

Mistily Meandering 6



MISTILY

NO 6

meandering

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PACIFICON II in 1964!

Salamander Press no. 32.

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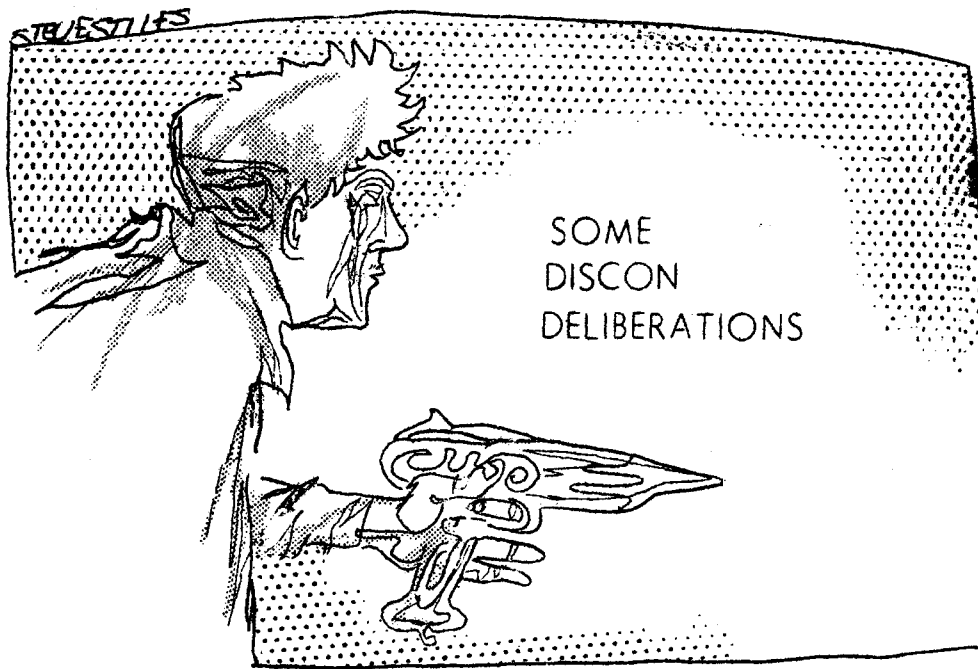
Since I am primarily a science fiction fan, one of the things about the Dis-Con that I found most interesting was the opportunity I got to talk with various authors and learn their plans for future stories, or hear small stories connected with the writing of some of their works, etc. Here are what I considered some of the more memorable of these:

When Robert Heinlein was building his house in Colorado Springs, he camped out at night in the uncompleted structure. An overly friendly cat living nearby had the maddening habit of coming over after dark when Heinlein was asleep on the floor, and curling up on his face. The cat could not be discouraged, and putting it out did no good, because it would soon find an uncompleted section of wall or a window that hadn't been fitted into its frame yet, and be back on Heinlein's face in a short while. Heinlein later wrote this into The Rolling Stones.

Ted Johnstone noted that the last two written stories in the Future History series are out in England, and wondered when they'd come out here. Heinlein said he didn't know; he was considering writing some new material to go with them after all this time, but probably would never get around to it. In answer to Ted's question of what De Capo (the parenthesized last title on the Future History chart) was supposed to cover, Heinlein said that this novel would almost definitely never be written; though if it is, he'll change the title to Lazarus Long, since Lazarus will be the central figure. Heinlein also noted that his next work (following Glory Road) consists of 500 tightly written manuscript pages, which his publisher wants edited down to more manageable size. He didn't say what it's about, though.

Andre Norton has a contract to write 3 hardbound novels a year. She likes the covers that Ed Emsh does for her stories, but she doesn't care much for Richard Powers' abstract work. She was considerably surprised when Don Wollheim reprinted Huon of the Horn as an adult paperback; she'd written it for an 8 to 11 year old readership. It seems to be selling as an adult book, though.

My first meeting with Isaac Asimov came when I asked him if Doubleday's re-printing of his Foundation books meant that Gnome Press was defunct. His answer: "I hope so; Greenberg never paid anybody what he owed 'em. Say, did anybody ever tell you you look like Paul Newman? I think that's a dirty shame; I want to look like Paul Newman!" And he walked away.



First of all, I better warn you that this con report is being written strictly from memory about a month after the events described occurred, and that it consists primarily of personal opinions of the people, places, and events I encountered. Bruce, Dian, and Ted were all taking notes for their reports, so you can check with them for the exact dates and times we arrived at places and did things. The big thing about this DisCon jaunt for me is the view I got of the U.S.A. It was the first time I was ever very far East of the Mississippi, and my ChiCon trip last year was the first time I was ever very far East of Los Angeles. The result of all this is that right now, I'm more interested in jotting down my impressions of scenery and people than I am in recording bits of fannish minutiae for future fan historians to check against other DisCon reports. I realize that you can probably get more competent descriptions of America from any professionally-written travelogue book, but these are my impressions, so I hope you'll bear with me.

Though we didn't return to California by the Southern route as had originally been planned, I still saw more of America than I've ever seen before. Our route took us through the semiarid areas of Southern California and the southern tip of Nevada, up into the plateau lands and mountain forests of Utah and western Colorado, across the plains of eastern Colorado and Nebraska into the cornfields of Iowa, then into the lush, green fields and forests of Minnesota and the states Eastward. On our homeward trip, we returned through the green states of Ohio, Indiana, and others, until we recrossed the Mississippi and swung down onto Highway 66, driving into the dry Western states of New Mexico and Arizona. On this trip, I rode over an eastern tollway, visited a Howard Johnson's, entered Canada, experienced the New York subway system, and saw our nation's capital, all for the first time. I met people (mostly fans, naturally) that I've wanted to meet for years and hope to meet again, missed a few I wanted to meet and hope to meet sometime in the future, and saw some I'd rather have not seen and hope I don't run into again. The whole excursion was what Calvin Demmon would probably call an Enlightening Experience. I don't expect the '64 Con to provide anything as great, since the trip to San Francisco is a short one, but I have hopes that London in '65 will result in something similar.

Of all the country that I saw, I liked the area around eastern Utah and western Colorado the most. This is an area of wilderness, of mountains, rivers, and pine forests. In Colorado, the land is a high plateau, cut into by deep canyons and gorges. The Continental Divide cuts through here. Specific scenic areas abound; we

missed Timpanogos Cave, which we'd wanted to see, but we spent an hour or so at the very beautiful Bridal Veil Falls, in the same vicinity. We spent the night in that region in the Colorado National Monument, which is a very well kept spot for camping and sightseeing. This is in the mountain plateau: red earth sprinkled with scrub pine and small bushes, and a fair amount of wildlife. The road out of there skirted the edge of a sheer cliff, with a drop of what looked to be a thousand feet or more, into the valley below. Our drive to Colorado Springs followed a river flowing speedily through the Rockies, with the mountains towering above us. Our passage over the Continental Divide took us through a real pine forest at 10,000 feet or so. We saw Royal Gorge, where the river makes a deep cut into the plateau land, and hand fed a young deer that was apparently used to getting handouts from tourists. This area ends just about at Robert Heinlein's house in Colorado Springs; Heinlein said that he can look out of a window at one end of his house up into the heights of the Rockies, then look out of a window at the other end of the house down into the beginning of the Great Plains stretching eastward.

The Great Plains didn't impress me nearly as much as did the Utah-Colorado area. Flat land as far as the eye can see; mostly shoulder high in corn or wheat fields. The lakes of Minnesota were rather nice, but on the whole, I didn't care so much for the country East of the Mississippi. It was mostly a case of too much vegetation for my tastes. While the countryside of Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, etc., had forests enough, they were all swamped by profuse undergrowth. While I have nothing particularly against undergrowth, I still prefer the less tumultuous greenlands of the West.

Two more strikes against the East were its humidity and its bugs. You couldn't get away from the humidity, short of staying in an air-conditioned building, and the insect life was almost as ever-present. Though I wasn't carrying on any violent war against stag beetles, as Ted was, I do like to be able to avoid bugs when I'm not interested in studying them. The East seems to be filled with nothing but bugs; the trees along the roads about Indiana were festooned with enormous tent caterpillar nests, the ground was aswarm with grasshoppers and crickets, and the air was filled with flies. There was one instance in which the lack of appearance of a bug disappointed me: I didn't see any fireflies at night. Aside from this, the East can keep all its bugs.

The different cities seemed to have their own personalities, too. Las Vegas was distinguished by the influence of gambling, of course. Besides the main gambling palaces clustered together in a few blocks of the central downtown area, slot machines can be found in every other store in town. I knew Las Vegas was supposed to have a lot of slot machines, but I was still surprised to find them in such 'staid' establishments as markets, clothing stores, etc. Salt Lake City was larger and more settled, though it still had the Western air of bustling informality that was lacking in the Eastern cities. Salt Lake City's main characteristic was its strong Mormon influence, most noticeable in the impressive Mormon Temple in the heart of the city. This is open to visitors (the grounds, that is, not the Temple itself), and we wandered about there for the better part of an hour, with hundreds of other tourists. When we went across the street for lunch at a drugstore afterward, Dian got to talking with the waitress, and learned that the waitress' brother is serving as a Mormon missionary in some foreign country. Salt Lake City is a friendly city, with the Mormon influence most predominant. Minneapolis, Detroit, and Cleveland all seemed to be large, rambling cities, with considerable residential areas, and tree-lined streets. Minneapolis is on the Mississippi, and had a lot more lakes and ponds than the others. We'll probably remember Detroit best for its poorly marked street system, as we tried to find Howard Devore's home late at night. New York City seemed large and confused. It's not really confused, I soon discovered, but it does give the impression of thousands of people rushing madly around in all directions, which seems confused. The most striking thing about New York, as far as I was concerned, was its subway system. This also looks like a confused 'dirty great thing' at first glance, but a very little experience showed me that it is an efficient, rapid, inexpensive intracity transit system, the best I've ever seen. I like the subways.

Washington was magnificent, with its wide streets, monuments, and beautiful buildings. I spent the whole day before the convention started just walking around the city, taking everything in. The Georgetown section of town was nice also; well kept up, and possessing a flavor of antiquity, but not 'restored' into tourist-trap neatness.

On the whole, I preferred the Western cities to the Eastern ones. Most of the Eastern cities seemed quite dirty; and in some areas, decaying. Gary, Indiana was filthy! Of course all these Eastern cities have had about a century's more existence than the Western ones in which to accumulate grime. In time, our cities will be just as bad; but I'll take their comparative cleanliness while it lasts.

The only exception to the dirtiness of the Eastern cities was Washington, which I imagine gets a deliberate cleaning much more often than do the others. And, as Ted pointed out, Washington has no real heavy industry to get it dirty, as do most other Eastern cities.

I discovered that California has the best major highway system of any state that I visited. Some of the Eastern tollways are as good in quality, but in California, you don't have to pay tolls - which can get annoying, especially in the states that have toll stations every few miles. The back highways we took in the East were in good repair, but were pretty narrow; about like California's main highways before they were replaced by freeways. The highways in the other states in the West were mostly in pretty bad repair. Colorado's roads were the worst; according to Heinlein, they're under snow for about half a year so that the road crews can't get at them. The snow doesn't clear away in some cases until it's almost Summer; then, just as the road crews begin to patch up the Winter damage, the heavy tourist traffic starts coming through. So Colorado (especially the Western half) has its problems. I don't know what excuses Arizona and New Mexico have for not improving their roads, though.

I was somewhat surprised to find that gasoline prices in California are comparatively cheap. Since our large freeway building program is financed largely through gasoline taxes, I'd assumed that our gas must be more expensive here than in states which charge tolls for highway use, or which don't have expensive highway improvement programs. Not so; gasoline on the whole was more costly in the other states that we visited.

The most rewarding feature of the trip was the opportunity it presented me to meet so many wonderful people. I saw George Barr for the second time. George is a very pleasant person, though somewhat modest and shy. We dropped in on him at his home in Salt Lake City for about an hour, and raided his wastebaskets and note files for scrap illos and doodles that he hadn't imagined that anyone would want. They all sold very well at the con's Art Show sketch table. George hopes to be able to attend Pacificon II; if he can, he'll finally be able to see one of the Art Shows his works have been so popular at for so long. I hope he can make it.

The Heinleins' hospitality was fabulous! We dropped in Monday evening for an hour or two of conversation, and we didn't leave until 18 hours later. We probably wouldn't have gotten out then if the Heinleins hadn't had other house guests arriving in a few hours. Though Virginia Heinlein was in bad health, both received us royally. We spent Monday evening and most of Tuesday talking about sf, politics, music, art (modern & classical), gardening & flowers, cats, & other diverse subjects. Bob took us on a tour of his fallout shelter, greenhouse, & garden. He's currently working on building a series of water reclamation pools to hold the Winter rain & snow through the dry Summer months, to keep his garden alive then. Petronius the Arbiter, who was one of his many cats, is buried next to one of these pools. After almost an entire day of conversation, though, we had to get going to get back on our schedule. As a matter of fact, we travelled so fast to get back on schedule that we burned out one of our tires about 20 miles outside of Minneapolis. It was a small price to pay for the extra time it gave us with the Heinleins.

I don't have to introduce Ruth Berman to you. I'm glad to say, though, that her whole family is just as pleasant. During the day that our tire was being replaced, we spent the time chatting and playing Hearts; and Ruth's mother kept us supplied with potato chips, pickles, and other snacks between a large breakfast and a larger lunch. The preceding evening, Ruth took us to a student production of "Camille" on an old showboat moored on the Mississippi by the University. We, in turn, talked Ruth into coming to the convention. I hope she had as splendid a time there as we did at her house.

In Detroit, we spent brief periods of time with Jerry Bails, Howard Devore, and Roger Sims. Our stop at Jerry's was somewhat unexpected, but we were made welcome, and we all spent an hour or so going over his collection of comics and discussing Comic Fandom. We spent a couple of hours at Big-Hearted Howard's looking at his collection and talking over more fannish matters, then we all went over to Teddy Bear Sims', where we were supposed to spend the night. Fred Prophet and Jim Broderick were already there, and quite a bull session got under way; Bruce, Dian, Ted & I were so tired that we flaked out in the middle of it, about 3 a.m. We had to leave early the next morning, so I didn't get to become nearly as acquainted with Detroit fandom as I would've liked. With luck, I'll have another chance to meet with everybody again sometime.

Our schedule called for us to deliver the Invisible Little Man Award, awarded to Andre Norton at the Westercon, to Miss Norton on our trip. We'd notified Miss Norton of this, and she'd invited us to dinner when we came by. This was another of the highest spots on our journey. Andre Norton is a very active and pleasant person, living in an old, neat frame house in Cleveland with her mother, whom she takes care of. Though she likes people individually, she dislikes crowds intensely, which would unfortunately rule out the possibility of having her as guest of honor at any worldcon. She's been writing all her life - her first book, The Prince Commands (1934), appeared before she was 21. We saw her large reference library of books on archaeology, primitive cultures, history of witchcraft, and other subjects she weaves into her books; then spent the rest of the evening looking through her collection of fiction and fantasy, recommending books to each other. We finally had to tear ourselves away in order to get to Ted's grandparents' home, where we were expected for the evening.

Ted's grandparents weren't fannish, but they did provide us with a welcome reception, giving us a chance to get a good rest from our travel weariness. From here, we went on to New York City, where we spent three days touring the city, and meeting New York fandom (or a part of it) at parties at Terry Carr's and Esther Davis'; plus being invited out to dinner by Jock Root and Adrienne Martine. Many thanks to Ted White for letting us use his house as a base of operations for the three days, and for letting me loose in his stock of comic books.

At the con, I was supposed to share a room with Ron Ellick; but unfortunately, he wasn't registering until the day following our arrival. Dick Eney very kindly invited me to stay that night at his home in Alexandria. This was really appreciated - and needed; I got a better night's sleep than any I had at the con hotel. And the breakfast Dick's mother served the next morning was one of the best meals I had on the whole trip; about the equivalent of a full-sized dinner elsewhere.

We stayed at George Scithers' home Tuesday night after the con, before starting home. George has a wonderful house for any sf fan, with plenty of room for book cases, hi-fi equipment, a fan den for his publishing equipment, wall space for framed pro-zine artwork, etc. I certainly hope he won't have to give this up now that he's being transferred overseas.

I'm also glad I had the chance to meet the Tacketts for the first time, as we spent a night in Albuquerque. Unfortunately, we got in early in the morning and collapsed almost immediately, and by the time we'd awoken, Roy had left for work. I hope to meet him, and Chrystal, and all the splendid people mentioned here, again soon.

As much as I enjoyed your con report, most of my comments on MISTY #5 are going to be on your mailing comments. I haven't read most of the zines, but when you mention prearranged license plates, for instance: we had a fellow here from Maine who told us that Maine had two kinds of license plates, either five numbers or five letters. The ones with letters cost extra, but you got your choice of any unissued combination. # And "Brothers of the Spear", which I remember for its beautiful artwork, as well as for its being an undying series of cliffhangers. ((After running serially in TARZAN comics for over ten years, it shows no signs of letting up. The series is currently drawn by Russ Manning; while Jesse Marsh, who originally handled it, still does the rest of the TARZAN artwork.)) # What is Alligator? It sounds like a book. ((It's a Harvard college lampoon of Ian Fleming's James Bond stories, published in a format parodying the Signet paperback editions of same. 77 pages for 50¢, and well worth it; it's hilarious. The bookstores in New York were selling copies along with the other Bond books in the regular pb racks when I was there last month. If you have any interest in the Bond stories, you'll have to read this; it's a composite satire on the whole series.)) # And I agree with you on The Magician's Nephew - books read better in their order-of-writing. I read it first instead of sixth, though, while waiting for the library to get The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe back in. Nephew is still my favorite of the series for imagery. # I think the word for those books you can't get started on is "uninteresting" (or "dull", to use a positive term). Boring books are the dull books you have some reason for reading anyway. Anyhow, this has been my experience in the matter. If you can get through the first half of "The Last Night of Doubt", to where the symbolic dialogs give way to Stanbery monologs, you shouldn't have any trouble finishing it.

# Hmmm, I'm going to have to look up that bit from Tennyson; I haven't had much luck in finding good fantasy poetry. There probably isn't much to be found, but I'm sure there's lots I haven't heard of yet. Any recommendations? ((The Tennyson



SO NICE YOU  
WROTE...

NEW TITLE,  
SAME OLD  
LETTERCOL!

quote is from his "Idyls of the King". As to other fantasy poetry, it's true there isn't very much. August Derleth has published quite a few volumes of poetry by such authors as Lovecraft, Howard, Smith, and Leah Drake, and two omnibus volumes of fantasy poetry, Dark of the Moon and Fire and Sleet and Candlelight. These are the only works of fantasy poetry I can think of offhand (aside from Tolkien's pieces, of course), and being from Arkham House, it's pretty largely macabre stuff. There are poems in F&SF occasionally, and UNKNOWN published some you might look up. There are the song fragments in "The Green Hills of Earth" and Silverlock. I suppose you've already checked the classic fantasies such as the Iliad and Ovid's Metamorphoses. That about exhausts my memory. Can anyone else recall any sf or fantasy stories with notable bits of poetry in them? (Never mind all the G&S parodies.)}}

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Harry Warner, Jr.      423 Summit Ave.      Hagerstown, Md., 21740      Aug. 21

It looks as if I shall be forced to make this Ballantine vs. Ace decision that has been bewildering so many fans. Some all-out Burroughs enthusiast seized on some remarks that I made in a letter of comment on Warhoon and demanded that I should cite chapter and verse to demonstrate what I mean when I say that Burroughs' writing is so bad. I own only three or four of his novels, they are buried somewhere on a lower level of the attic strata, and I'll have to buy a paperback in order to find some examples of what I mean. Incidentally, Burroughs' books come as close as any volumes I can think of to your last page definition of the books that are simply unfinishable. I've never been able to finish a Burroughs novel or even to get halfway through one. Those that I own were acquisitions that I picked up for little or nothing on a sudden impulse that told me that the time was ripe for me to begin enjoying ERB like all the other fans. Those sudden impulses were unmotivated, I quickly discovered on each occasion. {{I like Burroughs for light reading. I don't consider any of his books to be any great shakes, and I've gotten a lot of amusement out of parts I don't think were supposed to be particularly amusing, but I've never started a Burroughs book I haven't been able to finish, and I've read all the ERB paperbacks out so far, both Ballantine and Ace.}}

Your Westercon report was pleasant reading. All con reports have a particular importance to me just now, on the eve of my first worldcon if all goes well. {{I heard you were at the DisCon; sorry we couldn't find each other for a chat.}} I share a few of your problems. I don't drink, either; that is sufficiently well known around fandom to make embarrassing incidents improbable in Washington, and yet I suspect that I'm going to feel awkward. I'm not the type who enjoys parties, either as a participant or as an onlooker, and I imagine that I'll have trouble finding a small enough and sober enough group to satisfy me in the early morning hours. {{I have somewhat the same problem, with the added difficulty that a couple of times now, the guy with whom I'm sharing a room is the guy who's hosting the party, so I can't cut out and go to bed in the wee hours if I want to. Generally, I manage to guzzle all the mix and soda pop in sight until I gurgle, then find a group of young neos who don't drink yet for a sober discussion group. If there's none in the party, you can always go up to the N3F Hospitality Room. I'm the sort who likes to wander from group to group and from party to party, anyway.}} Then there's my special problem, that my work keeps me up to 3 a.m. or later morning after morning, and the late hours at a con that seem like delicious freedom and change from dreary routine to most fans will simply cause me to think that here I'm wasting several precious opportunities to get to bed early for once. I also gained some nuggets of information from your report that may come in handy some day. You have no idea how intelligent people think a person is when he suddenly lets drop the fact that he knows it takes eight or nine hours to go from Los Angeles to San Francisco by automobile. Such things aren't common knowledge in this part of the country and if I drop at the proper moment that fact into a conversation, I'm immediately assumed to be possessed of a complete stock of information about everything. (It's important to change the subject immediately after dropping a bit of fake erudition into the conversational pot, because I can



never remember which city is north and which is south and I wouldn't want to risk getting caught up on this matter.)

There must be good reasons against it, since it hasn't been done, but I haven't been able to understand why the LASFS doesn't hook up with an eating place for meetings. There must be scores of small establishments that would provide a room for meetings in return for the patronage, and I gather that there's always a meeting after the meeting in a restaurant even under today's circumstances. This was apparently the arrangement back in the late 1930's when the club met in Clifton's Cafe. ((The principal reason, Harry, is sheer inertia. As long as we've got a satisfactory (if not ideal) meeting place, nobody's going to trouble themselves enough to look for a new one. The Silverlake Playground is free, and in a nice section of town, which is something. What would be ideal, of course, is a slant shack in which we can set up a permanent LASFS meeting room, and bring the club library out of storage. But not being able to find this ideal, nobody's particularly interested in looking for a second-rate substitute.))

My auto license tags are fairly relevant this year. They are BN-6902. I can imagine that I'm two-thirds of the way toward becoming a BNF, and the first two numerals are undeniably fannish. But the last two numbers are not significant, as far as I can determine. Maryland doesn't provide special numbers or letters on request, except for reserving consecutive numbers for large orders placed through service clubs or other groups so that one member can recognize an unknown member through his license plate.

The cannon in the Columbia recording of The Confederacy makes my tonearm jump out of the groove back into the preceding groove, something like your father's problem. So the man keeps yelling in the distance "fire!" and there is just a suggestion of a thud and then his voice again and so on until I get up and help the poor stylus. I imagine that lack of compliance in the stylus assembly is the real problem and I've been afraid of damaging other records by putting any more weight onto the arm.

The reactions to Poor Richard's Almanac are interesting, both in FAPA and in the SAPS publications that I've received. Nobody seems to be impressed by Stanbery's achievements unless subjected to his personal aura repeatedly for lengthy occasions. He sounds like someone with intelligence and ability who is dashing off in all directions at once and as a result never gets anywhere in particular.

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Jim Cawthorn                      4 Wolseley Street, Gateshead S.. Co. Durham, England                      Aug. 26

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Thanks for MISTILY 5. I had almost forgotten the heading illo to the mailing comments; nice to see her again. All towns are suburbs of Los Angeles? (OUTSIDERS #51). Except when they are suburbs of London, Eng. There's some fairly serious speculation going on as to how much more weight Southern Britain can bear before disappearing below sea-level.

Trouble with the recording I have of the 1812 (GASEOUS VERTEBRATE) is that the needle sticks in the groove at the cannons bit; generally it repeats one bang two or three times before anyone realizes that it has struck.

Agree with you on the Tom Bombadil illos (PSILO #7). I much prefer the same artist's work on the Narnian series.

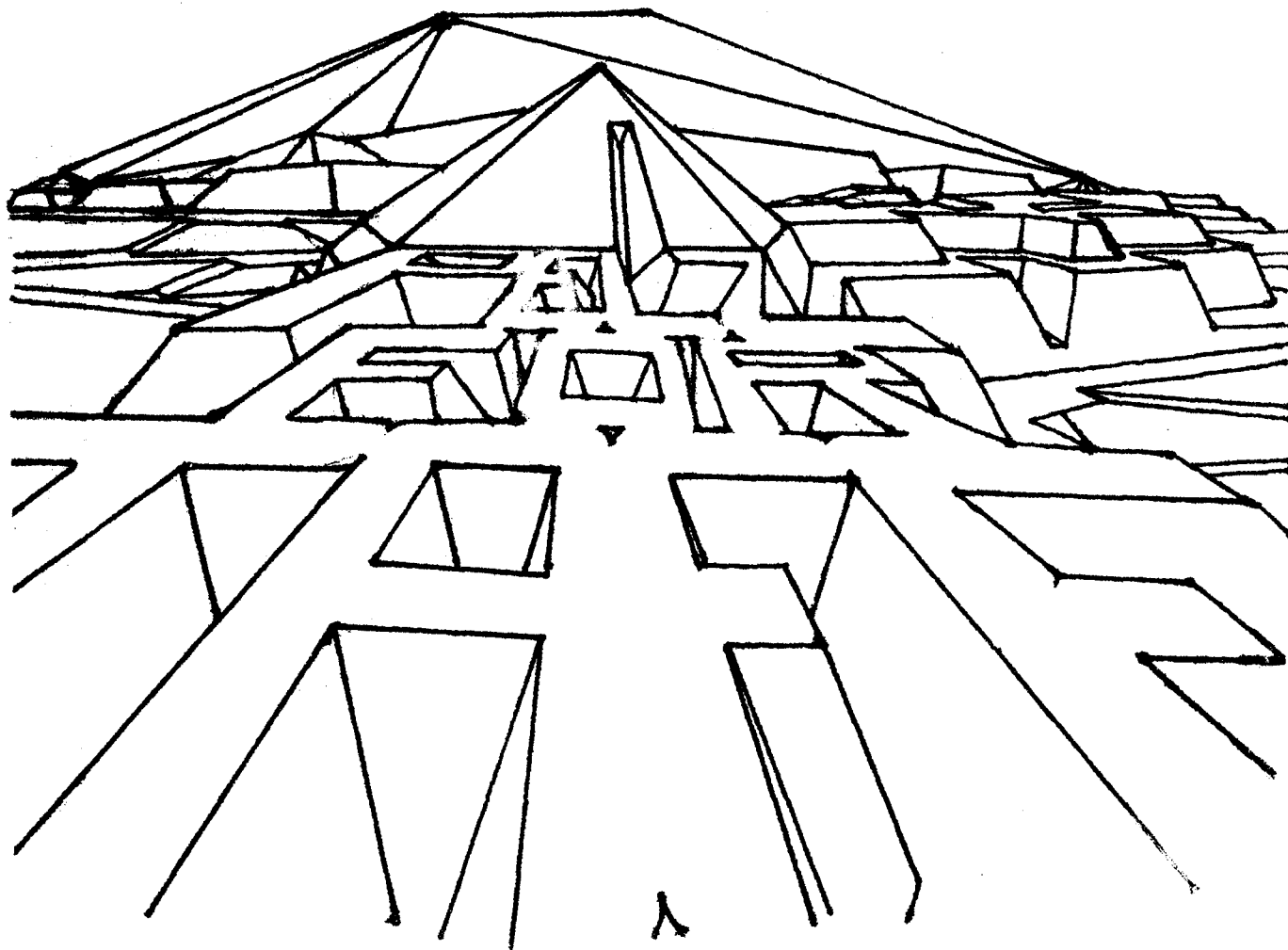
Are there any collections of C. A. Smith stories, at a price within my reach, available? Again, any readable size and condition will do; I have one or two of his stories in such mags as the AVON FANTASY READER, but he's far from being the most available author over here. It doesn't matter if a collection contains any of the stories I already have, so long as it does contain a reasonable amount of his stuff. ((You should have the copy of Genus Loci and Other Tales I sent you by now, and The Abominations of Yondo is in the mails now. That's all I can find; all his earlier

works are definitely out of print, and his works "in preparation" are apparently still in preparation - now that he's dead, only August Derleth knows for sure. Possibly some other SAPS members might have some Clark Ashton Smith material they'd be willing to sell you or trade for artwork. Hmmm, people?))

Ah, yes, that cover for MISTILY 4..... This is actually based on information given in a recent U.N. report on Africa concerning the culture of lesser-known tribes and illustrates the mango-peeling ritual of the Muttarubarbs. On reaching puberty, male and female natives are required to place a mango in the crook of each knee and peel it with as few sword-strokes as possible. A further unusual fact about these people, revealed by U.N. statisticians, is that the average height falls off sharply above the age of 14. Boggs' reference to a "black Amazon" is oddly apt, for it is known that in the third century B.C. a party of Greek seamen, disciples of Zeno, were stranded for some months on the Muttarubarbian coast and contributed a distinctly non-negroid strain to the physiology of subsequent generations. In native folklore the parallel to this physical legacy can be noted in the traditional reply to the Muttarubarbian child's traditional awkward question: "The Stoic brought you."

Actually, it was a piece of poor drawing; I didn't shape the leg sufficiently, so that the foot is hardly distinguishable. The cut-lass (!) is where it is to give some depth to the illo and 'bring forward' the bent left leg.

There has been talk of holding another "tournament" at the next Con over here. I hate to think what would happen if Pelz cut loose among the Knights of St. Fanthony with that ten-pounder.....



# MAILING

THE WILD COLONIAL BOY #3 -- (Foyster) Your Commonwealth National Library sounds as though it must be a very neat & tidy place. The Library of the University of California at Los Angeles has had space problems for years, but it goes on accepting all the material it can get, even if it does have to store books in boxes or pile them on the floors (it's constructing a new branch to one side of the campus, so it should soon have room to put everything neatly on shelves again). May I suggest sending a copy of WCB there, for a warmer reception? (You see, having spent all that money to construct the new library, the University lacks funds for fuel to warm it in the winter...) ## Your poem by Bertram Chandler is appreciated, I guess. That is, I feel that twenty pages of anything by a pro like Chandler in a fanzine should get some appreciation... ## Congratulations to Chris Bennie for another wowzer of a cover.

YEZIDEE #4 -- (Girard) I have no objection to anyone preferring The Worm Croborous to the Ring trilogy, but when you say you haven't been so pleased with a book since reading The Gods of Mars, I hope you don't mean that you like Burroughs better than Tolkien. That would be a bit much to accept. ## Yes, I remember The Wonderful Adventures of Nils, by Selma Lagerlof. It originally came out in this country in two volumes, The Wonderful Adventures... and The Further Adventures of Nils. For some reason, I had only read the first volume, until something Ruth Berman said prompted me to get the second. I see the current edition has reunited the two halves again. ## My favorite Merritt works are The Ship of Ishtar, Burn, Witch, Burn, Dwellers in the Mirage, and The Face in the Abyss, in that order. I think I've read all of his books except The Metal Monster. If you like Merritt, you should try to find a copy of his The Fox Woman, which Hannes Bok completed after his death. I think that in some respects, Bok has handled Merritt's style of fantasy better than Merritt himself did. I loved Bok's The Blue Flamingo in STARTLING STORIES, and I was very disappointed when I learned that STARTLING had cut out large portions so that it would fit in one issue as a "complete novel". I was talking with Lloyd Eshbach at the DisCon, and I mentioned that I'd wished that Fantasy Press could've published the entire manuscript. Eshbach replied that he did indeed have the manuscript and had intended publishing it, but that Fantasy Press had unfortunately folded first. This is a real pity. I wish there were some other publisher interested in Merritt-style fantasy today. ## Shalar is still wonderful. I don't know whether to wish for a speedy end, so I can learn how things will turn out, or to wish that the story go on forever, since good things shouldn't come to an end.

THE GOLDEN HARP -- (Girard) I hope that this is just a fragment of Shalar's mythology, and that it will be followed by more fragments in the near future. Your forté seems to be fiction rather than mailing comments, which is somewhat unusual (though decidedly welcome) in a SAPSzine.

DIE WIS #9 -- (Schultz) Sorry you were out when we stopped at your place on our trip East; I was looking forward to renewing our acquaintance made at the ChiCon. Maybe next year? ## Despite being taken to a very good Oriental dinner by Jock Root while in New York, I'm not that interested in Oriental food. Sorry. Gee, but this letter is almost long enough to give Bjo page credit for a full mailing. Are you sure you don't want to rejoin SAPS, Bjo? ## I still wonder if it was morally necessary to drop both Bombs on Japan. Did the Government really take the trouble to see if the Japanese Government was still determined to hold out, after the first one was dropped?

SPY RAY (OpCrif CCXXIX) -- (Eney) While I'm not too much of a Holmes fan, I have enjoyed the stories I've read enough to also enjoy the "scientific" articles purporting to explain his methods, motivation, psychology, etc. This seems as well done as most, and is likely a better way to spend your time than analyzing Shakespeare's works to prove they were written by someone else, for example. Are you a member of the BSI?

POT POURRI #30 -- (Berry) Ah; for this I'll willingly excuse you your lack of mailing comments. A hearty 'yea', and may the sequel come soon. I can just picture the Coon organising a fannish Underground in Moscow.

THE DINKY BIRD #7 -- (Berman) When visiting Andre Norton in Cleveland, I noticed that she shelved The Magician's Nephew first among the Narnian Chronicles, in her library. I guess I'm almost alone in my feeling that it should be read sixth, as it was written. As to further volumes from Lewis, I'd like to know what happened to the heirs of King Frank in Narnia that it came to be deserted by the Sons of Adam by the time of The Lion, The Witch & the Wardrobe. I imagine the White Witch had something to do with it, but I'd like Lewis to relate the details of the matter to us. ## Your play is well-written, though the sudden transition from science fiction to fantasy was a bit too abrupt for my tastes.

NIFLHEIM #4 -- (Hulan) Your remark that "the civilized world was pretty uniform, except where it was worse" reminds me of the old saying about personal freedom in Europe: "In England, everything is permitted that isn't specifically forbidden. In Germany, everything is forbidden that isn't specifically permitted. In France, everything is permitted whether it's specifically forbidden or not. And in Russia, ..." I don't know the source of this statement, but I think it predates World War I. Government of some sort may be a necessary evil; this does not mean that any form of government should be tolerated rather than no government. I agree that things on the whole have been improving in the past few decades, though. ## Have I mentioned yet that Knott's Berry Farm advertises as one of its exhibits a working tv set with a 2-inch screen? That is a mite larger than ring-size, but still pretty small. ## Ah, you share my views about the current Grey Mouser stories. Now if we can only convince Leiber... ## If any pb company does start issuing the super-space operas of Smith & Campbell, we might remind 'em that there's a 25-year-old unpublished novel-length manuscript by Campbell floating around somewhere that we'd like to see. Universe, I think it was called; and didn't Bill Evans pick it up at the ChiCon auction for \$50? ## The four Vega sf books that have come out so far have all been reprints of British originals, including the cover illos. The British publisher is Badger Books. They're all pretty bad; about on a par with Vargo Statten. ## Well, we got up to 109° here a couple of weeks ago. Can the South beat that? Though I admit it probably seems hotter, what with the wet heat down there and all. I don't know how Southern winters are, but now that you're out here in Sunny Calif., you'll have a chance to compare them yourself. ## I'm under the impression that my great-grandfather was in the Union army, though I'll confess I don't know for sure. Have to ask my grandmother the next time I see her.

POT POURRI #29 -- (Berry) John Trimble was recommending the movie version of Dr. No as one of the funniest pictures he's ever seen. ## Who says collecting stamps is mainly a kid's hobby? It's well established as one of the most cultured of all sedentary hobbies for anyone, adults included. It wasn't a kid who paid upwards of \$50,000 for that 1856 British Guiana penny magenta. If I could afford it, I'd start up my own collection again.

comments

OUTSIDERS #52 -- (Ballard) You're getting a nice set of G&S covers here from Dick. I hope you can keep them up. This one looks at first glance as though the guard on the right is just about to trip the one on the left. ## Detailed knowledge of the current NFFF feuds is pretty well limited to the Directors. They aren't telling anybody much, hoping the feud will die for lack of fuel on their part. It's Alma Hill who's keeping it going by sending letters to all & sundry, but who could ever make too much sense out of one of Alma's letters? ## I've been refraining from telling you it wasn't Dick who originated "Stop the world, I want to get off", until I could tell you who did originate it. I still don't recall, but I'm pretty sure it was some Britisher about the beginning of WWII. ## For me, the symbol of the DisCon is the fannish peace march that Arnold Katz & Len Bailes tried to get going, from the con hotel to the top of the Washington Monument & back, even though I never did find out whether they brought it off or not.

RETRO #29 -- (Busby) Hoog, chopchopchopchop! Will Norm recover, I wonder? Your "Christine was here -- but not lately" quote (I presume you're talking about a non-fannish Christine) reminded me of the time 10 years ago back in junior high school when one of the guys in print class made up a banner reading "Miss America - 1955", and went running through the schoolyard waving it and howling, "The doctors of Denmark strike again!" ## The N.A.P.A. is worse.

PLEASURE UNITS #5 -- (Eklund) I'm afraid your stapler wasn't quite up to a fanzine of this size. ## I don't think you could ever call Stanbery 'obnoxious'. 'Overpowering', maybe, but never obnoxious. ## Coventry itself is the fantasy world; the "project" was to get all the Coventry fans to write good interlocking noncontradictory Coventry stories. I don't know what the Brontes called their type of fantasy world fiction, but anything as wholeheartedly planned out as Coventry was supposed to be is a "project" in my book. ## I suppose my conception of a "giant" is broader than it should be, but I picture a giant as anybody who stands out noticeably above the common mass of Mankind, generally because of some personality trait. Thus Captain Ahab's very fanaticism makes him a literary giant. Most modern literary 'heroes', such as Holden Caulfield, are and remain a part of the common mass, so I wouldn't call them giants - though I'd give some, such as Jay Gatsby, an 'E' for Effort. I wouldn't call such people as Willy Mays giants, though I admit they're a bit above the common mass; I suppose I'd have to class them in an intermediate position between the mass and the giants. Of course, it's always a lot easier to tell a literary giant: he's the fellow who stands head and heels above anybody else in the book he's in. In real life, the distinctions usually aren't nearly that clearly cut. ## The Salton Sea is only 58 years old, you know. It was formed in 1905 when the Colorado River overflowed and poured a lot of water into the bed of long-evaporated Lake Cahuilla, dissolving all sorts of mineral remains. Since then, annual rainfall and stuff has just about equalled the rate of evaporation, keeping it wet. There's an old salt mining town at the bottom; I understand you can still see where the Santa Fe's tracks disappear under the water leading to it. The Sea is currently 40 miles long, 16 miles wide, up to 34 1/2 feet deep, and quite a tourist attraction. Swimmers and speedboaters love it, and it's being stocked with fish. Come on down, and we'll look for that giant slug together. ## We must've had the same English text, then; because Benet's "By the Waters of Babylon" and Vonnegut's "Report on the Barnhouse Effect" were both in mine. ## I consider the earlier James Bond stories to be the best.

TOROIDAL TEST #1 -- (Foyster) You say Chandler isn't writing much these days, but a new novel of his just came out here a couple of months ago. Has he started writing again, or is he just getting rid of a backlog? ## The lead characters in The Grapes of Wrath are giants, though just barely. I consider them to have more gumption and drive than the common herd.

RESIN #14 -- (Hecalf) Thanks; "All Cats Are Gray" is the story I was lacking. ## I knew "The Red Hawk" came out in '25, and the film version of Things to Come came out in the late '30's, but I didn't know when the original book of Things to Come had been written; whether it postdated "Hawk" or not.