

MISTILY
MEANDERING
No 5





#1 #2 #4 #5 #6
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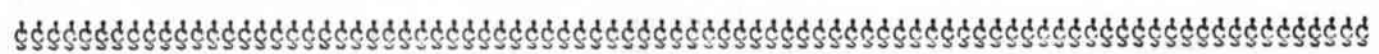
MISTY MEANDERING 5

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Bruce Pelz for TAFF!

PACIFICON II in '64!

London in '65!



This is the fantabulous First Annish of MISTY, and is printed in glorious two-color work to celebrate this momentous occasion. As this is the last page to be stencilled, I can see that it's going to run to eighteen pages. That's not half bad. A year or more ago, I was having trouble finding enough to say to fill much more than ten pages in pica type. Now, I'm breezing through eighteen and twenty pages of elite with no trouble at all. The quality may not be high, but the quantity is increasing with practice. Let's hope the other follows suit soon. And with all this practice in writing, long school projects no longer faze me. Who said nothing useful could come of Fandom?

A massive wave of Burroughsiana has just hit the LA newsstands, in the form of the first ten Tarzan novels, published as a matched set by Ballantine at 50¢ each. These are being displayed in a special cardboard rack. I suppose the publishers are counting on the gaudy sight of the ten covers to stun the customer and sell him the set as a whole, before he notices that four of the titles were already released by Ace Books just a couple of months ago. A couple of newsstands have gone so far as to remove their remaining titles of the Ace editions (though the Ace Tarzan titles past the first ten are still there). I will be extremely interested in seeing the sales figures on the Ballantine set, to compare the sales of those titles only available in Ballantine editions with those available in both Ballantine and Ace editions. I would guess that there aren't that many people interested in having a matched set over saving a dime apiece on some copies, or in duplicating the four Ace titles at a cost of \$2.00. This is assuming that people are interested enough in Tarzan to buy the complete collection of paperbacks in the first place. But while I'm rooting for Ace and Wollheim, I do hope the matched set proves successful enough for Ballantine to publish the rest of the Tarzan titles in the same format. I notice that these Ballantine Tarzan editions carry a notice that Ballantine will soon publish the remaining half of the Martian Series, including #4-7, that Ace published at the beginning of the current Burroughs craze. I can only applaud Ian Ballantine for carrying out his promise to publish the entire John Carter series in the matched format. I intend buying the four, even though I do already have the Ace editions.

At the Westercon, I saw my first copy of Burroughs' juvenile, The Tarzan Twins. It's a small thing. I wonder if Ballantine will release it in a 50¢ edition like the others?



The Con Without A Care

Westercon XVI was the most relaxed convention I've yet attended. In some ways this was disappointing, but mostly it was very pleasant. For once, I didn't feel I should be racing around like mad to be sure I didn't miss anything. Result: I took it easy, and enjoyed myself considerably. I think everybody else felt the same way; the whole convention operated on an atmosphere of leisure.

The Sixteenth Annual West Coast Science Fantasy Conference was a four-day affair this year, at the Hyatt House motel in Burlingame, just below San Francisco. I drove up there with Bernie Zuber, Mike Hinge, and Bruce Pelz, in Bernie's car. It was a nighttime trip; we left LA about 11 Wednesday evening and arrived at the motel a little after 8 a.m. on Thursday, July 4, the first day of the convention. Things were still quiet; hardly anyone was up. Bruce registered for a room, checked it, and decided that there was space for me on the floor. So I hauled my baggage up to room 357, dumped it, and set out to see what was open.

My first stop, as usual, was the huckster room. Here I found the first congregation of fans. Ben Stark and Norm Metcalf were getting their wares set out, and Ed Wood handed me my copy of the Chicon Proceedings - a beautiful little booklet; Advent and Earl Kemp are to be congratulated. After flipping through it to see if my photo was in it (it wasn't), I turned my attention to Ben's stock. Buying stuff at Westercons always presents me with a mild dilemma: I know that Ben, who invariably has the huckster concession at Westercons, always reduces his prices by 15 or 20% on the last day, so I have to consider each item in the light of paying the full price to get it immediately vs. waiting for the last day markdown and risk losing it to someone else. After checking everything carefully, thoroughly getting in everyone's way in the process (some of the stock I was checking hadn't been unpacked yet), I walked off with \$11 worth of early NEW WORLDS and SCIENCE FANTASY. These were among the first two dozen issues of each title, and at only 35¢ each for absolutely mint copies, I wasn't risking someone else's buying them before the last day.

My next stop was the Art Show room. Again, the items were just being set up. I volunteered to help assemble the art hangings, but soon found that with all the people already helping, it was a case of being more use by staying out of the others' way. So I wandered out to the coffee shop for the breakfast I was beginning to need. After that, it was afternoon and time for the con to open with the Official Introduction. I didn't stay for the panel following that, but strolled out to study the layout of the motel, and meet the other fans that were beginning to arrive in large numbers, from up and down the Coast.

I have a somewhat materialistic nature, and generally tend to judge the success of a con by the volume of material I bring home from the auctions, huckster rooms, and elsewhere. In that respect, this was a poor convention; I didn't pick up much at all. (Actually, I realize this is no longer a valid criterion of judgment even for myself; the main reason I didn't get much was that I've gotten my fill of such things as mediocre prozine art, manuscripts, fanzines, British pbs, comic panels, etc., at the last two Westercons and Worldcons. But I still tend to think in this old way.) On the other hand, I found myself taking a larger part in this convention's social life. I chatted with more fans, stayed later at the all-night parties, and was generally more sociable than I've been at any of the other cons I've attended. I still didn't go swimming or get into any poker sessions, but I feel that this leaves me with something new to experience at future conventions. In this newer respect, I did enjoy myself, even though I did occasionally find myself by myself in the roaring midst of an all-night party. Possibly I was operating under a slight handicap, being a teetotaler (at one point, Jack Harness drunkenly assured me that I couldn't possibly be a social success until I'd put a few drinks under my belt); but in spite of everything, I still feel that at this Westercon, I became more of a con fan than I've yet been.

The main program feature of the first day was the showing of the uncut 2 1/2-hour long silent film, "Die Frau im Mond". This, of course, is one of the two almost legendary German sf epics made by Fritz Lang before the advent of sound film; the other being "Metropolis". Personally, I would have preferred to have seen "Metropolis", since I've never seen it before, and I did see "Frau im Mond" at a special LASFS showing a couple of years ago. But "Frau im Mond" is still enjoyable, and the whole audience had a pleasant evening, commenting rather wonderingly at the parts so like actual rocket techniques today, and sarcastically at the stilted dialogue and the "scientific" parts long outdated - especially the scene in which Prof. Manfeldt goes prospecting for water on the Moon with a divining rod. Paul Healy, who arranged to get the film for the con, set up a selection of recorded classics as background music, matching the mood of each selection with that of the action on the screen; a nice bit of work.

The film ended at 10, and the audience broke up to begin the first of the various parties. As a loyal LASFS member, I hurried over to Paul Turner's room for the rump LASFS meeting, this being a Thursday night. After about 15 minutes, enough LASFS members and various guests had assembled, after stopping to pick up various potables, for new Director Turner to call the meeting to order. I was appointed acting acting Secretary, the official acting Secretary, Eddie Clinton, being still down in the bar. Another half hour of horsing around (with a sober note injected by Forry Ackerman's announcement of the death of Frank R. Paul) brought the official nonsense to adjournment, and we got down to beginning our own party right there. I don't recall anything notable happening there, and when the party broke up a few hours later, I felt tired enough to call it a night instead of looking for a new one. As Pelz, Harness, and Johnstone (the 3 Stooges with whom I was sharing a room) were still going strong, this meant that I got one of our room's two beds for myself, instead of having to use my sleeping bag on the floor. This was a pleasant happenstance that repeated itself throughout the rest of the convention; though I'd come prepared to sleep on the floor at a cost of \$5 or so a night, I invariably wound up with one of the beds, and the entire 3-day stay only cost me \$9. Pelz and Harness usually managed to party it up for a couple of hours more each night than I could; Johnstone didn't sleep at all during the whole convention as far as I know, though he paid his share of the room rent, which I appreciated.

The second day was much like the first. I spent the morning hours in the huckster room reading old pulps, or in the Art Show (where I finally met Betty Kujawa), or just wandering around. In the afternoon, I attended the panel on DO TODAY'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINES INTEREST THE FAN? The general opinion was that they did, but not nearly as much as the zines of the early '40's, though an upswing in quality seems to be developing.

The first of the con's four auctions began at 4 p.m., and I was in the front row to make sure I didn't miss anything. I soon found out that there wasn't anything in the entire auction stock that really interested me. Though I attended most of the following auctions anyway (I like auctions, even when I don't intend buying anything), I only picked up two items the entire time. One was a copy of Poul Anderson's Brain Wave in Japanese that I got as a curio for 70¢; the other was the original 31,000-word manuscript to William F. Temple's Battle on Venus (Ace F-195), for which nobody topped my opening bid of 50¢. Though I was rather disappointed that there wasn't more worthwhile material, I was relieved to find that I wouldn't have any financial problems this con. At both the Westercon and Worldcon in '61, I had to borrow \$25 from Bill Ellern to pick up all I wanted; I took even less money than usual with me to this Westercon, and still brought \$25 of it back home.

At 5:30 there was a Winetasting session which I attended, though I didn't do more than nibble the cheese provided. But the main feature of Friday evening was the Caberet Masquerade. Most of the LA fans had been preparing for this for months. I didn't have the time to make a new costume, being involved with graduate school, so I got out the one I wore to the Seacon masquerade as the Overlord of Coventranian Lankmar, and played it straight as Glipkerio, High Overlord of Lankmar, the City of the Black Toga, the setting for most of Fritz Leiber's Gray Mouser stories. The costume consists naturally enough of a black toga, trimmed with gold cloth, and gilded sandals (actually zoris). Unfortunately, as this was a characterization from Earth's dim past, I couldn't properly wear my glasses with it, so with my 20/200 vision, the Masquerade was mostly just a colorful blur.

The Masquerade officially started at 8:30, but when I got there five minutes later, only Bruce Pelz was there in costume, though the room was filled with non-costumed fans there to enjoy the show. Bruce had made himself up as a heavy trooper from Jack Vance's The Dragon Masters, and I strolled over to join him as he clomped across the room to come to a halt at Jack Vance's table. Vance was mildly interested at first, not recognizing the characterization (he later said that Gaughin's illustrations hadn't entirely matched his own mental pictures of the characters), but when Bruce told him who he was supposed to be, Vance really sat up. The item that impressed him the most was Bruce's 10-pound, 4-foot long steel sword, made by Dian Girard's father. Vance spent several minutes making practice swings with it, and the conversation turned to matters of swordcraft.

Ed Baker had just arrived from LA that evening, and I went over to meet him as he and Norm Metcalf engaged in animated conversation. Ed had introduced himself to Norm, but Norm was making Ed guess who he was. I cheerfully helped him in feeding hints to Ed. We told Ed that he and Mister X had met before (they had, but Ed is even more absent-minded than I am), and that Mister X was a LASFS member, a Cultist, a SAPS member, on the FAPA waitlist, an ex-N'APA member, and a very well-known fan indeed. Then we stood back to let Ed think. Ed becomes easily confused when you hit him with too many facts at once (in English; he's okay in Esperanto), and I was hoping he'd forget our identification of Norm as a LASFS member and identify him as Gordon Eklund. Instead, Ed apparently forgot that Mister X was an ex-N'APA member, because by a process of elimination of the Cultists that he could remember meeting, he came to the bewildered conclusion that Norm could only be Walter Breen with his beard shaved off. We agreed that this must be so since he'd eliminated all other possibilities, and left, leaving Ed standing there thinking furiously. He was obviously suspicious that we were hoaxing him, but he couldn't figure out who else Norm could be.

I then experienced the same delight that Bruce must have had when he confronted Jack Vance, as Fritz Leiber asked me if I were supposed to be Mark Antony. The Costume Judging Committee had earlier given everyone cards on which to write our "names"; I handed Fritz mine, and watched him break out into a pleased grin. He explained that he'd mistaken me for Mark Antony because Antony is sometimes played in a black toga while delivering his funeral oration on Caesar. He confessed that because the

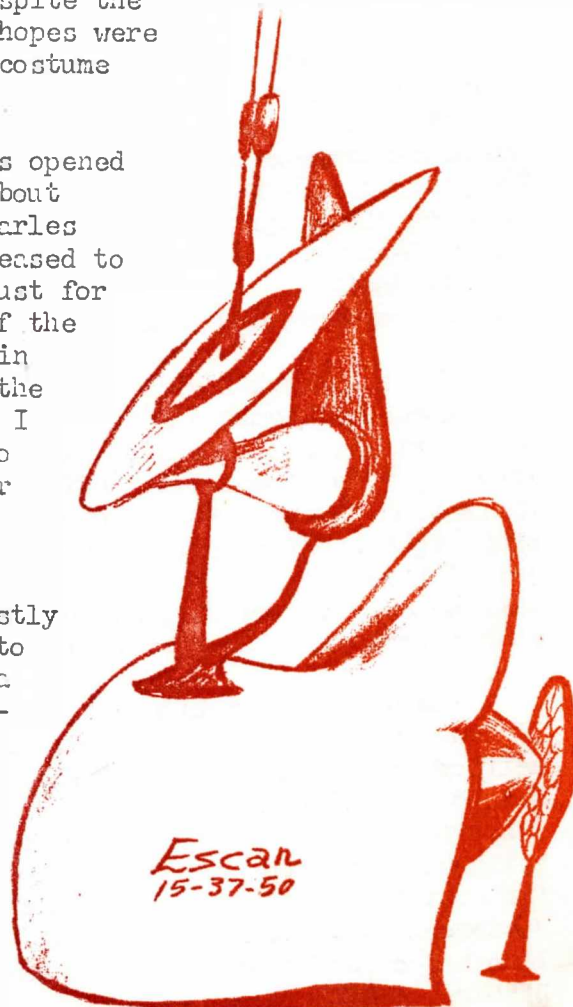
High Overlord has always been an offstage character in his stories, he'd never formed a visualization of him before. After this, Fritz promised, he'd always think of me when he visualized the character. I consider this about the highest compliment that a masquerader can receive; and I felt flattered again the next day as Fritz greeted me with a "Good morning, Glipkerio."

By the time of the judging, there were 25 or more costumes present, including Ed Baker as a makeshift "Mr. Esperanto", and somebody as Ferdinand Feghoot! Paul & Ellie Turner made a beautiful team as Pluto and Proserpina, but the best group was an Oz one, with Blake Maxam as the Wonderful Wizard, Bjo Trimble as Queen Ozma, Felice Rolfe as Scraps, the Patchwork Girl, and John Trimble as the Scarecrow. The preliminary judging narrowed the field down to eight finalists: Bruce as the heavy trooper; Bill Roberts as The Nummy; Astrid Anderson as Merry Brandybuck, the hobbit, when he was a warrior of Rohan in The Return of the King; Karen Anderson as a military officer of the Third Patriarchy (decadent stage?), mentioned in Poul's "Time Patrol" series; Blake as the Wizard; the Turners as Pluto & Proserpina; Bjo as Ozma of Oz; and Bill Ellern as Lazarus Long, from Heinlein's Methuselah's Children. The final winners were Bruce, Bjo, Bill Roberts, and Karen; all of whom received little loving cups as awards.

Several people commented that this First Westercon Cabaret Masquerade was considerably better than quite a few of the Worldcon costume balls, and I tend to agree. Each contestant was given a chance to parade across a well-lighted low stage at the front of the room, while the rest of the lights in the room were dimmed. There was no crowding; no contestant started across the stage until the previous one had gone down off the other side. Alva Rogers clearly announced the name of each contestant, the character he portrayed, and the source the character was from. The members of a group crossed the stage together or followed each other in order; no group was split up (this despite the fact that there was no award for groups!) General hopes were expressed that this would start a new trend in con costume balls, of doing things right for a change.

Following the Masquerade, the Flight Lounge was opened for the official Westercon all-night party. Just about everybody was there, including William Nolan and Charles Fritsch of the new prozine, GALIA. Nolan seemed pleased to get back into Fandom after several years, even if just for the evening. This party apparently did last most of the night, though I moved over to a filk-singing group in Ruth Berman's room about 3 a.m. I just don't have the stamina of some other fans; after another half hour I couldn't keep awake, so I drifted back to my room to sleep comfortably. I understand the filk-sing later turned into a Gilbert & Sullivan sing; I wish I'd stayed to hear that.

Saturday morning was spent like the others, mostly browsing in the huckster room - Metcalf threatened to charge me a reading fee. The afternoon began with a NZF Meeting, which consisted mostly of Ed Wood telling us how we should improve ourselves and Fandom. I went to the auction next, and then attended a speech by Antony Boucher on professional editing and reviewing in the sf & mystery fields, and the personal relationship between a reviewer and his readers. When asked what he thought of the current policies of F&SF, he replied that he didn't know. Since being appointed to edit the annual collection of best mystery short stories, he's been too busy reading all the mystery prozines to keep up with The Magazine.



Saturday night brought the Convention Banquet. I boycotted the actual meal since I didn't care much for the menu being served, especially not at the Hyatt House's prices. Fortunately, this didn't prevent my hearing the speeches; after the dinner ended, the Con Committee threw open the doors and set up chairs for those who hadn't purchased the meal tickets.

The speeches were just about the opposite of those at last year's Westercon, when everyone loved Alva's Fan Guest of Honor address, but couldn't understand Vance's Pro Guest of Honor talk. This time, though Elinor Busby gave a nice short talk on love, sf, & fandom (Buz didn't say much at all, disappointingly), the big hit of the Banquet was Kris Neville's address as Pro Guest of Honor. Elmer Perdue supplied a jocular note by cheering and applauding at every pause; unfortunately, for once Kris was trying to give a serious speech. Tying it in with what Elinor said about love, he felt that the reason science fiction is of a lower quality today than it was up to the last decade is that the authors have no love for their plots. Back in the '30's and '40's, authors had a general knowledge of the science they used in their stories, and had fun in working out sincere extrapolations on it. Today, these old ideas have been used up, and most current authors are not interested in keeping up with the details of modern science to write good science fiction stories, with the result that too much modern sf doesn't say anything, or shows that the author just tossed it off without really caring for it.

Following the Banquet was the Morcon Victory Party, another all-night fling, sponsored by the Morcon Committee to celebrate its not getting the '64 Worldcon (Bruce Pelz served as bartender). It was announced that Kris Neville would give one of his famous sermons, but he never worked himself up into the mood; though at one point in the early morning, he went around shaking hands with everybody in the room, congratulating them for the fine speech he'd given at the Banquet. Again, I bowed out about 4 a.m. to collapse in bed.

Sunday was the last day of the Westercon. Bernie Zuber wanted to get started back for LA in the early afternoon, so we spent what was left of the morning after we arose in tying up loose ends and packing. I made a quick trip through the huckster room picking up the few items I'd left until the last day, at 15% off. Everybody else was packing up, too; as the con drifted to pieces around the final items on the program. I finished getting my gear together in time to hear Fritz's upward-&-onward speech about sf. Bernie came up to me during the last five minutes to tell me that he was ready to go. The rest of us weren't, quite, but by the next hour we were started homeward.

The trip back didn't take nearly as long as we'd thought it might. The massive amount of homegoing vacation traffic Bernie was afraid of running into failed to materialize. Since last year, California has completed several new links of freeway, which keeps the traffic moving freely and eliminates the annoyance of the small town on the highway, where you have to slow down to 25 m.p.h. and wait at stop lights. There are a few of these left where the freeway systems haven't yet joined together, but in another few years, except for gas and meal stops, fans will be able to zip nonstop from Los Angeles to San Francisco at a steady 65 m.p.h. on a concrete, 3-lane, no-toll throughway.

The principal incident on our homeward trip was the stop for dinner at the Mission Inn in San Luis Obispo. I hope to be able to write a long report on that edifice some day, complete with photographs; without photos, you won't believe it. Bernie described the décor as "early Snow White"; we half expected to find Disney's 7 Dwarfs as the waiters, and Dopey must've been the architect who designed the building. All wood and marble and red velvet and brass and cut glass and chintz; fantastic! ...Anyhow, we got back to LA about 12:30 a.m., and that was the end of Westercon XVI. Commenting on the relaxed nature of the con, Bruce said, "Now that I've had a good rest, I'm ready for a real convention!" I hope to see you at the DisCon, too!

Thanks for Misty #4. Not being in SAPS, I enjoyed it mainly for your trip report, which was fun - I wish I'd been along. The last time we were at Calico it was still authentic-looking, in spite of the Crazy House, which had just gone up, but it sounds dismal now. Do they still have the resident rockhound in the "assay office"? He was turning out all kinds of fantastic things with an ultrasonic drill at that time. ((Yeah, he's still there.)) And we stopped at "The Poofy Woman"'s place on the way home. All kinds of memories. Someday, maybe, I'll get back to L.A. - I've got 18 months to go in the army.

Did I ever tell you about that illo on page 9? It was one of a set of story illos that I did about 6 years ago for a fanzine back east. After a couple of years they came back unused. I wrote to him asking for the story-writer's address, so I could send the illos there. No answer. A couple of years after that another Eastern fan wrote, asking for illos. I sent him three cut stencils, including the largest of the set of illos. In the past two years or so, I've written to him twice about the illos. No answer. I saw his name recently in a fanzine review, so he doesn't seem to have gone gafia, like the first one. It's nice to see one published at last. ((I bought this on-stencil from Hannifen when he moved to LA. He says Jim Lanctot stencilled it for him. I've no idea how he got it in the first place.))

The robot's name is AUGIE, a mining robot made by Terran Automatic Usuiform Robots (TAUR). He is one of a set of specialized robots exploring an alien planet. AUntie Maim, the defense robot, is another (AU is in all the names.) The robots' group mind has been taken over by a native life form - silicon crystals -, so when one of the human crew tries to change AUGIE's data-tapes, he gets fried. The story was well written, with a wheels-within-wheels plot (for one thing, that crewman was changing the tapes to steal a valuable mineral deposit for himself. Only at the end do we find out who did which villiany and why.) I wonder if it was ever published. ((I've never seen it anyplace. If you can remember the author's name and address, let me know. I'd like to see it myself.))

\$1,000,000 for 32 Dr. Seuss books is fantastic. Value (cash value) is in the checkbook of the buyer: when somebody pays the million, then I'll believe it.

P.S.: my address in full is:

Private First Class Donald Paul Simpson
 Regular Army Service Number 19722950
 Company B, Eighth United States Army's
 Signal Corps Long Lines Battalion, Detachment of
 In care of [Camp Carroll
 Headquarters Company, VHF Site]
 United States Army Storage Facility (Camp Carroll)
 Army Post Office #460 [Waegwan, Korea]
 via San Francisco, California
 United States of America.

What could be more simple? I don't move - the name of the place gets changed. The important thing is "APO 460", a building about 80 feet from our barracks. Either address is good, "Storage Facility" is best.

WE'RE ALWAYS GLAD TO
 HEAR FROM YOU...

I don't know if you're still interested in my reactions to your older publications, but you might like to know that they stick in my memory quite well. I hadn't looked at them since reading them immediately upon their arrival at the ~~old folks~~ convalescent home where I finished my knitting. But just a glance at the pages

brought back the memories quite clearly. There were the resurrected thoughts of disgust that I felt toward you. You aren't to blame for this disgust, understand. It derived from the fact that you had the ability to convey so fully your delight in Bill Donaho's hosting and LASFS parties and similar activities, while I was in a condition that kept me confined to one room and part of one hall, with so much snow around me that visitors were scarce and the only other persons in the building were senile nonagenarians and moronic nurses. ... The copy of *The Child, the Artist and the Book* was also greatly appreciated. I imagine that under other circumstances I'd have glanced through it and put it aside into that pile of eternally neglected things that you promise yourself you'll read at the first opportunity. But I had more spare time on my hands those few weeks than I'd possessed for the past ten years and I read every word of it. I wish I could agree with Donnarae MacCann, but I suspect that she's taking the child's side from an adult viewpoint. If you turned most children loose in a store where the finest in unstereotyped children's books were displayed alongside Little Golden Books and the kind of children's books you find in dime stores, I suspect that the kids would grab for the cheap, mass production stuff. Kids think in stereotypes and love the familiar. Just think how many of their games are based on repetition of key phrases and how they love to hear the same stories over and over at bedtime, complaining if the adult changes the wording a little.

The April *Mistily Meandering* causes me to envy you for another reason. Anyone whose only acquaintance with bats comes from watching them flap through the outdoors air is lucky. One manages to get into the house somehow about once a year and then there is as tumultuous and extensive a fight between man and beast as if it were a production of a vampire drama. They don't look small when they're flapping around a room, either.

The commercialization of real western ghost towns has its parallel around here. Sometimes the trouble is a sort of inversion of what happened to Calico. The restorers of historic sites in the East do such a thorough job that the places look more glossily new and fastidiously neat than they possibly could have been in real life: Williamsburg, Va., for instance, which has been restored to 18th century appearance in many blocks, complete with residents who wear party dress of the period for tourists. Or the nearby Antietam National Battlefield Site, where there is so much acreage devoted to beautifully manicured grassy plots that you can't imagine the things that really occurred there. I think that one of the few places in the area which haven't been spoiled by restoration work is Harpers Ferry, W. Va., where there is still a gratifying amount of dinginess and oldness in the blocks that the National Park Service is looking out for. I'd urgently advise any fans from far away who plan to attend the DisCon to make a side trip there, if they have any time to spare and have any interest in scenery, geology, or history. It's not far out of the way from Washington.

Redd Boggs 270 South Bonnie Brae Los Angeles 57, California May 27

Mistily Meandering #4. One nice thing is that your fanzines no longer resemble *Shaggy* too closely. The format was rather undistinguished, I'm afraid, but at least it was painstakingly neat and workmanlike. I wish you'd skipped a line between paragraphs in the trip tale. Artwork seemed adequate, but again undistinguished. I did not care for Cawthorn's cover, and I'm still puzzling over what in hell that black amazon is doing with her cutlass (or whatever) behind her left calf like that. It looks dangerous. That weapon may literally be a cut-lass, if the lass isn't cautious. ((Several local fans have commented on this, wondering if she's sliced off her left foot, or if the illo is incomplete, or what. That was the entire, complete illo, and you'll have to ask Jim whether her foot was cut off or just not drawn.))

"The Bats Were Very Small" is a mixture of very bad and very good things. The very bad thing is that it is much too generalized and vague most of the time: "The Calicos are beautiful mountains. They contain many different kinds of rocks and ores...." That's pretty unpromising, like a textbook description. But then you con-

tribute one of the very good things: a hasty glimpse of the colors created by those rocks and ores, and a reason for calling the mountains Calico. I feel that this account should have been shortened considerably, to remove the generalizations and vagueness and the synopsis for the most part ("The evening was spent in pleasant conversation...."), and more effort ought to have been expended on making the direct glimpses of things more vivid and immediate. ((I know my trip reports tend to be more rambling diaries than polished articles. Thanks for the good criticism; I'll keep it in mind when I write my next trip report.))

The BLOB's fanzine reviews were very good. I like Lichtman's reviews because he has positive reactions.

"Mailing Comments" (aha, an original title!): Well, maybe sf once had some "giants" -- Kinnison, Carter, and those people -- but it seems to me that sf in recent years has had as many "insecure, aimless neurotic" protagonists as "modern literature," with the added drawback that sf is less well written. ((I agree, and I think this change is one of the principal causes of the decline of the Golden Age of sf. I suppose this started around 1946, when Campbell went on his atomic doom & destruction kick, with everyone oppressed by the impending atomic annihilation (I think Raymond F. Jones' "Pete Can Fix It" is a good example of this). Soon after that, sf switched from a technological to a sociological and psychological kick, and such things as Robert Sheckley's "Cost of Living" became common. This hasn't been all bad, of course. Quite a few of the atomic doom & destruction stories were quite memorable. In his "Viagens Interplanetarias" series, de Camp wrote some very adventurous and amusing stories, using some of the most neurotic heroes sf has ever seen; but then these neuroses were thrown in for comic relief, rather than to point out something significant. Asimov's The Caves of Steel is as good as anything that came out during the Golden Age, despite its basis of a planetful of agoraphobes. And most of Alfred Bester's works do center around the neuroses of their principal characters; Ben Reich and Gully Foyle in particular. The reason that these stories come closer to the "giantism" of the pre-1946 works than the bulk of today's sf, though, is that while the protagonists may be neurotic, they are not aimless. Each protagonist has a goal, real or imagined, and he attempts to realize it in some dynamic way. Compare this to the protagonist of most modern sf, who is pushed, pulled, and dragged to the conclusion of the work, never quite knowing what's going on. That's why, though I like Pohl & Kornbluth's The Space Merchants, I'd never call Mitch Courtenay one of sf's giants. As to sf being less well written these days, there's always been a lot of badly-written sf. In the '30's and early '40's, though, the emphasis was on the science (or pseudoscience) and action; and even if the writing was bad, the plot often moved along fast enough to carry you with it. Now that the emphasis is on the psychology of the protagonist &/or the setting, there's less overall action; and if the story is badly written, it shows more. Also, more detail is given to characterization today, and few writers can give their heroes such a thorough and believable personality as, say, Heinlein did with Lorenzo, the actor in Double Star.))

Matt Weinstock's column on the term "86" certainly doesn't sound very convincing. The Dictionary of Modern Slang claims all uses of the term "86" came because the term rhymes with "nix". This sounds a little more probable than the explanations advanced by Weinstock and his correspondents, but I suspect that the term really had no esoteric meaning at first -- it was just an arbitrary term. "310" could have done as well. What brought on this discussion of the term? ((I don't remember. Ask Jane Ellern.)) F. Towner Laney once wrote an article called "Lovecraft is 86" for Skyhook.

"A slan shack type place"? Such establishments must have their drawbacks, particularly to the people who live in them, but I am surprised that more isn't being done (maybe I am unaware of the efforts) to find the LASFS a new clubroom such as it once had. Aside from the wonderful fact that it is rent free, the Silverlake playground is certainly inadequate. ((Everyone's in favor of a new slan shack in LA, except that nobody wants to live in one himself. The fan doing the most to find one right now is Owen Hannifen, who, as John Trimble sagely notes, hasn't had the experience of living in one yet, himself. Would you like to join Owen in establishing one?))

M A I L I N G
C O M M E N T S

A FANZINE FOR BURNETT R TOSKEY, Ph.D.

I hope Toskey got more out of this than I did.

PLONK #1 After reading this, I hardly feel qualified to welcome you back into SAPS. How are you doing against the Air Force with your power of a trained godzilla? ## I'd say that mailing comments can be harder than writing articles, if you're just doing m.c.'s because they're expected and you really have nothing to say, and if you do have something to say in your article. Articles are at least usually more worthwhile than m.c.'s. ## But if you go back to 500-page SAPS mailings, I'll never succeed in writing complete mailing comments.

YEZIDEE #3 Thanks for including the license sticker with your article. It makes a nice little extra; not that your article needs it. It stands up fine on its own. ## It must be possible to arrange beforehand to get certain letter combinations on the plates. My mother works at Great Western Savings & Loan, and got "GWS" plates through them. They arranged to get the 1,000 "GWS" plates for their employees. ## John Trimble is considerably amused by Al Lewis' plates: GAK 315. "It's the sort of thing you'd expect a teacher to say when he finds out he's 15 minutes late in dismissing his class." ## As one who has had an advance look at the illustrations for Shalar's mythology, I hope your "Annals ..." are continued for many issues (though don't let them grow into another "Brothers of the Spear").

POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC #15 Talk about hero-worship! I've met Stanbery on four or five occasions, but I'm afraid I don't remember him as much as I remember Paulus Edwardum Rex of Coventry. The first time was at the 1960 LASFS Halloween Party that Sid Coleman hosted at his dorm at CalTech. It was a masquerade party, and Paul was in his Coventranian costume. I remember talking with him for a while, but I don't remember what was said as much as I remember wondering whether his Ronald Colman-like accent was real or an affectation for the occasion. It wasn't until he relapsed to his normal speaking voice that I was sure that the



cultured British tones were not genuine. Even though I was sure that no native Pasadena boy (I'd heard a little about him from Ted Johnstone) could have such a British accent, I was kept wondering as Paul led a conversation for over half an hour, by its perfection. I assumed that Paul must be the sort of person that, when he takes on a role, he lives it to completion (Stanislawskism?); and what I've heard about Paul since tends to bear this out. The second time I met him was after a LASFS theatre party, when about 20 fans went across the street to a restaurant for a snack before breaking up. Coventranianism was just beginning to spread among LA Fandom at that time, and Bruce and Ted were telling me how Coventry was composed of different areas from many sf stories. As an old Grey Mouser fan, I asked them if Lankmar was one of these borrowed countries and, if it was, if I could become its High Overlord. They referred me to Paul, seated at the next table, and he gave his okay; which is how I got into Coventry (though I never did much once I was in, because I soon discovered that Coventranian Lankmar wasn't much like Leiber's Lankmar). The third time I met Paul was at the Coventranian get-together at the Fan Hillton (toward the height of the Guardian controversy), when he was again in full Coventranian regalia. The last time was when I was with Bruce and Ted in Pasadena, and we dropped in on Paul at his home for a few minutes, where I saw him in his "natural habitat" - seated on the floor of his incredibly disorderly room, with his hi-fi (?) on to provide a background to our conversation. I don't believe I've met him since then, though I may have seen him once or twice on minor occasions. These brief meetings weren't enough to get to really know him, though I did get the aura about him of ever-present activity. ## I'm afraid I find "The Last Night of Doubt" unreadable. I've tried getting into it on three occasions now, and I can't get past the first few pages. I don't know whether this is my fault or the play's, but it's too avant-garde for my tastes.

SPACEWARP #76 I'm glad you could manage to stay in SAPS, Art. ## But there are Italian sf prozines. They sell copies of it at a newsstand here in LA (the one on Hollywood Blvd. and Caluenga). I ROMANZI DI URAMIA is its title, and it reprints US sf novels by such authors as Heinlein, Raymond Jones, and Charles Eric Maine (okay, so he's British). As such it may be more like the old GALAXY NOVELS than a prozine, but it is an Italian stfzine. Also, I recall seeing some ads on FCSF for an Italian edition of theirs. ## And thanks for a nice trip report.

FARRAGO #2 From what little lettering there is on the cover, you printed this backwards! How on Earth did you manage that? ## I see you're like I am in not liking to pay for something not in hand. That's why I've never subscribed to any of the prozines, though I collect and read them all. I'd rather pick out each individual issue at the newsstands, making sure that I got one in good condition, even though I lose the subscriber's discount this way. ## My newest grotch with the 75¢ Lancer Books is with their "Now in new, durable library binding" ads. Big deal; so who cares? Not the libraries. I suppose that since they've switched from printing the stfnal rarities, almost unavailable (such as Vance's The Dying Earth) that they originally made such a big thing of in their ads, to such items as Asimov's The End of Eternity (available in a Doubleday Book Club edition and an old, but still available Signet pb edition), they need a new justification for their 75¢ price tag. ## Frankly, I'd prefer the old IMAGINATION to the new IF. ## Agh! Don't you dare get Harness or Hannifen started in SAPS on Scientology! We LA fen hear enough about it from them as it is. ## I'm glad you included a colophon at the end of your m.c.'s, but how about putting the title on your cover next time, too? ## Gad, when I ordered my copy of The Immortal Storm from Burge (one of the rare times I did send money for something without having it in hand first, because there was no other way to get it), it only cost me \$5.00. That was only in 1960 or early '61, too. Galloping inflation, indeed.

POT POURRI #27 Fair story, but I'm not much interested in fan mystery fiction.

POT POURRI #28 Enjoyed more than #27, but with no more comment hooks. Try to get some mailing comments in soon, okay?

OUTSIDERS #51 I'm glad to hear the Kujawas are intending to get to the Westercon. Betty was one of the fans I didn't get around to meeting at the Chiccon, and I'd like to remedy this as she was a faithful letterhack to SAL. ## Well, I'm sure Lichtman can think of something more fannish to do to postmailings than frowning on them, but let's restrict that to the Cult, shall we? ## Hope you can get to the Westercon, too, though since you either will or won't be before you read this, there's not much sense in my putting the sentiment here. If you didn't make it, too bad; we missed you. If you did make it, I'll have said my "howdy" in person by now. (If this sounds confusing, it's because it's being on-stencilled June 23, two weeks before the con.) ## All towns are suburbs of Los Angeles. ## Is half an Eney as good as half an octopus? (That's an even better question.)

SAPTERRANEAN #8 Tchaikovsky didn't like the "1812 Overture"? I've been told that he didn't like "The Nutcracker", either. Which of his works, if any, did he like? ## Walter Trygve Nelson as a 4-year-old Scientologist? Nononono...but wait! Come to think of it, I sat next to him at the N3F meeting at the 1961 Westercon, and from that encounter I would say that a mental similarity to Harness & Hannifen exists. Poor Ray...

DIE WIS #8 Nice cover. Remember Tennyson? "And he that once was king had on a crown Of diamonds, one in front, and four aside. And Arthur came, and laboring up the pass All in a misty moonshine, unawares Had trodden that crown'd skeleton, and the skull Brake from the nape, and from the skull the crown Roll'd into light, and turning on its rims Fled like a glittering rivulet to the tarn: And down the shingly scaur he plunged, and caught, And set it on his head, and in his heart Heard murmurs, "Lo, thou likewise shalt be king." ## "The First Tears of Winter" finishes on a logical and well-written note, and I enjoyed it more than any other bit of fan fiction I've read recently (with the exception of Dian's "Annals of Shalar"). But you have one habit which annoys me considerably. I count eight references to historical conditions "back on" Earth, used as comparisons to the action and conditions in this Coventranian story. Logically, this is all right; as long as men fight wars, there will be similarities in their actions and conditions everywhere. But emotionally, by pointing out that the actions and mental states of Rikard and his men are similar to those that have already existed back on Earth, you are branding your characters as copy-cats and play-actors. We already know that since your story has a setting analogous to one in Earth's past, similarities are bound to arise; there's no need to hammer the point home with references to Marine action in Korea, the reasons for the decline of the armor-wearing knight, or Captain Ahab. If you'd divorced your story completely from Earth, it would've been much better.

WATLING STREET #16 I'm not any too happy with the large amount of gasoline it takes to keep the Chevvy I drive going, but as long as I have free use of this car (which is my parents'), I'm not about to take on the extra expense of buying one that uses less gas myself. For the past six weeks, there's been a gas war going on at the stations around Slauson and Overhill (on my route to UCLA), and I've been taking this opportunity to keep my tank full of the high-octane (under whatever names the different stations call it) while I can get it for 29¢ a gallon, instead of the usual 35¢. ## "When will you be worthy of your fourteen Coventranians?" Jot that down for your next cover, Walter Breen! ## I never have any trouble with my pb bindings breaking; most of 'em look as though they'd never been opened, though I've read 'em all. But then I take special care when I read them not to let anything happen to 'em. Steve Schultheis and I; we're both finicky beyond belief.

THE GASEOUS VERTEBRATE #3 A couple of years ago, my father jury-rigged our old console radio-record player into a hi-fi set. He built two more speakers and put them in two of the corners of our living room, hooked in the speakers from the radio and the tv set in the other two corners, and would sit in the middle of the room deluged in sound from the records he'd play. (He liked Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture", but he had to tie a pencil to the needle arm every time he played it to weigh the needle down. Otherwise, when the cannons went off, the needle jumped out of the groove.) (This is true, by the way.) After a while, we got a tape

recorder, and he gave up buying records to record whatever he was interested in from the radio.

CHASTITY BELT I've read Mother Night, but I didn't consider it all that goshwowed great. Come to think of it, it was mostly Vonnegut's ~~A~~ fawning acolyte, Harlan Ellison, who was heaping all the laurels on it; Fandom didn't say too much about it other than what you've said here. Vonnegut never did have anything published in ASTOUNDING, did he?

IGNATZ #33 The Dean of our Library School just got back from a sabbatical in Europe, and he says they're widening the roads in Italy to make regular US-type highways out of them (he was talking of the area around Florence, at least). He didn't have much to say about the traffic itself, though. ~~##~~ Clever bagover cartoon.

PLEASURE UNITS #4 I'm hoping that the success on the pb stands of the various Burroughs series (Mars, Pellucidar, etc.) will impel some pb publisher to put out an edition of the Lensmen series. I was glad that Pyramid put the two Harold Shea novels out as a matched set (I consider The Wall of Serpents almost unreadable, and don't miss it at all), and I was disappointed that Asimov's "Foundation" series wasn't published similarly. ~~##~~ All of a sudden I realize that you've got very good and even reproduction this issue. Congratulations! ~~##~~ Yes, I did enjoy America Fallen!, and I intend reading Beyond Thirty whenever I happen to pick up a copy. I read another novel quite similar to America Fallen! about a month ago; I don't recall the author or the exact title offhand, but it was something like The Great Pacific War: 1931-1933. Written in 1925, it tells of an American-Japanese war, but with America winning this one. I'm pretty sure I read a review of this one in some fanzine several years ago, but I don't recall where. I discovered this copy on my own in the UCLA stacks, though. If you like America Fallen!, you should enjoy this one, too. ~~##~~ I had a collection of Classics Comics complete up to #120-odd before I got rid of them. I remember being surprised when I learned that the Classics version wasn't always exactly true to the work it was condensed from; some of the gorier Great Literature was toned down for us little kiddies, and I still got nightmares from the Classics edition of de Maupassant's "The Flayed Hand", with Allen Simon's illustrations. In one case though, the Classics version is truer to the original than the "standard" edition. This is in regard to Dumas' The Count of Monte Cristo, which is condensed, of course, but it's condensed from the complete text. The only full version I've ever seen (Philadelphia: Porter & Coates edition; undated, but published circa-1890, from its binding & format) runs to 941 pages of type so small it hurts your eyes to read it. The more modern editions in most of the Los Angeles libraries don't run much over 350 pages of large, easy-to-read type. The modern version isn't just condensed, whole episodes have been lopped out (I've read them both for comparison). But all the important episodes, though condensed, are in the Classics edition. The UCLA Library has a fair-sized collection of the earlier Classics Comics.

OH, BLOODY HELL! #6 You don't get my copy of STUPEFYING STORIES with the Akrean mythos back; I'm definitely hanging on to it! And I'd like to see some Akrean fiction, besides.

THE DINKY BIRD #6 I agree that illustrations in children's books, except for those for the youngest age levels, must be subordinate to the text. That's why I wish William Pène du Bois would go back to writing novels such as The Twenty-One Balloons and Peter Graves, even if the illustrations in them aren't as colorful as those in the more juvenile "Otto" series he's writing now. Though, actually, he's using two different techniques. The art for the "Otto" books consists basically of simple line drawings, brilliantly colored in. The art for his books for older children, though only black & white (with various shades of grays), is much more intricately detailed. Anyhow, I prefer the text of such works as Peter Graves to any of his illustrations, even though I am crazy about his artwork. ~~##~~ I remember the changes of character in Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone; I'll have to try murder in Pastiche.

FLABBERGASTING #26 "What is the awesome circumstance that drives Toskey to smoke?"
He's fumigating his tongue fungus. ## How could anyone go 7 miles deep into the ocean? The last I heard, the deepest spot only went down six miles. Have they discovered a new one? Ted? ## Though I don't know that much about Burroughs, I would guess that if Jungle Tales of Tarzan (American title) was intended to be the second in the series, it was a retroactive decision. Tarzan was followed directly by The Return of Tarzan in 1913. I don't know when the individual short stories in Jungle Tales of Tarzan first appeared, or if they ever appeared outside of this collection, but the book itself was first published in 1919.

NIFLHEIM #3 I guess that if anyone has a solid excuse for doing minae, you do.
Thanks for even this one-pager, under the circumstances. I hope that Roy comes along okay.

THE SEVEN EYES OF NINGAUBLE #9 If you're working on the school paper, do you think you could get some regular printing into your next issue of 7 I's? ## -50°? As a native Southern Californian, I cringe just to think of it. It hasn't gone much below 40° here at any time in the last 6 or 7 years that I can recall. ## As a squeamish individual, just reading about your operation makes me giddy. And why does the cat on the back cover have three hind legs?

COLLECTOR #33 What happened to your fancy rainbow covers? ## The robbery report is interesting, but I don't find any comment hooks. ## I'll leave the order for the 2nd Day Index standing; I'd rather have the book than the money back. I hear rumors, though, that if Day doesn't have the Index out by the Westcon, Advent: Publishers is going to take matters into its own hands. ## I'll agree that \$3 is a good price for mint early WEIRDS. I'm just sorry that I couldn't afford any that high up.

GASEOUS VERTEBRATE ANNEX Is 1.5 spacing with elite type much different from single spacing with pica type? A page in pica gets full credit.

RESIN #13 Your history of buccaneers in the Pacific is interesting, but too brief. It's also annoying in its use of names without first establishing who you're referring to. Even if Ringrose is identified in your footnotes later on, the statement "Ringrose says..." throws the reader into momentary confusion when first encountered, because it sounds as though he should already know who Ringrose is.

YOLO #1 Congratulations on a fine first issue! I predict you'll soon become a Guiding Light of NAPA.

MEANINGLESS PILLAR POLL RESULTS: 1963 22nd place isn't so good, but at least a large amount of the votes were in the "Best Fanzine" category. That's heartening. Possibly I shall do complete m.c.'s some day, and pick up some more votes in the "Comments" category next time. Congratulations, Bruce. ## Sorry I didn't get around to voting in your poll, Norm, but my back mailings are stored away, and it didn't seem worth the trouble to get them out to check specific references.

PSILO #7 I liked the illos in Tom Bombadil, though not as Tom Bombadil illos, if you know what I mean. ## Have you seen the dust jacket from the British edition of Sylva? I'll try to get UCLA's copy to show you. ## Your "In & Out of Fandom" is excellent. Has Ed Baker seen it yet?



NOTE: That 1925 book about an American-Japanese war is The Great Pacific War; A History of the American-Japanese Campaign of 1931-1933, by Hector C. Bywater. On recollection, I think the review of it was in de Camp's Handbook of Science Fiction, and not in any fanzine.

ARMISTEAD'S POLYCHROMATIC PETS #3 LA's a good city for bookstores with lots of bargains. The best of them is the Pickwick Bookshop on Hollywood Blvd., which is 3 stories tall. Pickwick gets all the new hardcover of books, including the Arkham House titles. Pickwick also always has a large stock of remaindered books, and you can often pick up some good sf in mint condition at bargain prices. They just added some Gnome Press titles at 99¢ each last week, including They'd Rather Be Right, by Clifton & Riley; The Dawning Light, by "Robert Randall", and 3 or 4 others. Not what you'd call real classics (despite one's winning a "Hugo"), but cheaper than you can get them through Pick-A-Book, even; and with 15 copies of each title, you can pick out one in top condition for yourself, and not have to worry about ending up with a damaged copy, which often happens when you order by mail. I visit Pickwick every other week to make sure I don't miss anything. ## Sure, I've seen the Trix commercial. It's on The Bullwinkle Show, which is just about the only program I still watch regularly (in color yet, including the Trix commersh). I'm rooting for the Rabbit. Come on out to LA some day, and we'll show you the statues of Bullwinkle and Rocky out on Sunset Strip.

RETRO #28 Hear, hear! No mandatory coat & tie at con banquets. Not to mention the discomfort of wearing them, there's the bother of crowding them into your already-jampacked luggage and carrying them around with you, just for one evening's use. ## So far, I haven't had time to read any of the books you recommend, but thanks anyway. I will whenever I get a chance; after A Talent for Loving, I respect your reading judgment. ## "Nothing But Gingerbread Left" was in the Jan. '43 issue of ASF. It was reprinted in the Ballantine collection of Kuttner's work, Bypass to Otherness.

UTGARD #1 For romantic interest so inane and tenuous that its very existence may be only in my imagination, try two of Andre Norton's books: The Defiant Agents, and Key Out of Time. I will give Burroughs credit for pulling one of the most audacious tricks I've ever seen; in The Mad King, he manages to defeat Austro-Hungary to end World War I about two days after it starts, to save his romantic interest. Anybody know of a wilder frame than this? ## According to THE GRIDLEY WAVE #9, Burroughs, Inc. has given Canaveral Press the rights to ERB's unpublished manuscripts, and Canaveral will publish a new Pellucidar book, Savage Pellucidar. This will consist of four stories, three of which originally appeared in Palmer's AMAZING STORIES, and one which was never published anywhere. So we may find out what happened to von Horst after all. ## Thanks for putting this into the mailing. OIPA's loss is SAPS' gain. ## Huntville in '66?

STUMPING #4 I like the cover, and will be looking forward to more artwork by Chuck Wowerite. ## I like both dogs and cats, but the Trimble's kittens sound like much less trouble than your puppy.

¿POR QUE? #17 What is this? SAPS' answer to the ACE DoubleBook? ## Your boss suggested you strike for higher pay? You have a nice boss!

HOBGOBLIN #10 Glad you could make it. Now that you've become a Dirty Pro and all, and since you only make every other mailing anyway, we can never be sure whether you're still interested in SAPS or not until the April and October mailings come out, and we can see whether there's an issue of HOB in them. And as HOB is one of the top SAPSazines (I think), I'm always a little anxious on this point. ## Okay, no more of Layout Error 37X. After the way it turned out in DRY MARTOONI #2 in FAPA, I'm pretty disgusted with myself, too. ## Oh, we had all sorts of lovely cartoons and slogans to use against "'64 Frisco or Fight!" In fact, my preference would have been not to drop the LA bid until we'd gotten the chance to use more of them. "Fifty million San Franciscans agree - "'FRISCO" IS A DIRTY WORD!"

That's right, Ted, they were playing Bill Donaho's jazz collection. Or, at least they were playing jazz records over Bill's record player; I assumed the records were Bill's, too. (Maybe they brought the records with them; or, since Terry Burns was staying there at the time, maybe they were his.) I remember that a large part of the conversation was on whoever it was that taught Louis Armstrong to play jazz.

I dug Alligator myself. There are some parts that could be taken as slightly fannish, such as Miss Le Galion, who Alligator paints purple before making love to.

MEET #13 I just got a little billet-doux from the Draft Board myself. No induction notice, just a questionnaire so that the Board will "have current information upon which to base your selective service classification." Up until the end of this May, I had a 2-S classification, which is a deferment for students, good for a year and renewable as long as you're in school. This May was the last semester of regular schooling for me, and though I have to go to summer school to the end of July to get my Master's, the local Board wouldn't give me another deferrment - they said it was highly unlikely I'd get called up in the two months between the expiration of my deferment and the end of summer school. Anyhow, my status has presumably reverted to 1-A, and ol' Draft Board's keepin' an eye on me. I'll have to check and see if you can step into a commission with a Master's in Library Service. Don't be surprised if my fanac is drastically interrupted in the near future, though.

ASTOUNDING STORIES OF SUPER SCIENCE Du Marier's short story, "The Birds", gave no explanation either as to why the birds began attacking mankind, other than a hazy guess that they were finally paying man back for thousands of years of being hunted.

SPELEOBEM! #19 I don't believe I've ever seen a Bjo drawing like this before. It looks more like some of Dian's work, I think. I like it, though I think she has done better. I prefer Dian's bagover. ## I hardly ever read mysteries any more. Of the few authors I do try to keep up with, though, Manning Coles, Rex Stout, and Leslie Charteris make up the bulk of the group. There is one other that I'd advise you to try: Andrew Garve. Garve doesn't have any central character to link the books together; no two are connected, so you can start reading anyplace. They are all excellent, and each one is almost entirely unlike the others (there's about 15 so far). Garve (a pen name; I forget his real name offhand) is a British author; his works have that quiet, meticulous, competent air that marks good British authorship. I think all his works are available in American editions, and there are pb reprints of some of them, too. Bjo is a John Dickson Carr fan, and I read a couple of old JDC pbs she borrowed from Stan Woolston recently, but I didn't like them any better now than when I'd tried reading JDC about 6 or 7 years ago. By and large, I'll stick to sf. ## I still maintain that The Magician's Nephew should be read sixth, and not first in the series. ## Hooray for another great installment of Madeleine's report. This ought to be worked into "The Works of WAW" somehow; possibly along with Walt's report of this trip when it comes out as a volume of TNOWAW.

-AGO #1 While some books force continuous reading, and others can be partly read, laid down, and come back to, there are others that cannot even be started. I don't mean boring or incomprehensible, exactly; I've forced myself to finish many a book that I was bored with, and of course there are books I've found incomprehensible. But occasionally I'll come across something that I can understand (or that I think I can understand), but which I simply cannot get into. I'll start it, read maybe 5 pages into it, find I've forgotten what the first 3 pages were about, and almost instinctively put it down and walk away. This seldom happens (I don't think I've ever had that trouble with an sf book), but there have been a few occasions. Have you ever experienced this?

SON OF SAPROLLER #29 Harness, I love your nattering humor, and I wish you'd do something more than minac. ## Did you ever see the English comedy, "Passport to Pimlico", about the Londoners who discover their city block is legally a part of the Duchy of Bergundy? Recommended; ask Ted about it.

THE ZED #803 Enjoyed very much. Is this supposed to be the same setting that Pratt used in The Well of the Unicorn, or am I confused by a similarity of Scandinavian-sounding names?