone, uneventful.

But we were wrong! ✧

next time, the trip home includes a stop in the Twilight Zone ✧

There's more yet why the 1952 Chicon has become the source of so many stories and much fannish legendry. One reason might be because of its size – at almost 900 attendees, it was the largest worldcon that had ever been held to that time, more than twice the size of the next largest, and it would remain the largest for another 15 years. The convention was, in effect, a small city of science fiction fans. And Chicon II was also the most international of worldcons to that point, not only including Walt Willis, but even a 'Citizen of the World'...



On June 8, 1952, I turned 22 and made plans to vote for the very first time. Not just *any* election, but a presidential election! I was most eager to vote for 'my man' Adlai Stevenson. And it is my considered opinion that this loss to Eisenhower, who became President for the next eight years, was the cause of the poor turn out for Detention, the 1959 Worldcon! Because it was Eisenhower's economic policies that were responsible for the dismal job outlook at the end of the 1950s. Many fans who wanted to attend Detention just did not have the necessary funds. But the rest of that story is for a different venue than this one. Instead, what I'm going to write about is a more-or-less factual account of my attendance of my third worldcon, the 1952 Chicon.

So, on with the story! In the spring of 1948, my father decided that we would all soon be involved in another war and that there might be a possibility that I would be drafted into the Army. That was why he decided that I should join the Navy after graduating from high school to prevent that from happening. The terms of my enlistment were one year active and six years in the active reserve. While I was on active duty, keeping our country safe and earning draft-deferred status to avoid what would be the upcoming Korean War, back home my cousin Bennett Sims discovered the world of Skiffy pulps. And he also made another discovery – when I returned he gave me

the prozine which contained the phone number of a member of the Detroit Science Fiction League. When I called the number we learned about the next meeting of the club, and we attended our first meeting on October 31, 1949.

Shortly after I was discharged into the active reserve in September 1949, I attended my first drill at the Naval Armory in Detroit. The requirement was a weekly two-hour drill, but it was so boring that after about six months of this I transferred to the Naval Air Station on Grosse Ile, Michigan. It was there, sometime during 1951, that I met Elliott Broderick III. Elliott was very friendly and outgoing; it didn't take long to learn that he read science fiction and liked to talk to people who read science fiction. And he had a car!

My years in the Naval Reserves were mostly, but not entirely uneventful. I also went to college in those years, and in addition to turning 22 in June 1952, I graduated from Highland Park Junior College after only three years of attendance for the two-year degree. (But that's another story!) Immediately after graduation ceremonies, my father drove me to Grosse Ile Naval Air Station from which I was scheduled to leave the next morning for two weeks at the Naval Air Station in Key West, Florida. All of this is significant because the money that I earned during those two weeks paid for the trip to the 1952 Worldcon in Chi-

cago. I could write about my experiences in the then-sleepy Navy town of Key West or even our Remain Over Night (RON) trip to pre-Castro Havana, but maybe I'd better not. The language and vistas suitable to a swabbie may not be suitable for these pages!

But enough digression, back to the story!

A couple of paragraphs back I mentioned meeting Elliott Broderick, who read and talked Science Fiction. For this, and the fact that he had a car and I did not, led me to believe that he would be a *great* addition to our local club. And he was! At one of the DSFL meetings, the upcoming Worldcon in Chicago became a topic of conversation. It turned out many members were planning to attend. Besides Elliott and myself, there were Martin Alger, Ray and Perdita Nelson, Ed Kuss, and cousin Bennett. Martin and Elliott would be the drivers to get us there and back. Howard DeVore also had a membership and wanted to go, but Sybil, his wife, wanted him home for the expected birth of their middle daughter, Karol. The fact that she did not arrive until three weeks later has remained, for years, a source of irritation.

So on the Friday morning of the convention weekend, Elliott arrived at my house and we proceeded to drive around Detroit picking up the others. About five hours or so later and with only one false turn we arrived at the Morrison Hotel (which no longer exists and whose smashed remains are believed to lie somewhere in the vicinity of O'Hare Airport, waiting to be smashed into even smaller bits for use as fill). Once the car was parked for the weekend, we dragged our luggage up to the desk and registered for a double room. In those days, who knew about making a reservation? I'm not even sure that there was a room block. After unpacking and changing into suitable fannish attire (in 1952, no one traveled in fannish attire) we wandered down to the convention's registration desk. As I recall, there was a person from the Convention Bureau who sat behind a large typeface typewriter typing names on badges for those (like Elliott) who hadn't purchased a membership in advance (like me). In those days badges were much simpler, and weren't designed to be forgery-proof. And you didn't have to buy a new badge to replace a lost one — you just went back and got a new one!

Another digression: before continuing, I must take the readers back a year to 1951 and the first Nolacon. At Nolacon I and at all previous worldcons, site selection for the following year's worldcon was made at the current convention's business session. At those business sessions the Chair called for nominations

from anyone who wanted to hold the next year's convention. Bid parties were uncommon. In those days, for many attendees, the business session would provide their initial knowledge of who might actually be interested in hosting a worldcon. After nomination and seconding speeches, a vote was taken, ballots counted, and the winner announced.

Once the site had been selected there was a race to the sign-up table. At Nolacon, it just so happened that I was in a favorable seat close to that table. So I found myself first in line and received, upon payment of the one-dollar registration fee, badge number 1. This meant that I would be listed, if not first, very close to the beginning of the list of members in the Program Book! As the reader will soon learn, this is significant to my story.



Opening ceremonies at Chicon found me in the audience; Sam Moskowitz was the Master of Ceremonies. After a 'short' speech (as only Sam could) he began to introduce the notables in the audience, and the first words out of his mouth were "Roger Sims!" Now, to this day, I believe that he had not looked at the list until he said those two words; I believe this because the next words out of his mouth were, "Who the Hell is that?" But I stood up anyway. At this point there were a few polite claps and a lot of stares. (The reader should remember that I had, as a result of Room 770, only graduated from the ranks of neo-fandom the year before! Now, I'm known for other things, of which most are 'Rogerisms', but as Bill Bowers is wont to say, "We love you anyway.")

I know that I attended the entire program, because that's what we did in those days. One was either in the hall or "Down at the bar!" Even then that was the cry from all of the attendees when a person's name was called and the person did not answer! But being poor at the time, the bar was not a viable option for me. It should also be noted at that there was only

one-track programming. Nor were there video rooms, all night movies, or gaming. It was not until later that some of us discovered bridge and managed to play a rubber or two in the evening. But we never played during the day because it would have been unthinkable to do so while important fans and pros were waxing eloquently!

Ever since I told the Lynches that I would write about the 1952 Worldcon I have been wracking my brain trying to remember items from the program. (I don't even have a Program Book to crib from.) For sure there was a fanzine editors' panel on fanzine publishing, a pro panel on writing for the prozines, and even a pro editors' panel on editing prozines. Willy Ley did the science part of the program. He spoke with a German accent, so I asked him, in all seriousness, if he preferred his first name pronounced 'Willy' or 'Villey'. He replied with a very serious voice, "'Villey' or 'Villey', makes no difference!"

But there is one item that I remember because I often think about it. And do enjoy retelling to all that are willing to listen. It was a speech by, Gary Davis, who called himself a 'Citizen of the World'. The speech was without a doubt the funniest speech that I had ever heard or read.

OK so I don't remember the whole thing. Which is a good thing because if I did, this article would be much too long. The title was "How to Split an Atom." Davis walked on stage wearing a full-length black academic gown and began:

I'm going to now demonstrate to you the proper method of splitting an atom. The first step in this process is to select a proper atom, one that is ready and willing to be split. This is because it is almost impossible to catch one that is not ready to be split! Now a word of caution, just because one is willing to be split, does not mean that it is a good candidate for splitting. In order to be split, it's size must be suitable for splitting. It can't be just any atom, but one that is sufficiently mature to have grown two handles of proper size. This is most important because brand new ones do not have handles. And the handles of the young ones are not of a proper size to do what has to be done.

For demonstration purposes I have already selected one. Here it is (points with right index finger at his open left palm). The first step is to take the atom firmly between thumb and forefinger and place it on the floor between your two feet. Do not let go until the handles of the atom are underneath your two feet. This move must be done quickly and carefully. This is because at-

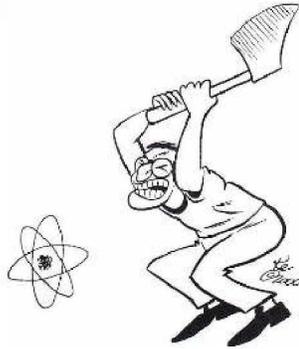
oms do not like to remain in one position for very long. Using the wrong feet for the next maneuver might lead to your being in a whole lot of trouble. When you have placed the atom between your feet you will notice that the handles lay flat on the floor. This makes it easy to do what has to be done next. First a word of caution, do not put both feet on the same handle and do not put your right foot on the left handle and the left foot on the right handle or vice versa.

OK, enough of what not to do, here is what you should do. Very carefully, but with great authority, place your right foot on the right handle and the left foot on the left handle. Make sure that you do this in the proper order. It will not work if you put your left foot on first. I say again, do not even think about putting either foot on both handles. As you will soon see this would lead to complications which are too numerous to correct!

The reason I said with care will be fully understood when I tell you the next step. Unless you have taken care to have the proper tool within reach you will need to call out to your assistant. This is because many atoms do not like to be kept waiting to be split and certainly will not wait around for you to go into the next room to grab it. Not that it does not want to be split; it's just that it will not tolerate sloppy behavior on the part of the person who is to do the deed! Now we are truly ready to split the atom. Take the very sharp axe that ... oh it is not within reach, you say? Then you must yell to your assistant, "Assistant, quickly bring the sharp axe!" It is very important that the axe be very sharp, for if it is not then it might slip off the atom and cause serious damage to what might be in close proximity. In this case you know, that is, if you have been paying attention, this is your feet. Now it should also be clear why I told you to be careful in placing your feet on the atom's handles. Too close to the sides of the atom and your risk losing part or all of one of your feet. Too close to the outer edge and you risk allowing the atom to walk away! Now for the third and most important step, picking up the axe, that is if it had been close enough for you to grasp or falling that from your assistant's hand. Grasp it firmly in your two hands and with a quick hard chopping stroke bring the axe down into the middle of the atom. The fourth and last step is to determine what to do with the two halves. If this has been an exercise in seeing if you can split an atom successfully, then the exercise is completed and the two halves are free to go any place that they might want to wander. However, if you have future plans for the two halves, then care must be taken to keep them at home so to speak. How to do this and the number of possible uses of the

two halves will be covered in my next lecture. Thank you for your attendance and good night.

As I said, it really was quite funny. But I guess you had to be there.



But let's return again, for a moment, to the previous worldcon, the one held in New Orleans. Nolacon I saw the introduction of the Little Mens' Science Fiction Marching and Chowder Society from San Francisco to fandom. And what an appearance they made. They had so much fun at Nolacon that they made plans to attend Chicon II. Not only that, they, without telling anyone, made plans to bid in Chicago to host the 1953 Worldcon. Because I had held a bid party in Room 770 the night following the more famous impromptu one, they decided that they would also have parties each night of Chicon in the penthouse of the Morrison Hotel. It was a grand undertaking and it was anticipated that, as a result, all trufen would vote for San Francisco.

But it was not to be. Philadelphia won. We trufen felt that the large number of local fans, looking at

a map, determined that Philadelphia was much closer to their homes than San Francisco, and voted with their feet rather than with their hearts. The next year Dave Kyle introduced the worldcon site rotation plan in the business meeting. It was this plan that lasted, in one form or another, for almost half a century.

Elliott, with whom I was sharing a room at Chicon, needed to be back in Detroit on Tuesday morning. Even though I didn't, I felt that there would not be any thing to do after the Chicon business meeting concluded, so Monday morning we checked out of our room. But at the time we checked out, I was unaware that The Little Men still had their suite until Tuesday and had decided to throw a 'Losers of the Bid Party', so when their President, Les Cole, invited me to the party, I accepted. But where would I stay the rest of the night? I had enough money for food and a train ticket to Detroit, but not for a room. Not to worry! When you're only 22, you just know that something will turn up. And it did - I had such a great time at the party, I never got around to going to bed! In the morning, I remember watching the sun come up and glide over Lake Michigan on its way to the Pacific Ocean and beyond.

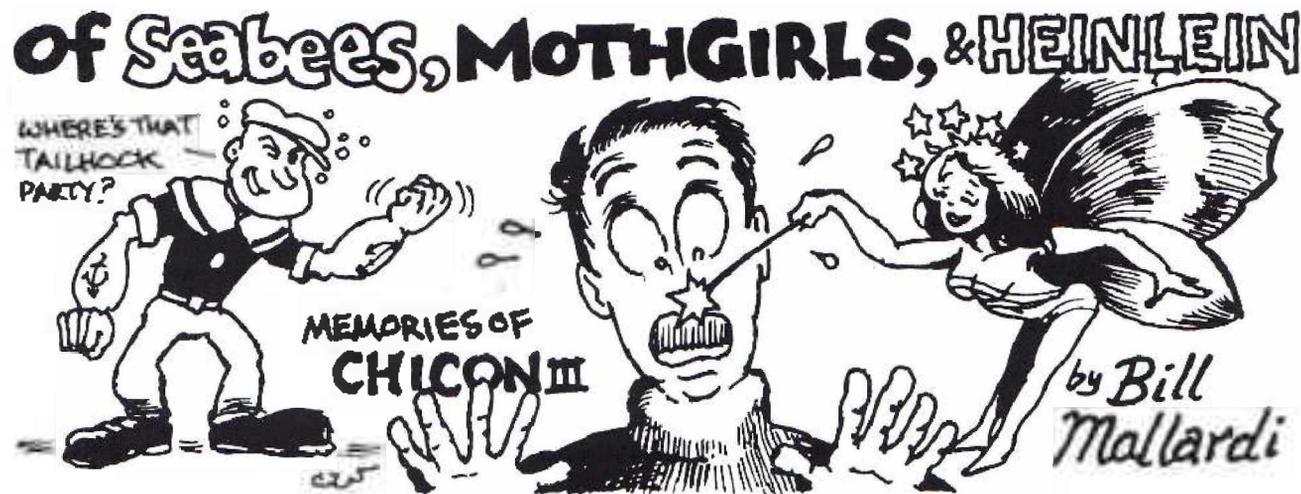
Soon afterwards I said my goodbyes and, with suitcase in hand, went down the elevator from the penthouse, out the front door of the hotel, and on to the train station. As soon, or maybe even before the train left the station, I was asleep, and woke up refreshed when it stopped at the station near downtown Detroit. And that is, as I have said often in the past, "This is the rest of story!" ✧

CHAT, the 4th Fannish Ghod

By TEDDY HARVIA



☞ The third Chicon was held ten years after the second. Even though it's overshadowed by its more famous predecessor, Chicon III was memorable in its own right – it once again featured a trans-Atlantic visit by Irish fan extraordinaire Walt Willis, it was the only time Theodore Sturgeon was a worldcon Guest of Honor, and it was the only time that a series of short stories (Brian Aldiss' "Hothouse" series), rather than a single story, won the 'Short Fiction' Hugo Award. But, as we'll see, there was a lot more going on than just that.



The 20th World Science Fiction Convention – Chicon III – was rapidly approaching in 1962, and I had just met Bill Bowers for the first time. Being ‘veteran’ of two Worldcons already, Pittsburgh and Seattle, I was looking forward to my third in a row. For Bowers, however, it was his first-ever convention, so I advised him to just take it all in and not to let it overwhelm him. Bill and I agreed to travel to the convention in my car, sharing expenses and a suite at the Pick-Congress Hotel in Chicago. Before we left, during one of our conversations at his parent’s house, I said, “Say Bill, if you ever want to co-edit a fanzine with me, just let me know...”

Upon arrival and after checking in, I was faunching to meet Walt Willis, famous Irish BNF extraordinaire. Walt and his wife Madeline were attending the convention due to a Special Fund set up by Larry and Noreen Shaw, and after all I had heard and read of his sharp punnish wit I was determined to avail myself of his vast repartee. I think it was in the hotel lobby where I first spied him, with all kinds of busy fans bustling about, talking in groups. I was very nervous, being just a wide-eyed neo, as I introduced myself to him. He was very gracious even though he didn’t know me from Adam. We shook hands, and then it happened...

You’ve all heard of the dreaded affliction: “My mind just went blank!” I never had it happen to me until that very moment, and what an inopportune time! But it did; my brain just shorted out, and there

was *nothing* in my head (no comments please!), and I was totally embarrassed. There was a long, loud silence, and I’m sure Walt thought I should be committed. Luckily he was in such demand by everyone that someone else inadvertently rescued me by coming up and distracted him with their conversation. I don’t think we ever did have a decent conversation the whole con, just snippets during parties. But Walt was very kind to me, and along with Ethel Lindsay who was the TAFF winner that year, made the con very enjoyable for me and everyone else. Ethel was a lot of fun at the parties, friendly and easy to get along with.

I definitely recall two things from Chicon III – the fact that there were two *other* conventions going on at the same time as ours – not a Good Thing. One was the Seabees Reunion, a group of World War Two survivors of the Navy Construction Battalions in the Pacific. They were loud, rowdy, and most of the time as drunk as a skunk. Sometimes they even tried to crash our parties. Once, after leaving an elevator on the floor where they had their meetings, I heard some yells and turned to see what the commotion was. There, in the hall outside their meeting room, a bunch of burley, drunk Seabees, in suits and ties, were shouting at each other. Suddenly one of them picked up another fellow bodily by the seat of his pants and scruff of his neck, walked over to a water fountain, and stuck his head in as someone else turned on the water! I decided I didn’t want to stay around to see

what would happen next.

There was also a group of Catholics at the hotel – priests, nuns, and teen-aged girls and boys. They were all a bit leery of us ‘weird science fiction people’. There were fans in all kinds of dress and appearance, including beards and sandals, so I’m sure many of us looked like the original hippies to them. I’m a Catholic myself, and I really thought it humorous how they reacted to us – as we walked down the halls of the hotel, the girls and boys would almost literally hug the walls as we passed them. I can only imagine what the nuns and priests must have told the youngsters about how ‘evial’ we were. Apparently they didn’t mind the music from the orchestra after our Masquerade Ball, though, because when the band played Twist music the Catholics danced more than the fans did. I also recall one funny bit described to us at a quiet party that Jim Warren, publisher of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*, held one night. He had been going from party to party, up and down elevators from floor to floor, with a drink in one hand and a bottle of booze in the other. While waiting for one particular elevator to arrive, the door slid open, revealing some nuns and a priest. They frowned at him severely as he stepped in – complete silence the whole trip, and he, feeling-embarrassed, tried to hide the bottle and glass under his sweater. When the elevator stopped and they got off, he said, meekly, “I’m sorrreeeee...” And the elevator closed.

Memories fade, and I’m not sure if Bowers and I held a party in our room one night, but we did attend all the other parties we could find, including the all-night filk sessions (I love folk songs). Plus, at 10pm on Saturday night, Ted Cogswell, Juanita Coulson, and Goll Theodore Sturgeon played their guitars and sang. The Masquerade Ball started right afterwards. There were many good costumes, but I really liked Karen Anderson’s costume of a moth-girl with large feathery antennae and a full head mask with bulging reflective eyes and wide-spreading filmy wings, almost all of it in blue. She went on to win the ‘Most Beautiful’ category in the judging. The only problem with it was when the contestants marched around the room and Karen turned, everyone had to watch that the wide wings didn’t poke their eyes out. I had my camera with me and took many pictures, even setting up some shots. For example, I spied Larry Ivie and Les Gerber as ‘Batman & Robin’ near beautiful Sylvia Dees in 6 or 7 filmy veils (and not much else), so I asked them to ‘threaten’ her in a menacing manner; they did so and she leaned away with outstretched,

hand, feigning terror. It seems like every picture I’ve seen of them was in that pose, since many other fans rushed over to take that shot, too. (By the way, if you look at the back cover of the *Chicon III Proceedings* – the one with Jon Stopa on the cover as a menacing caveman – you will see another shot of Sylvia posing in her veils, and on the far left in the background, kneeling on the floor camera in hand, a very young Bill Mallardi, while behind him stands Ted Johnstone, both entranced by Sylvia.)

One of the highlights of the con for me was the Robert Bloch slide show, “Monsters I Have Known,” with rapid commentary by him as the slides were shown; the puns ran wild and Bob had all the fans in stitches most of the time. And at the Awards Banquet, Bowers and I ended up at a table in the extreme rear of the large hall, so far to the rear, in fact, that my back was to the double doors which was the hall’s entrance. Just as Betsy Curtis stepped up to accept the Hugo Award for Robert A. Heinlein’s *Stranger in a Strange Land*, I felt a draft as the doors behind me silently opened and in walked Heinlein himself, dressed in a black and white tuxedo to accept his Hugo in person. He had apparently only just arrived at the convention. Was it perfect timing, or just a dramatic ploy? At any rate, he received a standing ovation as he walked up to the podium.



I enjoyed the whole convention, very much, as did Bowers; we were really hooked on fandom after that. After packing up and checking out, we started back to Ohio in my car, and I think it was somewhere in Indiana, eastbound on the turnpike, when, after a small silence, Bowers said to me, “Say, Bill, remember what you said to me about starting up a fanzine?”

Quickly I leaped into the breach: “Yeah, and we can call it *Double-Bill*!” Thus *Chicon III* was responsible for the birth of our fanzine.

But that’s another story! ☉

Chicon 2000 was more than just a single large convention. It was also a place where many subfandoms and special interests held events – there were special Award Ceremonies for 'Alternate History' and children's science fiction, an academic program track, several dramatic and musical stage productions, and the ever-present filk singers. One of the special interests that has rapidly grown in popularity is the dance, especially the so-called 'Regency Dance'. Here's more on that.



Fans have long been enchanted with the Regency (about the year 1800). By the 1960s there were Regency teas. By the 1980s, a worldcon questionnaire drew hundreds of replies that it wouldn't be a worldcon without Regency dancing. Although as we all know It's Eney's Fault, and indeed I did not start Regency mania, I must admit advancing it. A case could be made for blaming me. I blame Georgette Heyer.

A regent is a kind of pinch-hitter in a monarchy; if the monarch is alive (thus still reigning) but unable to rule – young, sick, long away – a regency is established. England has had only one since before Shakespeare, during the last years of King George III, so 'the English Regency' is relatively unambiguous now. George III's eldest son was made Prince Regent in 1811 and crowned George IV upon his father's death in 1820. But the curtains of history seldom go suddenly up or down. For many purposes, the Regency period may be considered to run from the early 1790s, or even before, until a few years after the Coronation.

Heyer, a 20th Century Englishwoman (died 1975), set three dozen historical romance novels in this colorful period. That's not too many. Deft, witty, lightly satirical, they speak to the fannish mind, like Walt Kelly's comic strip *Pogo*, the Ernie Kovacs days of *Mud* magazine, or more recently Patrick O'Brian's novels of the seafarers Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin. It helps that she is, in the language of the time, a friend to levity. I bow to Jane Austen,

who has a superb sense of humor and counts among the greatest writers in English; I am her ardent follower, but in Heyer there is this special touch that resonates with us fans. *Space Cadet* ends, "Never lead with your right." *The Lord of the Rings* has Ents. Larry Niven. Book dealer Marty Massoglia says Heyer is his bestselling author at s-f cons. Among my favorites are *Arabella*, a neat introduction; *A Civil Contract*, mostly taking place after marriage; and *Cotillion*, whose ugly duckling is not the protagonist and is even a man.

Nor did Heyer choose amiss. The rhymes of Austen's contemporary Lord Byron in *Don Juan* can politely be described as breathtaking. George Bryan "Beau" Brummell led society by wisecracks; eventually he took to snubbing the Prince Regent, once asking Lord Alvanley, after more than the Regent's mind was broad, "Alvanley, who's your fat friend?" Foreign Secretary Canning kept the British minister in the Netherlands up till dawn deciphering an urgent message which proved to be

Sir,

*In matter of commerce the fault of the Dutch
Is offering too little and asking too much.
The French are with equal advantage content
So we clap on Dutch bottoms [= ships] just 20 per cent.*

*(Chorus) 20 per cent, 20 per cent.
(Chorus of English Customs House Officers and
French Douaniers).*

(English) – We clap on Dutch bottoms just 20 per cent.

(French) – Vous trappere Falck [Netherlands minister in London] avec 20 per cent.

I have no other commands from His majesty to convey to your Excellency to-day.

Your Excellency's most obedient humble servant,
George Canning

In Regency London, the indispensable club was Almack's. Fandom thus formed the Almack's Society for Heyer Criticism. At the 1972 Worldcon, L.A.Con, it hosted a tea attended by Astrid Anderson, Judy Blish, Charlie Brown, Elinor Busby, Terry Carr, Lester del Rey, Marsha Jones, Peggy & Pat Kennedy, Suford & Tony Lewis, Ethel Lindsay, Adrienne Martine-Barnes, Ed Meskys, Fuzzy Pink & Larry Niven, Anne McCaffrey, Alexei Panshin, Bruce Pelz, Bob Silverberg, Bjo & John Trimble, Leslie Turek, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, and a host of others. The December 1974 *Esquire* (not 1966, as was stated in J.A. Hodge's 1984 biography of Heyer) ran a delicious full-page photo of the Kennedys in an article "The Pleasures of Indulging Yourself," which also mentioned John Boardman and Fory Ackerman, but not fandom, another case of a tail wagging a dog.

Fuzzy Pink Niven no longer mixes the eggnog that inspired the first Georgette Heyer convention. We had all drunk at least our share on the New Year's Eve when someone proposed this clever idea. We took rooms at the St. Francis Hotel, San Francisco, in 1975, that being Martine-Barnes' home country. I volunteered, or was volunteered, to research and teach period ballroom dances, such as would have been done by Heyer's characters. I am still not quite sure how it happened. I was then, as another hobby, teaching folk dancing (which I still do); perhaps with enough eggnog, the connection between village dances of the Balkan Peninsula and aristocratic dances of England, two centuries earlier, seemed obvious.

Anyhow, to everyone's surprise (including mine), the dances were a great success. S-F cons also seemed a natural occasion for them. I found myself in demand other than for my sensitive fannish face. Also to credit is Mary Jane Jewell, who over the years has tailored some of the best men's and women's costumes. Regency ladies wore what is now called the Empire-line gown (that's the Empire of Napolcon, ptoo ptoo ptoo); gentlemen looked like the man on a bottle of Johnnie Walker scotch. For dancing at s-f cons some people wear period dress; others wear hall

costumes, and as I have written, until you've done the Figure of Eight with a large orange shaggy dog you haven't lived, but our usual flier says "Come in costume or come as you are." Enthusiasm is the salt of life, a little is good.

The 1979 Worldcon, Seacon '79, was the Nivens' 10th wedding anniversary. The con was at Brighton, a place almost as important to the Regency as Almack's. The Old Ship Inn had a play about the Prince Regent. This called for a party. Locals did not know what to make of the fans strolling in Regency garb. They trailed behind, commenting.

Jerry Pournelle was resplendent as a Colonel of 1st Hussars, King's German Legion, in a uniform Jewell made for him. It was dark blue with red facings, a fur hat, 152 brass buttons, and so much gold braid he was the Man with the Golden Ribcage. One Brightonian had the poor judgment to ask him, "I say, Governor, where's your horse?" Pournelle, who some of us forget has been in fandom a long time – long enough to sip a Nuclear Fizz in the Insurgent manner – drew himself up to his full nine feet three inches, looked freezingly down at the unfortunate fellow, and snapped, "In Wellington Barracks, of course." Clearly implying, without having to say, "you silly ass." The man turned pink and green, tucked his tail between his legs, and scuttled back to his friends where he was heard to mutter, "That one's real!"

At the 1984 Worldcon, L.A.con II, three hundred people came to Regency dancing. The least bad time for it at a con seems to be Friday evening, but at a Worldcon there's so much to do that dancing is sometimes scheduled on Sunday afternoon before the Hugo Awards. I tried to persuade Pournelle, who was hosting the Awards Ceremony, to stay in his Regency costume for it, but he changed into a dinner jacket. He was right, of course. Since then I have judged Masquerades in Regency dress, most recently at the 2000 Worldcon, Chicon 2000, but for Hugo Night, our great event of the year, I put on white tie. L.A.-con II was also when Victoria Ridenour and the late Adrian Butterfield, whose costuming ability was known to Regency fans but not yet widely, 'challenged' the Master class in their first masquerade, i.e. entering as Masters although technically Novices, and won Best in Show as Titania and Oberon from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, spellbinding in gossamer, gemstones, superb presentation, and black, black.

At the 1990 NASFiC, ConDiego, I was standing in the lobby talking with Bruce Pelz in Regency

clothes. From the bar came Sprague de Camp. After one look he turned to me and cracked, "Who's your fat friend?"

He'd never met me, but in seconds he recognized the costume, remembered Brummell's line to Alvanley, and figured that whoever I was, since I was with Pelz, it would be either all right or worth it. Later while waiting with Ben Bova for a panel to start, I recounted the story and marveled, "So Sprague de Camp really *does* know everything!"

Bova said, "That makes two people who think so."

"The other being you?" I asked.

He grinned. "No, Sprague!"

Three years later, at ConFrancisco, Regency dancing was in the afternoon again. Saturday night had been the debut of A.C.R.O.N.Y.M., the Association of Costumers, Related Others, Ninjas (in the Masquerade sense of stage helpers dark-clad for inconspicuity) & Yak Merchants, who won Best Novice as a set of chess pieces in black and white fantasy-style Regency costume, which they wore to dance in next day. Unhappily, Sarah Goodman had scheduled Larry Niven's Guest of Honor speech at the same time, which vexed me, because I wanted to hear the speech, and him, because he wanted to dance. By the time we all realized, it was too late to cure. Goodman, who had first met him at Regency dancing, apologized. Perhaps I should apologize for telling so many Larry Niven stories. The Nivens are my friends; they've been to more of the annual Regency fans' conventions than almost anyone but me, and Larry seems to generate stories. In many ways.

At Westercon 45 in Phoenix, we were dancing in a kind of lobby outside the Art Show. A band of Navajo came by; they were Jane Austen fans. At Westercon 50 in Seattle, I went to the *Locus* Awards banquet in Regency clothes, the dance being immediately afterward. Andy Hooper came by and later said kind things in his fanzine, *The Jezail*. One Norwescon thought I wanted a panel, and helpfully put Martine-Barnes and Elinor Busby on it; like Tremaine of Barham in *The Masqueraders*, we contrived. Once Walter Jon Williams arrived, apologizing for his mundane suit; he had been on pro business. "But I came in costume," he said, opening a matching fan. His wife beamed.

Marjii Ellers (speaking of *The Masqueraders*) sometimes came in gentleman's clothes, introduced as "Peter Merriot", but even then, like the rest of us, not in the rôle of any particular historical or fictional

person. It has not been only beer and skittles – perhaps I should say Madeira and whist; at a Lunacon with just months remaining to Walt Willis, one speaking glance from Teresa Nielsen Hayden told me how he was. On the outside, at a romance writers' con that invited me to teach them (all women, a fact of which we heterosexual men should be deeply ashamed), Carolyn & Ashley Grayson were there as literary agents, also long-time Regency aficionados. These writers, while knowledgeable about the period, struggled painfully. Stop the music, stop the music. I unsnarled them, and started them again. At length they seemed able to enjoy themselves. I gave a troubled face to the Graysons. "What," I worried, "if fans really are slans?"

Cross-cultural contact is homework for s-f. We wonder in meeting an alien world. Hoyer's aristocrats, wealthy, tasteful, polite, are alien to us fans even as she by skill and discernment rouses our interest in them. Their formalistic patterned dance, to music of Mozart and Haydn – even Beethoven wrote ballroom music – is so unlike the shape of things that came; but fans can find strangeness delightful. Since we do not have to live then (Roscoe forbid! The dentists! The plumbing!), we can play at it. And these aliens cherishing their foreign treasures happen to sound notes harmonic with ours.

For me there have been many fences to clear, understanding historical material (see George O. Smith's "Lost Art") and the art of teaching. Choosing and arranging what to offer and how – I am sure half or better lies in the technique of application – has taken hours, though under inspiration it can be moments. I have found new pleasures, and evidently given some. I have tried to keep a light touch. The Regency saying was "Always get over heavy ground as lightly as you can," and it seemed the fannish thing to do. ✨



It's time to end this issue, but not before one more moment in time with Joe Mayhew. This article, originally published in *The WSFA Journal*, is vintage Joe at his most exuberant. It was written after the 1990 Worldcon, ConFiction in The Netherlands, and was a celebration of Joe's very first nomination for a Hugo Award. Most fans know Joe as a cartoonist and artist, but he was also a very good writer. He had many skills. He was a good friend, and we miss him.

ConFact Stranger than ConFiction

by Joe Mayhew

I'm off to Europe as an Official Representative of the Library of Congress.



Great, I see you're taking that sci-fi trash with you on your way out.

TEDDY HARVIA

I was a Hugo Nominee! I could hardly believe it, but Rick Katze was on my phone, asking whether I consented to be on the ballot in the Fan Artist category. Up until that very moment I really hadn't planned to attend ConFiction; Holland being thousands of expensive miles away from my humble proletarian rowhouse in Eleanor Roosevelt's Commie Pinko Paradise, Greenbelt, Maryland. But a little voice (my ego) told me now I really needed to attend. So, the very next day, I asked my supervisors at the Library of Congress for leave so I could attend the Con.

They asked why I wanted to go to Holland and I sez, "Because I'm a finalist nominee for an International Award." Damn, that sounded impressive. Did I stress that it was for my fan artwork?

Word buzzed around the corridors of power and then my Division Chief asked me whether I would like to be the Library of Congress' Recommending Officer for Science Fiction and to attend ConFiction in duty status as their representative. I was flattered and immediately accepted. The job as Recommending Officer would not be telling people what's good to read, but rather to develop better understanding of science fiction, its place in American Letters and to get our national library's collection of SF into shape.

As I said, I was all puffed up like Tennyson's toad with the invitation at the honor of becoming LC's first ombudsman for SF. True, there would be no additional pay despite the additional duties, and while the Collections Policy folks said I should feel free to spend all the time I needed to get the SF stuff going,

my immediate supervisor had not been consulted in my appointment and resented my spending any time at all away from the duties he supervised (I was at the time Acquisitions Specialist for the Caribbean). There was just one more loose end: why had the Library of Congress suddenly decided it needed a Recommending Officer for Science Fiction? Subsequently I found out that a memo from my friend and co-worker, Eric A. Johnson, was to blame.

Eric is a Philip K. Dick fan. He had gone through the LC catalog and collection to find out exactly what of PhD's works were actually available, and found that LC had very few of Dick's books indeed. So he wrote up a very thorough report and sent it to the Collections Development folks who routed it to the reference people, who routed it to this one and to that one, but there was no place for the memo to land. No one either had, or wanted responsibility for "that sci-fi trash." The memo wandered like the little rain cloud in Ursula K. LeGuin's *Earthsea* books, driven off from place to place by hostile wizards so it was unable to rain anywhere. Anyway, they created a place for Eric's memo to land, and I was it.

Thus it was that I would be attending ConFiction as an official representative of the United States Congress. It was also about this time that the producers of the cable TV show *Fast Forward* asked me to review SF books for them, whereupon I actually had the job of telling people what science fiction books I think they ought to read. By way of escalation, doing book chat for *Fast Forward* helped give me the opportunity to review SF for the *Washington Post's Book World*.

All of which seems to have grown out of my Fan Artist Hugo nomination. Gilbert and Sullivan could have done something with that.

The 48th World Science Fiction Convention was held in the Netherlands at Scheveningen, The Hague's port city, in the Congresgebouw, a convention center which looked like a parking garage disguised as a museum built by a committee of hippies and civic boosters. I arrived at the Congresgebouw in search of glory – after all was I not a Hugo Nominee, Program Participant, Artist and Auctioneer, and yea, moreover, strangely believe it, the Official Representative of the Library of Congress to the World of Science Fiction? The Dutch, who live next door to the Germans, across the street from the English, and just a hop away from the French, are used to all sorts of pretentious nonsense and pomposities. So, when I explained who I was to the registration folks, they just smiled good-naturedly and gave me my little Hugo nominee rocket lapel pin and all sorts of ribbons.

And there were an amazing assortment of ribbons! I got one for being an artist, Hugo nominee and program participant, and felt a bit grand until I saw some kid walk by with so many ribbons he looked like a regimental flagstaff. Then I noticed that most of the SMOFs looked like traveling maypoles for all the ribbons fluttering from their chests. My three were nothing! One of my cartoons that ConFiction reprinted in their Souvenir Book showed a highly-decorated U.S. Army general glaring enviously at a Noreascon III fan with a wide bevy of ribbons. I knew that the NESFAns were again the guilty party, as one of them had done the ribbons for ConFiction. Since Noreascon Three there has been a general ribbon escalation. The next logical step might be merit badges.

Despite my Program Participant ribbon, I was only on the program as auctioneer. That was fine with me as I was primarily interested in meeting the European Fans and in smofing and schmoozing. However, I did make it to one panel. I was in the Green Room chatting someone up when Joe Halde- man came over and said, "Hey, Joe, what are you doing right now?"

I said something clever like, "I dunno."

Joe buddy-smiled and said, "Come on, I've got a panel right now." So I got up and followed him. Actually, his wife Gay had me by the elbow. She is probably the most charming person I know; if she had suggested we walk out of the third story window, I probably would have said, "Well, sure, OK."

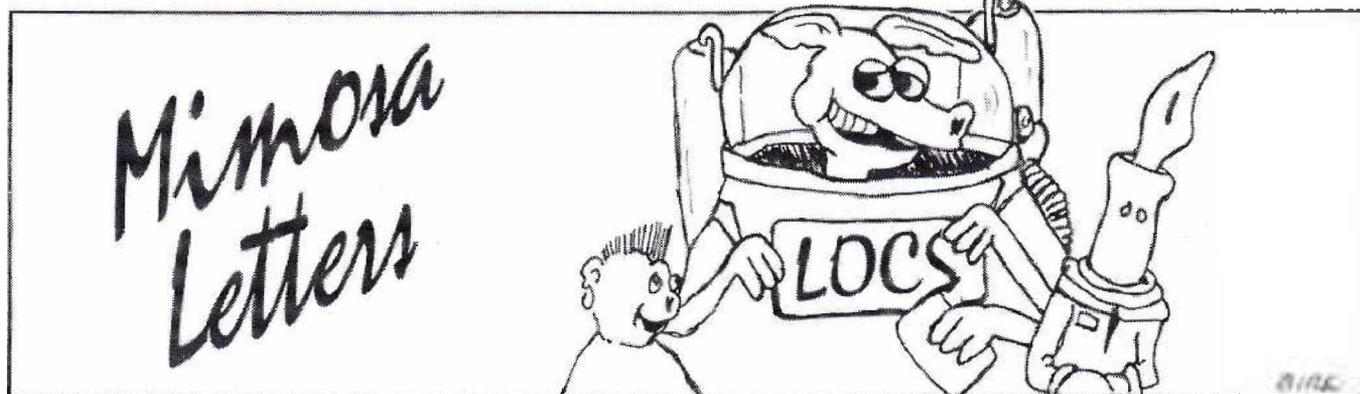
So we went down the hall to a program room. I started to join Gay in the audience and Joe called me up to the table; it seemed that he had drafted me to join him on a panel. Until we sat down at the speaker's table neither Joe nor I knew what the panel was to be about. It was titled "Homo Pacem" and turned out to be about whether man will ever outgrow war. Poor Joe, they always stick him on things like that. It worked, we got the audience involved, and with the Iraq crisis and the British Falklands experience, there was a good buzz. Good Panels usually include a lot of audience participation.

C. Howard Wilkins, U.S. Ambassador to The Netherlands spoke before the Hugos were given out. It turns out he is actually a SF reader and either was carefully briefed or is somewhat a fan. After the ceremony was over, I went over to greet the Ambassador and to tell him that the dear old Library of Congress is also becoming an SF fan, which caused a small security panic among the Con security, but not with the Embassy Staff. I explained to some officious Brits who tried to hustle me off or chew me out or whatever, that I was also an official representative of the United States, and while the U.S. Legislature was not always fond of the Executive Branch, that neither the Ambassador nor I were likely to engage in fist-cuffs.

For years I had heard that the Hugo Loser's party was one of the best events at the Con. I had looked forward to attending it, certain that while I had gotten nominated, I really felt reasonably sure one of the better known artists, Teddy Harvia, Merle Insinga or Stu Shiffman, would win. (And one did: Stu Shiffman after eleven nominations finally got his laurel.) The Loser's party was sponsored by the 1991 Chicago WorldCon: they gave me an embroidered drink caddy with a Hugo on it as a consolation prize. Had I chosen to cry into my beer, I would not have left a table ring. The party was rather quiet, as most of losers were attending the winner's party. Oh, well, sometimes you can't win for losing.

More recently, I have begun to sell my SF writing, and given my extraordinary good fortune in being nominated for a Hugo in the Fan Artist category, perhaps I might get nominated for a Hugo for something I wrote. Considering the results of my previous nomination, perhaps the next time I get nominated for a Hugo, it will set off a chain of events which makes me Pope.

If I got that job, who knows where it would lead? ✧



{{ Thank you once again for all the interesting letters of comment we received. Readers comments truly are the energy source that keeps fanzine publishers going, and we want to assure you that all comments we receive on specific articles (whether or not they appear in our Letters Column) are collected and sent to the writers of those articles. Besides comments on *Mimosa* 25, some of the letters we received this time requested that we reconsider our earlier decision to cease publication of *Mimosa*, so an update on our future publication plans is probably in order. We've not changed our minds; we won't be publishing beyond issue 30. But *M27* ought to appear about the middle of 2001.

Where to begin this time? As usual, Mike Resnick's "Worldcon Memories" received the most comments, but not far behind was our own Opening Comments about our "South by Southwest" odyssey last year to Los Angeles for the NASFiC and Australia for the worldcon. We'll start there. }}

**Leigh Kimmel, 2402 North Sickle Road,
Indianapolis, Indiana 46219**

I enjoyed "South by Southwest, an Antipodean Adventure," both for a different view of NASFiC (which I spent largely tethered to a table in the Dealers Room, alas, so it's always great to hear about what others got to), and for the account of Aussiecon, which I missed entirely. I'd originally hoped to get to it when Australia first won the Worldcon bid, but life simply refused to co-operate and I didn't get to go. Still, your account was so extensive that it was almost like being there.

Mike Resnick's "Worldcon Memories" was another fascinating visit to Worldcons I never got to attend (heck, some of them were before I even *was*, and most of the rest were from days before I started attending conventions). It's fascinating to read about those early days of the small, intimate (and inexpensive) Worldcons, especially in these days of big-bud-

get extravaganzas where it's simply physically impossible to see and do everything (short of cloning oneself multiple times and sending one to each event that's happening at a given time).

I also enjoyed Forry Ackerman's adventures in 'Shockholm' (actually in Lund, Sweden) {{ in "Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman, Part 10" }}. His account of the film festival is worth a chuckle, especially the schlocky movies.

The other articles were interesting as well, including Dave Kyle's story of "The Legendary Hydra Club" of New York (so named for its nine original members), and the reminiscences of the days of Irish Fandom (we seem to be losing a lot of our big names in fandom these last several years, and it doesn't seem like anyone's stepping forward to fill their shoes – no wonder people are expressing concerns that fans are a dying breed and fandom as we know it may soon be coming to a halt).

In the lettercol. I noted Robert Lichtman's comments on auto racing in relation to having lived through the energy crisis of the 1970s. It's interesting that we seem to be having a gas shortage again – only instead of having gas lines stretching for blocks, we're having prices skyrocketing through the roof (they're talking about gas getting as high as two bucks a gallon by summer, which is going to make it that much harder for us to make our expenses as book dealers at conventions). It might be interesting to speculate as to the differences in economic policy that led to the two different outcomes.

Finally, I also enjoyed the Closing Comments {{ "Other Places, Other Fandoms" }} and especially the account of fandom in Slovakia and Poland. It's so neat to see the flourishing of Eastern European fandom, especially after the fall of the Iron Curtain – and it's of especial interest to me because I studied Eastern Europe as part of my undergraduate major.

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

I could fill this letter with memories of Australia, but just let me respond to some comments of Richard & Nicki Lynch and Eve Ackerman. I agree with the Lynches that the Queen Victoria Market is a wonderful place. I spent about four hours there – it takes that long to see all the booths, eat snacks (such as ‘American Donuts’), buy things, listen to excellent live music, and just marvel at all the stuff that’s for sale. But while I didn’t spend as much time at the con as the Lynches did (too many things to see!), I think they’re in error about the reason for the lack of parties. My understanding is that there were few parties both because hotels charged incredibly high corkage fees and because Australian conventions, like British ones, tend to cluster at the bar in the evenings. I noticed that the bar at the Centra was packed every night, and served as an informal consuite.



I second Eve Ackerman’s comments about the excellence of Australian dairy products {{☞ in “How I Spent My Summer (Actually Their Winter) Vacation” }}. This is a country where coffee-flavored milk comes in seven different flavors, all good. Friends in Sydney also introduced me to King Island cheeses, which are creamy and delicious. In fact, one of the most pleasant days I had in Australia was sailing in Sydney Harbour aboard the HMAV Bounty (built for the Mel Gibson movie), eating King Island cheeses and trying exotic fruits, like blood oranges. And since the Bounty was used in the *Moby Dick* television

miniseries that starred Patrick Stewart as Captain Ahab, I have sailed on a ship that was commanded by Patrick Stewart.

Dave Kyle’s piece on the Hydra Club is one of his better articles. As he points out, the Hydra Club was historically important, since its members tried to form the predecessor to SFWA, and did manage to create the precursor to the Nebula Awards and the ancestor to Nebula Weekend. But I haven’t seen a memoir prior to Kyle’s that explained what Hydra Club meetings were like. And by ending his memoir with the Hydracon, Kyle doesn’t tell us how long the club lasted and why it ended. Given that the Hydra Club is not as well known as it should be, any information Kyle could provide about the reasons for its demise would be quite valuable.

{{☞ According to Dave, the club faded away sometime in the 1960s. Dave himself had moved to northern New York by then and only got to Hydra Club meetings infrequently. Apparently some of the other members had similar changes in their lives. The Hydra Club was an essential part of the 1950s, where it was needed to get writers and publishers (then mostly small presses) together. By the 1960s the field had grown enough that there were other ways. }}

**Steve Sneyd, 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury,
Huddersfield, West Yorkshire H05 8PB,
United Kingdom**

In your Opening Comments, you mentioned seeing a floral clock in Melbourne. Floral clocks used to be very popular in municipal gardens in the UK, so Oz is perhaps keeping a link with the ‘Old Country’. You also mentioned people riding trams for the sake of company. Here, with very cheap bus fares for pensioners in West Yorkshire and plenty of long routes, including circular ones, we get the same phenomenon. Particularly in winter – not just to see people and places, I think, but a way of keeping warm without expense of running up your own heating bill.

In Richard’s Closing Comments, he mentioned being in Slovakia on a business trip. I was also, briefly, in Slovakia in February – I gave a paper on using science fiction poetry as a trigger in creative writing classes, at a British Council symposium at Budmerice Castle near Bratislava on creative writing in education. One of other participants, Stefan Konkol, turned out to be a Slovak SF writer. On my final morning in the country, before heading for the airport, he took me around Bratislava, including to the city’s only SF

bookstore, a cellar under a computer games shop (which presumably subsidises the literature side). There were endless shelves of Terry Pratchett translations, but also a good selection of other writers. I've got a copy of Konkol's latest novel (in Slovak) and an issue of *Fantazia* with one of his stories in it (I was also pleased to see it uses SF poetry), so your mention rang a bell. (Bratislava seems to be one of those places never mentioned as a destination, yet everyone turns out to have been there – a bit like Tazenda in the *Foundation* series!)



Evelyn Leeper, 80 Lakeridge Drive, Matawan, New Jersey 07747-3839

I'm really enjoying Mike Resnick's "Worldcon Memories," but I have one small correction. Mid-AmeriCon was the first, but not the only, worldcon to have a hardcover program book: Conspiracy '87 (in Brighton) also had one.

As for Eve Ackerman's description of the Floriana Guesthouse in Cairns, I won't say that I take responsibility for their choice, but I was involved. I had been corresponding with Janice about Australia and she mentioned a hotel they were staying in. I commented that they were staying in a much more expensive set of hotels than us, and mentioned the Floriana as an example of our choice. What can I say? Lonely Planet liked it, the price was right (A\$70, or less than US\$50 for a room with kitchenette), and its web page didn't mention the helicopters.

We arrived in Cairns a couple of weeks before Eve, and had the same room they got. What bothered us was the street light just outside the completely uncurtained windows. We did get them to hang a couple of sheets (the curtains were out for cleaning or repair or something), which were still there two weeks later. If there were helicopters, we slept through them.

Then again, when I was in high school I once slept through a fire across the street involving several fire engines and police cars (right outside my open window), which I'm sure did not coast up with their engines off.

If nothing else, this has probably cured Janice Gelb of ever taking hotel advice from me again – and Eve will certainly think twice as well.

Eric Lindsay, P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach, Queensland 4802, Australia

Mike Resnick's Worldcon articles certainly bring back some memories. I'd (thankfully) forgotten the hospital bands that MidAmeriCon used. As I recall, you could slip them off, with a little trouble, and put them back again. Luckily that idea wasn't repeated. I remember celebrating with Joe and Gay Haldeman, first met at that very con, and have always wondered just how I was lucky enough to continue to be friends with them, and visit back and forth for more than twenty years.

Given all the problems Mike reports at Worldcons, it really is a wonder he has the good humour to continue to present panels and items at them.

With Eve Ackerman doing an Australian trip report, I was thinking you almost had an Australian travel issue. Glad Eve realised exactly what the Aussie Rules Football was aiming at, with their teams in short shorts and playing in the mud. Just moving with the times. I also admit to finding USA money very boring, with the same colour and size. What do people with poor eyesight do to tell bills one from another? Isn't there some rule about discriminating against blind people that way? Incidentally, it seems Brazil is going to start using our style plastic money, just like many South Pacific nations do.

John Foyster's article {"Scraps from an Album"} also brought back memories. I recall driving to a con in Melbourne with Alf van der Poorten in Tom Newlyn's Alfa, and a wonderfully fast car it was too. On another Melbourne convention trip Alf drove down with me in my much more ancient Morris Major. In the middle of the night on the way back the hood flew up while Alf was driving. Luckily Alf was able to stop with no damage done to us. It turned out one of the hinges of the hood had lost the press fit metal pin that completed the hinge. We drove the rest of the way to Sydney with a screwdriver blade wired through the hinge, and a nylon cord holding down the rather bent hood. Alf van der Poorten is now a Head

of School at Macquarie University, but as I recall, even in his fannish days he was accumulating new degrees in various topics at a great rate. Every now and then if I see something that might interest him (like another Aussiecon), I send him an email to mention it. It was Alf and Ken Ozanne who started agitating at the first Aussiecon in 1975 for a second Aussiecon. I now can't recall who proposed it, and who did the running around.



Milt Stevens, 6325 Keystone Street, Simi Valley, California 93063

As usual, Mike Resnick's "Worldcon Memories" in *Mimosa* #25 did provoke some. The Chase Park Plaza in 1969 may not be the worst worldcon hotel of all times, but it is a formidable contender for the title. Thus many years later I can almost appreciate what made the elevator operators so surly. Imagine coming to work every day knowing that you could not only be replaced by a machine, but that the machine only cost \$29.95. However, at the time, I briefly considered having an incident with one of the elevator operators myself. I was on one of the elevators with an elderly

non-fan couple on one occasion when the adolescent elevator operator stopped about one foot above the floor. The gentleman remarked the operator might try to get a little closer next time. The operator replied with a string of obscenities. I had a momentary urge to grab the kid by the scruff of the neck and the seat of the pants and propel him head first out of the elevator. I had already noticed that the elevator was controlled by a single lever. How difficult could anything with only one control be to fly? In retrospect, I'm sure there must have been some silly local ordinance against hijacking elevators. Crashing an elevator into the sub-basement might have caused a few problems.

The elevators weren't my worst memory of the Chase Park Plaza. The worst thing they did was run out of food on Sunday with no other sources of food within walking distance. This left fans with the grim prospect of being left in a convention hotel with nothing to eat but each other. It's times like that when you appreciate how many fans would qualify as USDA Choice. Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed. They suggested we should eat the hotel staff first.

The costume 'The Turd' was certainly a memorable incident in the history of worldcon masquerades. It was also one of the most colossal examples of lack of prior planning in the history of fandom. The perpetrator covered his entire body with peanut butter without considering how he would remove ten pounds of crunchy peanut butter from all over his entire body. Hotel security had orders to shoot him on sight if he tried the swimming pool. This meant he had to do it in the bathtub of his hotel room. The next morning he greeted the maid with an abject apology and a \$20 tip. She looked in the bathroom and commented that she had seen worse. The mind boggles to consider what 'worse' might have consisted of.

Harry Warner {{§ in "The Summer of '39" }} mentions the frequently-deceased Earl Singleton. Singleton lived such a vigorous posthumous life that I met him in the early '80s. One Thursday evening, Len Moffatt and I were standing outside the LASFS Clubhouse talking. An older man drifted over and joined the conversation. He said his name was Oliver King Smith. The name sounded familiar but it didn't quite ring a bell with me. After Smith had left, Len told me about the Psuicide. Earl Singleton has supposedly committed suicide, and the event was reported by one Oliver King Smith. People who had known what Singleton had looked like saw Smith and noticed Oliver King Smith was Earl Singleton. Sev-

eral months after Len and I talked to Smith, LASFS received a letter supposedly from Oliver King Smith's daughter reporting that Smith had died. As hoaxes go, that one makes utterly no sense. Smith had only visited the LASFS once, and only a couple of people had ever heard of him. People only react when your gone if they knew you were here in the first place.

John Hertz, 236 South Coronado Street #409, Los Angeles, California 90057

Mike Resnick, at Chicon 2000, confessed he'd forgotten the rest of that Scott Shaw story (in his "Worldcon Memories" article in *Mimosa* 25) from the Masquerade at L.A.Con in 1972. Shaw was the cartoonist who entered as the title character of an underground comic strip he wrote, *The Turd*. Indeed he was covered with peanut butter – chunky, I'm afraid – which smeared and dripped and led to the notorious 'No Peanut Butter' rule. But those effects were not evident from the audience.

He lurched on stage brandishing a plumber's helper (for non-U.S. readers, a wide rubber cup on a stick used to restore outflow in what I understand you call a water closet). Like most in the house I knew nothing of his comic strip, but from his appearance and manner we saw at once what he was. Laughter.

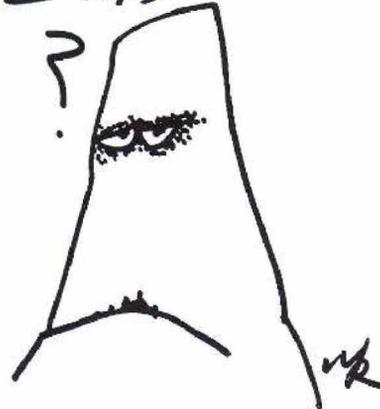
He paused for our recognition. Then, in a voice like a sewer, dragging out the words, he roared. "I ... STINK!"

That was so obviously true, and the perfect expression of this creature we really started laughing. Many of us took it for his curtain line. He let just enough more time go by, then burst out, finishing his thought, "— I AM!"

That brought the house down.



WHAT THE HELL
NUMBER FANDOM
IS THIS



Mike Resnick, 10547 Tanager Hills Drive, Cincinnati, Ohio 45249

Ted White, in his letter, caught me in a misstatement of fact concerning Part 3 of Mike's series. I checked the program book, and the panel I referred to at Nycon III was not supposed to be about whether one editor should be editing three prozines... but that was what it degenerated into. As for the rest of the program, I'll stick by what I said; I've been to Rivercons and Windycons and ConFusions and Boskones that were far more heavily programmed than his worldcon, and for a fanboy who had come halfway across the country to listen to his heroes, they weren't on display very often if at all.

"I gather," says Ted, "Mike had no interest in the dialogue between new hot writers Samuel Delany and Roger Zelazny, for example..." OK, at the risk of blasphemy, I'll freely admit it. Chip and Roger later became my friends as well as two of my literary heroes, but in 1967 they were, as Ted says, hot newcomers, and I – and most of the fans I spoke to – wanted to hear hot older writers who had gotten us reading science fiction in the first place, writers whom we had grown up admiring.

Still, if you want a pleasant memory from Nycon III, I'll give you one. Paul Allen, a Burroughs fan who was publishing *The Barsoomian* at the time (and later published *Fantasy Newsletter*) picked up a copy of Dick Lupoff's *Edgar Rice Burroughs: Master of Adventure*. He brought it over to Reed Crandall, who had done the frontispiece, to sign it. Reed not only signed it, but drew a little Tarzan sketch on the title

page. Then Paul took it to Frank Frazetta for an autograph; Frank saw Reed's drawing, and gave Paul a full-page sketch on one of the blank pages. So did Al Williamson. Roy Krenkel wasn't there, but Paul visited him one afternoon, and Roy also gave him a full-page sketch. By the end of the con, I think he had original pen-and-inks by twelve different pro artists in the book, and was turning down thousand-dollar offers (in 1967, yet!) for it. Niftiest made-on-the-spot collector's item I ever saw.

So anyway, Ted remembers things differently. Fine. Those are *his* memories, and perhaps he should write them up (or write them up again, for I'm sure he's done it sometime, somewhere, in the last third of a century). What I wrote were *my* memories. They are totally subjective, and while I wish I had encountered and/or fondly remembered some of the things that so favorably impressed him about Nycon III, the fact is I didn't. I suspect that's why we have more than one article about any given subject.



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

Now, that's a salient point Mike Resnick makes in his super article, this throwaway remark about the huckster room displaying only reading matter and not the toys, games, 'media junk', and so forth. No doubt about it – we've been taken over by aliens.

Ah, poor John Brunner. One morning I had breakfast with Roger Peyton, who runs the Andromeda Bookshop in Birmingham. A terrific guy whom I've known for thirty years. I think his only connection with fanzines was when he was editing *Vector* for the BSFA sometime in the mid-sixties. We were musing about fans and conventions and actually said that as far as we knew no fan had actually *died* during a convention. Little did we know that at just about that time John was having his fatal attack. Surprisingly, whilst the terrible news was spreading through the convention, it didn't reach me, which simply goes to show how I'm involved with the Inner Wheels (perhaps I had my one customer of the con just then). The first I heard about John was the following morning when Roger confronted me with the startling words, "I'm not having breakfast with you again."

Interesting that Mike mentions John as being the first pro to die at a con, whilst I was regarding him as the first fan to have done so. Perhaps because I'd known John since his days in OMPA, his attendances at Kettering, during his time in the RAF and before his first marriage. An *exceedingly* intelligent guy. Very insecure.

Ah, Dave Kyle. Not only does he spread before us his tales of people and politics (fan politics, that is), but they're imbued with, well more than a sense of wonder, with a sweep of the glory which could be, and should be, Man's destiny. Always optimistic, always uplifting. A great pity that there's not more of his dry, caustic wit in his writing, wit which, with its trademark dead pan delivery, always has me rolling about on the floor. A pity, too, that I don't see more of him these days. A person whose company I've always enjoyed. Even if he once did want to throw me out of a party at a Coventry convention (I was saved by Roger Sims). As ever, I loved his article, this on the early days of the Hydra Club. With my brilliant analytical mind and incisive intellectual brain, it had never dawned on me that the club originally had nine members. (Sometimes I amaze myself with my brilliance, I tell you.) A great article. Only regret for me was that there were only passing references to Harry Harrison, another fan/pro in whose humour I revel.

Joyce Scrivner's article {{ Bob and Walt, A Remembrance }} brought back memories of the '79 WorldCon... my daughter Rachel, sans hair and between bouts of chemotherapy, my son Andrew having his first contact with computers, the Commodore Per with its 16K memory (he became computer mad, ran computer rooms at British cons when the things were

still a novelty, has had his own software company, has edited his own fanzine... which is a joke as it was the national magazine, *Atari User*, has had three books published on computers and is now working in northern California, not too far from where Robert Lichtman lives. And it all started at that Brighton con. Wonder what track his life would have taken if we hadn't been there), the pair of them rushing to me to show me an autograph which said, "Chriddle Roove," and naturally we've since always called the unfortunate Christopher Reeve by that name, re-meeting Greg Benford after twenty-three years and Bob Tucker after twenty-one, of having a Perry Rhodan book-hurling session with Ned Brooks, of finding a German dealer with four-hundred year old fantasy books, in German, at some hundreds of pounds per (no, he didn't sell any), that blasted cricket match on the beach (and me, a cricketer, only finding out about it and managing to join in about five minutes before it ended).



**Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore Street #105,
North Hollywood, California 91606**

I rarely spend much time reading trip reports; however, in the case of the various reports of travels to and around Aussiecon 3, I am making an exception. My trip to Oz was to Aussiecon 2, and I am as much fascinated by the things seen and done which were different from what I did and saw during my trip. Even more interesting are the takes on what I did see

and do – and it all brings back warm memories. Retirement remains comfortable for me; however, it does not allow the luxury of any travel. My trip Down Under is one of the highlights of my life and I am glad that you got to experience some of that wonderful place.

Joyce Scrivner writes about her meetings with Walt Willis and Bob Shaw. It is sometimes relatively small things which stand out in remembrances, and that is the case with my connections with both of these fans. Mostly, with Walt, I would send to him my fanzine and he would reply with a LoC (although there was the occasional random letter about something else); finally, we met at the 1987 Brighton Worldcon. The most notable memory I have of Walt at that time is when we both sat down for some conversation in the Fan Room and he asked me if I would introduce him to any American fans who wandered by. "I would be glad to do that," I said, and spent the next few hours introducing him to many fans, all of whom were Aussies! Not one American fan came up to our table during that time.

Bob Shaw was a fan with whom I had conversations at cons in what seemed like all over the place; and, somehow, I do not believe that he did not make it onto my mailing list until I was near ready to put *Holier Than Thou* to rest. Robbie got to know him better than I did, visiting him at his home on her tour of England after the Brighton Worldcon (I went home right after the Con as I had to get back to work). My most vivid memory of Bob is of a quiet, private time the two of us spent together in Australia. I was one of the horde of fans who stayed with the Ortliebs after Aussiecon 2. Now, the Ortlieb's place was a non-smoking abode, and both Bob and I smoked pipes. On the Tuesday after the con, most of the fans staying with the Ortliebs went off to visit Murchison Falls but Bob and I decided to not go, instead retreating to the backyard to have a companionable smoke and spin wild theories about the variegated fauna we discovered inhabiting the grass. All very forgettable and all very relaxing and unwinding after the frenzy of the con, which had not abated at the Ortliebs due to the sheer number of fans who were staying there.

**Lloyd Penney, 1706-24 Eva Road,
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2, Canada**

Once again, a wonderful scratchboard cover from Julia Morgan-Scott. I'd like to read some reactions to it from Australian fans.

{{☞ So would we, actually. Several people commented on Julia's cover for *M25*, "The Kronicles of Kaptain Koala," but none of them were from Australia! }}

Concerning your Opening Comments and your Fan GoHship at ConuCopia, Yvonne and I were Fan GoHs this past February at our own local convention, Ad Astra 2000. We had the same dilemma you had, what to do for our GoH hour. I hate the idea of speeches, so we chose to be interviewed, and we asked Robert J. Sawyer to do the job. Rob and I are old schoolmates, and Yvonne and I have known him since his fannish days as a convenor of the local SF club, now long gone. As has happened at several other cons we've guested at, we expected our GoH hour to be pretty sparse, but with Rob as part of the team, we filled the room. We ignored the head table on the risers, and asked the audience to gather around, and we'd have a chat. That hour was a lot of fun, we told a few stories, we had a lot of laughs. Rob is a good interviewer, and he ensured the pace was upbeat and enjoyable. (He's a graduate of the Radio and TV programme at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, so he'd better be good.)

I would have loved to have been at Aussiecon 3, and there had been the remote chance that we would have been there, if a travel agent had come through with an inexpensive fare. After all the years I've been receiving *Thyme* and *Ethel the Aardvark*, and all the other fanzines from Down Under, I would have liked to have put a face to all the names I know there, and going to an MSFC meeting would have been some fun, too. But there was just too much geography in the way.

Concerning Nicki's article about 'MSTing' the movies {{☞ "At the Movies" }}, at one Niagara Falls convention some years ago, the con made a big fuss about having for the first time, a showing of the animated *Star Trek* cartoons, which had not been seen in many moons. However, one thing that had not been revealed on the con flyer, and the provider of the animated *ST* had not told the convention, was that that the episodes had been purchased from a television station in Montreal, so the dialogue track was in French, and *Capitaine Kirque* and *Docteur Spock* were battling *avec les Klingonnes*. (Yeah, I know, Dr. Spock was the baby doctor, but a lot of things were lost in the translation from English to French.) So, with hours to go before this big presentation, they discovered that Yvonne is fluently bilingual – she

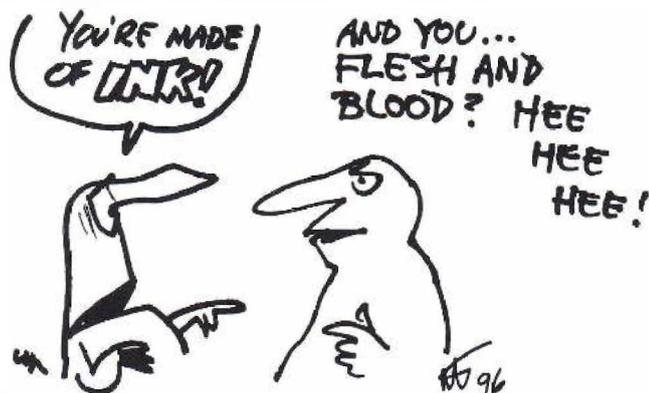
spent the entire presentation standing beside the big screen, holding a microphone and doing instant translations for the assembled throng. Supplying better lines than Tom Servo, Crow, and friends from *Mystery Science Theater 3000* is nothing new for our little group – when the first *Superman* movie made its initial round of the theatres, the scene was the crash-landing of young Kal-El's ship on the Kent farm in Smallville; the young Kryptonian climbs out from his ship, naked, and holds his arms out to the Kents. A voice pipes up from behind me: "Hey, I didn't know Superman was Jewish!" And the entire audience dissolved into laughter. We didn't stop laughing for a good ten minutes. That's just one reason why I'm sure the people behind *MST3K* were fans.

Concerning Dave Kyle's article about the Hydra Club, years after Judith Merrill moved to Toronto, she formed a Canadian Hydra Club here, with many of the local authors as members. Such a club was for authors only, and as fans heard more about this gathering, the more the word got out that fans were not welcomed, the less word about the group was circulated. When Judith died, I don't know what happened to the club; her only public visibility here was as the 'Undoctor' on the local educational television channel, talking about SF after episodes of *Doctor Who*.

Roy Lavender's letter of comment, about Southern Black Baptists in the same hotel as the 1977 Worldcon, reminded me of our experiences in New Orleans for the 1988 Worldcon. In our hotel, as Worldcon was checking in, a Southern Black Baptist convention was considering, and then postponing checking out. As we sat in the lobby, we were quickly surrounded by these enormous black women in their best clothes, Sunday hats and purses, as friendly as you like, enchanted with the idea that we liked SF, and that we were Canadian. There was a little culture shock there, too, but the phrase "When in Rome..." has served us well over the years.

Noreen Shaw's letter, about once seeing the creators of *Superman* signing autographs in the lobby of Cleveland theater, made me check my facts about Joe Shuster. He was born in Toronto in 1914, but moved with his family to Cleveland in 1923. His cousin Frank Shuster is a famous comedian here, and with his late partner Johnny Wayne, performed as Wayne and Shuster many times on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Frank Shuster now works as a programming consultant to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which gave Wayne and Shuster their Canadian fame for close to 40 years. I had the fortune to meet Frank

Shuster some years ago on a tour of the CBC building downtown. Joe Shuster's Metropolis was originally modeled on Toronto, and the *Daily Planet* was actually the *Daily Star*, now the *Toronto Star*.



Tom Feller, P.O. Box 68203, Nashville, Tennessee 37206

In the Opening Comments, your remarks about the 'mini-convention' in the Qantas lounge before your flight to Australia reminds me of Winnipeg, where I think the fans filled up most of the departing flights.

Regarding Nicki's article and film rooms at cons, I would prefer that they actually showed films, not videos, and preferably ones that are not available on video. All the fans who are interested in videos already have VCRs after all. However, when I discuss this with Anita, she takes the position that the cons need a video room so that fans who can't afford hotel rooms can find somewhere to sleep.

By the way, I just read Mike Resnick's predictions for the future in the latest *Star*. I hope that he's right in predicting that you will still be publishing well into the 21st Century.

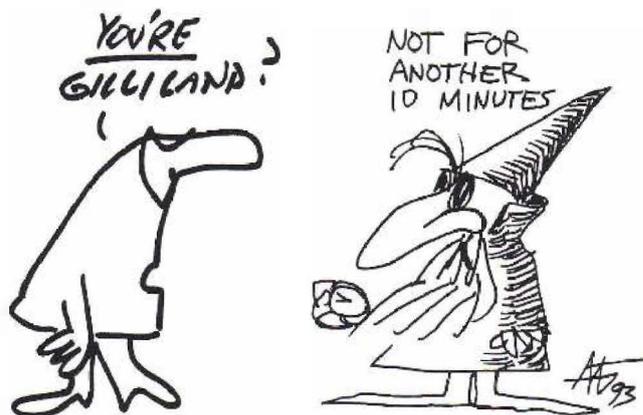
Timothy C. Marion, 266 East Broadway #1201B, New York, New York 10002

I don't think it would be unmanly of me to admit to certain diminutive sized *internal organs* ... such as my bladder, so I can certainly empathize with Eve Ackerman preferring the 'smaller flush' toilets in Australia. But when reporting on this very important matter, she forgot to mention one of the most pertinent facts regarding flushing Down Under – does the water spiral down the toilet in the other direction and *why*? (My answer, which I guess is obvious, is that the water is really flushing in the same direction, just that when a northern hemisphere person is in the southern hemisphere, they are looking at it from the opposite direction.)

I found the late Joe Mayhew's article {"My Own Personal First Fandom"} to be fascinating. One line quoted ironically out of context: "I suspect that when I finally cross the River Styx, Charon will ask me, 'Say, how's Jack doing?'" One regrets that Joe isn't around to write about his personal *second* fandom.

The fan historical anecdotes by Dave Kyle and Harry Warner, to me, were of the utmost interest. The mention of Fred Pohl inspires my anecdote of meeting him – an unremarkable story, really, except that it shows what a nice guy he was, as an elderly gentleman, to speak to such a young squirt like myself. I was hardly more than a kid, just barely grown, having just moved to New York City (from Virginia) and making my way on my own for the first time in my life. I was attending a convention, and as soon as I walked into the con suite, Fred Pohl saw me, a skinny, young, long-haired kid, and greeted me with, "Oh, another First Fandomite!" I'm ashamed to say that I was so embarrassed by his attention that I didn't even have a rejoinder handy, and merely quietly slunk away.

Fabulous, *fabulous* letters. Good that you led off with Milt Stevens, as he was very funny, almost as though he was writing in a Harry Warner type style, but managed to out-do Harry's humor! Ted White managed to pithily defend himself without sounding overly acrimonious. And Noreen Shaw's first paragraph, about L. Sprague de Camp, was extremely amusing.



Harry Andruschak, P.O. Box 5309, Torrance, California 90510-5309

I read and enjoyed your NASFiC report. I have Drifted Away From It All (DAFIA) and had no idea that there was a NASFiC in LA until I read about it in the *LA Times* newspaper calendar. And by then I had

already volunteered to work all that weekend at the Post Office to pay for my vacations. I had hoped to see the 1999 solar eclipse but could not get the time off from the Post Office to cover that event.

And then I read Ron Bennett's article {"The Greatest Show On"} and had to chuckle to myself. Every guide to the 1999 solar eclipse pointed out that the chance to view the eclipse in Cornwall was less than 5%. As the path of totality swept through Europe, your chances for clear skies improved, and were at their best in Turkey and the Black Sea. Which is where most of the USA eclipse tours headed for, with excellent results.

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

John Foyster mentioned in his article the RAAF chap who got out of service by standing for Parliament. That was a regular trick in the U.K. in the days when 'buying out' cost several hundred quid – but standing as an MP cost only £150, a much cheaper option.

Also, I was tickled by Ron Bennett's account of the eclipse. Here in Scarborough it was sunny but with thin clouds. My photos were a bust.

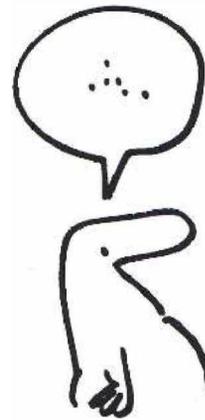
**Jerry Kaufman, 3522 NE 123rd Street,
Seattle, Washington 98125**

I enjoyed John Berry's article about Walt Willis {"I Remember Him – A Tribute to Walt Willis"}, especially his take on Walt's golfing abilities. It rather humanizes Walt that he was not perfect at everything he did. Too much of what we write or say about Willis puts him very high on a pedestal, even the stuff intended to show how warm, approachable and friendly he was. (I've certainly idolized his writing; Amy Thomson still tells people how I handed her the Willis issue of *Warhoon* as though I were giving her the Word of Ghu.)

I also liked Ron Bennett taking the great British Eclipse down a few pegs. His report perfectly showcases how the media (newspapers, radio and television) talk up an event far past reasonable importance or interest, often affecting the outcome. Possibly if they hadn't published such dire predictions about the terrible crowds that would clog Cornish streets, a larger turnout would have come and made the locals a decent amount of money. But then we might not have this article to read. (By the way, Seattle fan Jane Hawkins made it to Cornwall or fairly near for the

eclipse, but I don't suppose Ron would have recognized her if he's run into her. Still, it makes for a nice bit of what if to wonder what they'd have made of each other.)

Julia-Morgan Scott's cover and article heading for Nicki's movie article are pretty impressive. The detailing on the cover in particular is quite fine, though I can't make out what those things are, apparently being sucked into a wormhole – kangaroos undergoing some distortion from gravitational effects?



GRAMMARIANS
NEED A PROPER
CONTEXT.



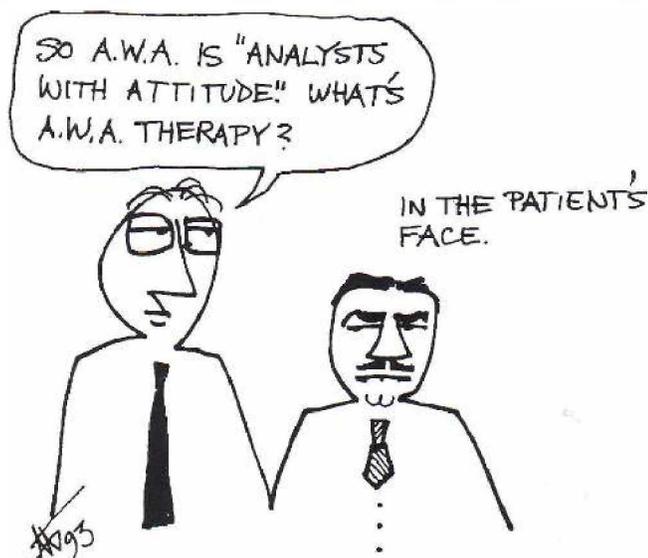
**Tracy Benton, 108 Grand Canyon Drive,
Madison, Wisconsin 53705-4522**

I enjoyed #25 quite a bit, but it did have an air of sadness – any time-binding zine would, considering fandom's great losses in 1999. It's really quite hard to grasp the fact that Walt Willis is gone. To me he's always been a mythic figure, a legend someone dreamed up to inspire neofans. I was introduced to him once, years ago, and couldn't shake the feeling that perhaps this was just a Willis avatar, representing a corporeal existence for the supernatural being – that this *person* wasn't really him. Those who really got to know him feel a deep personal loss, I do not doubt; but to me he's still out there somewhere, in the ether. I got a loc from him once; it'll stay tucked away in a treasure-box somewhere as a memento of The Trufan. Thanks for running the remembrances of him. I particularly enjoyed John Berry's article – what better evidence of Walt's legend could there be than as someone who picked up a Gestetner for a friend?

I enjoyed Ron Bennett's article about the eclipse, too; it ends with one of the best anti-climaxes I've run across in a fan article. It reminded me a bit of the Douglas Adams book, *Last Chance to See*, in which he ends up spending rather more pages describing the

trips to see the rare animals than on the animals themselves. I think about half of fannish trip reports are actually just travel horror stories – if the travel wasn't horrendous, the author talks about the destination, but if the travel was bad, it outshines the destination for essay potential!

The cover, incidentally, was quite an amazing piece of scratchboard work! I really liked the rendering of the "Kaptain" on the back, mustachios and all.



**Gary Deindorfer, Trent Center West,
465 Greenwood Avenue #1104, Trenton,
New Jersey 08609-2131**

Your covers continue to be a stand-out feature of your zine, but the cover to #25 is really spectacular – so dynamic, and bursting with energy, not to mention being full of felicitous detail. I don't know much about the graphics of art, but I believe Julia Morgan-Scott's cover is done in what is called the 'scratchboard' technique, like that wonderful cover she did a few issues back of the armadilloes, etc. She is a wonderful artist.

It is clear that the late Joe Mayhew was as talented a writer as an author. This is really quite a little episode of otherwise forgotten fan history. And, yes, I remember "St. Neo" Harriet Kolchak, in whose house in Philadelphia I experienced my first fannish party, being down there for the 1961 Philcon where I met for the first time Theodore Sturgeon, L. Sprague de Camp, and James Blish.

It was interesting to read of John Berry's meeting with the immortal Walt Willis. I don't think I'd ever read that tale before. It is clear that John fit right into Irish Fandom, although he says he is an Englishman,

something I never realized before. This is a magnificent reminiscence of Willis, long may he reign in Valhalla.

Joyce Scrivner's article is very helpful to those of us who want to know more about Bob Shaw. Of the four or five Major Fans – Shaw, Willis, Burbee, Tucker, Bloch – he was the least of a known factor to me. But it is clear that he was a congenial, witty agent of life.

**Fred Smith, 5 Mansionhouse Gardens,
Glasgow G41 3DP, Scotland**

Many thanks for *Mimosa* 25. May I add my voice to the many clamouring for its continuance – after all it seems like only yesterday that I discovered you. (Actually it was at Intersection that I first clapped eyes on *Mimosa* – Mighod, five years ago!)

The tributes to Walt Willis were needed, particularly John Berry's, of course, since he knew him so well. In '55 or possibly '56, my wife and I visited Oblique House on our way to our holiday in Dublin. We took an overnight sailing from Glasgow to Belfast arriving at about 6.30 a.m. and were thoroughly taken aback to find Walt and Chuck Harris (who was staying with the Willises) waiting at the quay to escort us to the house in the trusty Morris Minor. Because I had warned Walt that we were dropping in *en route* he arose from a warm bed to meet us at the boat. That's the kind of person he was. The Shaws and John Berry turned up later and we ended up spending about ten hours there. I even played ghoodminton with Bob, Chuck, and Berry, which nearly caused more demolition of the room, what with the famous Berry leap and Chuck falling down all the time. (His stone deafness affected his balance). We were also supposed to meet James White that evening but unfortunately had to catch our train to Dublin and so it wasn't until the '70s when he was guest of honour at a Glasgow convention that I finally managed to catch up with him. James was one of nature's gentlemen in addition to being a fine writer and an extremely funny man. Strangely nobody seems to have remembered just how funny he could be.

Apart from that brief visit to that particular Glasgow con (mainly to see James) I had no contact with fandom after the early '60s and, alas, never saw any of the Wheels of IF again. That's why it's rather intriguing to see Charles Williams' portraits of Bob and Walt for Joyce Scrivner's "Remembrance." His 'young' versions are more or less how I remember

them except that Walt looked a bit more like Fritz Leiber. The 'older' versions I wouldn't know, never having met them as elderly gentlemen.

Walt's Chicon piece {{ "The Harp at Chicon" }} reminded me that I consider "The Harp Stateside" be the finest thing that even he wrote and one of the finest sustained pieces of fan writing that there has ever been. I'm glad I managed to tell him as much before he had his stroke.

I also enjoyed the rest of this issue, especially Harry Warner who is one of the most consistent and interesting people in fandom. Ron Bennett is dead accurate on the eclipse which turned out to be a non-event. I was in Bournemouth (on the south coast) at the time expecting a partial, like maybe nine-tenths, eclipse. It had clouded over, of course, so all that happened was that it became gloomy or, rather, more gloomy.

Catherine Mintz, 1810 South Rittenhouse Square #1708, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Despite all the wonderful articles, I confess my absolute favorite was a reprint, "The Harp at Chicon." Willis is like one of those Chinese artists who take up a brush, make two or three strokes on a piece of paper and suddenly have a rabbit, complete with a bit of grass in its mouth and ready to go on the wall.

In the Letters Column, there are interesting parallels between Harry Warner and Robert Lichtman's comments on racing and freeway crossings. Personally, I would rather watch pod racing, although the most recent version of that in *Star Wars* I was a marvel of special effects that highlighted the debate over whether the people behind me really had bought enough popcorn.

Sean Russell Friend, P.O. Box 2757, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 1NT, United Kingdom

I think the part I most relished in issue 25 is the Letters Column, which is the bit of a fanzine I nearly always turn to first. Although *Mimosa's* is a tad more serious than, say, *Twink's*, it was especially chuckle-making (and heartwarming) to read Roger Waddington's epistle.

It's good to find someone who writes plain English instead of fanspeak, for a start, but he seems to echo much of my own history as an SF reader, and also shares my love of 'Social Archaeology'. It's all

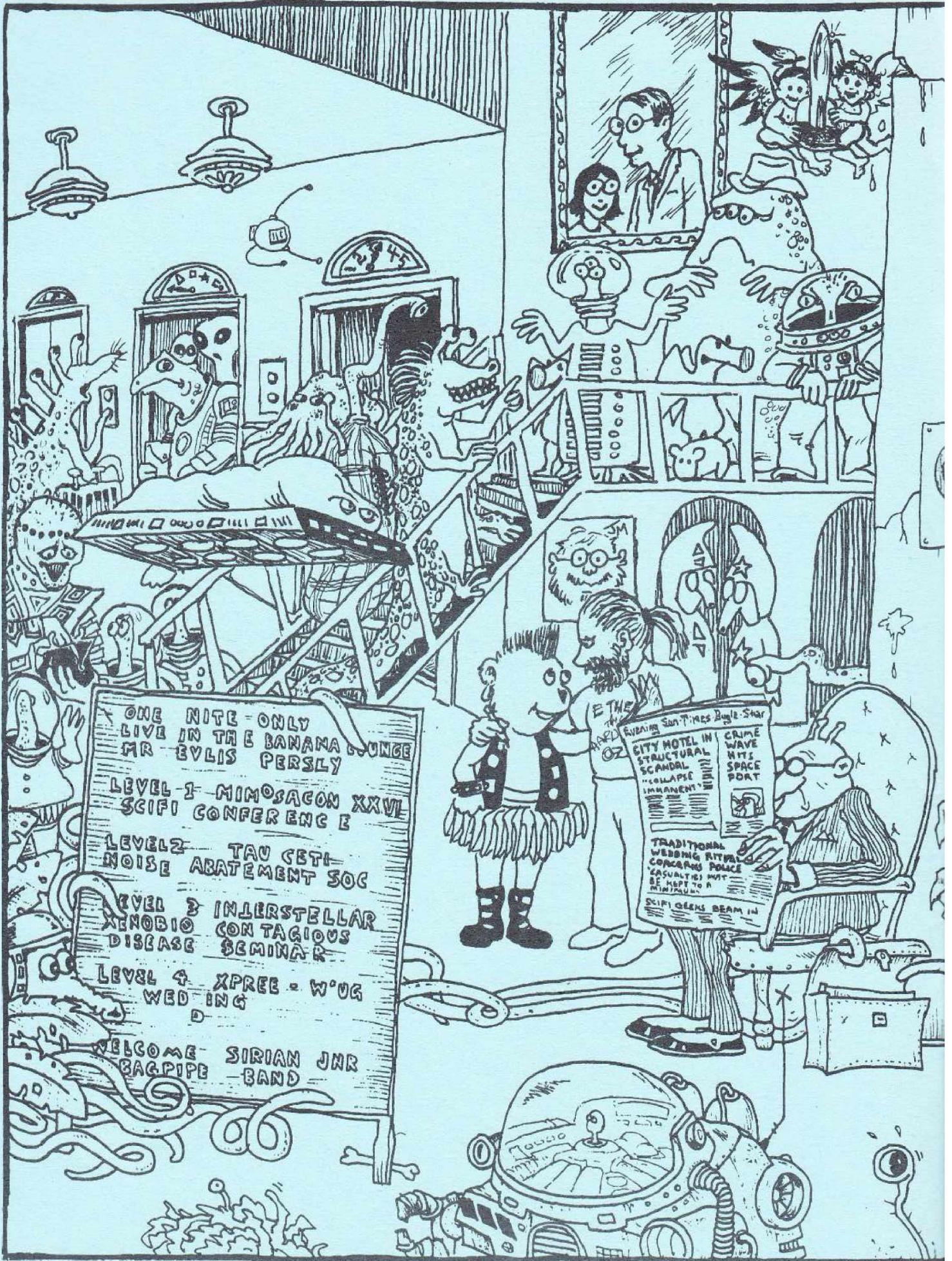
about the art of telling a story – something highly prized in Ireland, and something that *used* to be prized in literature. Perhaps more to the point, it's about telling an *individual* story, i.e., a tale whose style could only belong to that particular storyteller. There are not many writers in SF today who I regard as having a distinctive style, which is why I still largely read the old stuff – like John Wyndham! And to think that when "The Chrysalids" was released by Penguin in paperback, the publishers were too snotty to admit that it was science fiction.

It was about that time *Quatermass and the Pit* got its first airing on television – so you could say I was *scared* into science fiction. I suppose I spent my 'golden years' in *Doctor Who* fandom, but I fortunately grew out of it and started to skirt proper SF fandom in the mid-eighties. I was so thrilled when I received my first issue of *Matrix* – and have been indebted to Maureen Kincaid Speller ever since! So you can quite understand how wonderful it is for me to see the photos in the "South by Southwest" article! Everyone looks so friendly, not scary at all! For the first time in many years, I thought to myself: "I wish I'd been there."

We Also Heard From:

Amanda Baker, Pamela Boal, David Bratman, Ken Bulmer, Ken Cheslin, David Combs, Chester Cuthbert, John Dailman, Rich Dengrove, Ahrvid Engholm, Joe Fillinger, George Flynn, Robert Kennedy, Ken Lake, Willy Legate, Rodney Leighton, Fred Liddle, Sam Long, Joseph Major, Robert Peterson, Dave Rowe, Dale Speirs, Ian Stockdale, David Thayer, Dorothy Tompkins, Roger Waddington, Michael Waite, Harry Warner, Jr., Taral Wayne, Toni Weisskopf, Henry Welch, Charlie Williams, and David B. Williams. **Thanks to one and all!**





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