

MUCH BINDING ON THE MARSH #2 (June 1996) is an apazine by Garth Spencer, from P.O. Box 15335, V.M.P.O., Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6B 5B1 (also getatable at hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca or [604] 321-7962).

GENERAL NATTER

It's amazing, the amount of time I have spent on the Internet in the past year and a half.

I suppose it was inevitable ... I have now started a Web site. "The Incomplete Guide to Canadian SF Fandom" (<http://www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn>) includes my lists of apas, clubs, cons, and zines in Canada, plus small-press SF markets ... and, now, **my condensed Canadian fanhistory**.

A lot of recent natter in fanzines has concerned what I call lack of outreach in fanzine fandom. Maybe the best way to expose new fans to fannishness is with Web pages like this.

My next big idea is to feature selected pieces of faanfiction, just to add a certain *je ne sais quoi* to the picture of fandom thus presented. Comments? Contributions?

THE ADVENTURES OF GARTH SPENCER ACROSS THE FANDOMENSION

Garth Spencer

Part 1

To make much sense of my activities, such as the number of man-hours I spent compiling fanhistory, I have to go into an extended account of my activities and experiences. In fact I have to go back further than my entry into fandom. Believe me, it all hangs together.

In no particular order, and sometimes simultaneously, I have joined: student and amateur theatre groups; an Esperanto association; the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship; SF fandom, both as a registered member of several clubs and as a lone faneditor; the Society for Creative Anachronism, and (briefly) a writers' workshop.

With 20/20 hindsight, I can see why I was joining one or another leisure interest group, starting before I left high school. I was a loner who just got tired of being lonely and (rather less than consciously) started a program to do something about it.

1975: Pupation of a Fan

Entering university in 1975 gave me a feeling of coming in late, just after the Great Events of my generation -- already people were talking about "The Sixties" as a great

cultural watershed in our past, as far past and as geographically distant as the English Civil War. Well, in a backwater like Canada, and given the current speed of time, perhaps that made sense.

Much more on my mind, though, was my sense of entering a foreign country, something novel and nervous-making; my sense of seeking a place here, a new niche. This was hard to get clear in my mind, but in fact this was my first priority, not to seek a goal here but to carve out a new shelter. I didn't file a record of degree program until my third year.

My grade point average was never great, partly I think because at any minor faults or failures I reacted with a long spell of misery. I felt I actually *owed* it to someone to be miserable – either because I ought to punish myself or because it was the only way to placate the powers that be. Actually, though, it wasted a lot of time.

What I came to enjoy most at university, and what gave me the most benefit – perhaps this is a matter of course – were activities entirely beside the official calendar of courses. Most of all, my university years came to centre on student journalism; and here I have to draw attention to some impressions I formed from *The Martlet*, the UVic student paper.

First time I clapped eyes on this tabloid weekly, I saw a front-page story about giant moles attacking the Student Union Building. They had a three-column cover picture of the student editor standing on one of the mounds of earth, and pointing at an excavation. The gist of the story was that the big holes had to be the work of giant moles, they showed no rhyme or reason and couldn't be the work of intelligent minds.

Every so often they ran stories like that. I remember the first copy I submitted to the rag was a caption for pictures we took of the giant Mickey Mouse figure someone put up on the tower clock. I wrote, "Rumours that Disneyland is buying out the University of Victoria were confirmed this week ..." and went on from there.

This is what I took to be sophomoric humour: the sense that anything can be funny, and everything can be lampooned, at any time; nothing is to be taken seriously, and the more wit and education you marshal for your humour, the better.

Another impression I gained from my new friends was that we were all of us *past* the simple idealism many people had, in The Sixties. Dave Climenhaga, a former editor who returned from working on an Alberta paper after having a gun-running story spiked, and Ken Simons, formerly a member of a local commune, especially formed this impression. While almost all of us would probably support B.C.'s leftist party in a provincial election, we were capable of being sardonic about it.

I remember Dave Climenhaga satirizing the NDP candidates to the tune of a sea chanty: "We sailed across the deep blue sea, / Under Captain Charlie B., / On the good ship NDP, / We sailed for Admiral Davey-o. / Toe, toe, toe the line, / Toe, toe, toe the line, / Toe, toe, toe the line / Oh, toe the party line-o!" (Charlie B. was our local NDP member of the legislature; "Davey-o" was Dave Barrett, who later served as provincial premier.) He made up another ditty, cheerfully ripped off from the Monty Python "Lumberjack's Song": "Oh, I'm a socialist and I'm OK / eat raw babies every day / I kick

pregnant women in the tummy-tum-tum / And all I drink is Cuban rum!" Well, I assumed it was funny, at the time.

It was Dave Climenhaga and Ken Simons, specifically, who led the Second of January movement. (I think it was Second of January.) What it was, at this time the federated association of Canadian student newspapers was called CUP (Cdn. Universities Press), a federal conference of papers was held, and the *Martlet* delegates discovered that a faction of refugees from The Sixties was trying to take over the direction of CUP. They wanted to expand the organization a lot, perhaps not wrong in itself, but they also wanted to jack up the membership fees and adopt this really revolutionary statement of principles. Just absurd, from our delegates' viewpoint, and a few other papers agreed (including an avowedly Marxist one). So the Second of January counterrevolutionary movement was born. We had T-shirts and everything!

It gets even better. At this time (I don't know about now), one CUP printed organ was put out each year, a different paper was chosen to produce the organ, and the CUP organ was delegated to the *Martlet* this year. Ken Simons and friends titled it *Granma*, laid it out just the same as the Cuban paper, and headed the stories with titles that imitated the socialist-revolutionary style mandatory for such a paper. "Martlet Delegates Return Victorious" or some such blather surmounted a sketch of a Straits ferry chugging between the Gulf Islands.

The Martleteers were hardly the only students on campus who behaved like this. Somewhat before I entered UVic, two students named Bentley and Armour announced that Greenland was threatening Canada -- the term "cultural imperialism" was used -- and declared war. They dressed up in fatigues and set up recruiting tables in the SUB, and everything.

Some years later I ran across a quote that captured this student spirit. Perhaps unsurprisingly, I found this in *The Compleat Practical Joker*. The quotation, attributed to *Scaramouche*, runs: "He was born with the gift of laughter and the sense that the world is mad."

When I later ran across the term "fannish", I surmised that this must be the same spirit.

Canadian Fandom

Some of the Great Events of Canadian fandom also predated my stumbling upon them. The outline seems to be that the largest collections of fans showed up where there was the highest concentration of population in the first place, southern Ontario (notably Toronto), followed after a pause by Vancouver. Toronto fanhistory, I now realize, extends back to the misty dawn of fandom itself, but the "current" generation of fans went back to the founding of the Ontario SF Club (OSFiC) in 1966. From this sprang a number of famous fans and zines, Fan Faire 1 and 2, and the second Toronto Worldcon, Torcon II, in 1973. BCSFA, the Vancouver club, was founded in 1969 as a student club at the University of British Columbia. Torcon II seemed to have had some bearing on the beginnings of a recognizable Quebec fandom. (Which is odd; Montreal and Quebec have been around since before there was a United States. There must be a story behind this.) Other Canadian

fan groups, such as Decadent Winnipeg Fandom and the large, influential ESFCAS group in Edmonton, seem mostly to have sprung up in the mid-1970s.

It was years before I heard of Vancouver's first Westercon, in 1977. Westercon 30 received mixed reviews, but it was followed in the next year or two by a whole crop of new conventions springing up, in both the Canadian and American Northwest: Orycon in Portland, Norwescon in Seattle, Spokon and Moscon, and NonCon in Edmonton. It is established that Edmonton fans went around at this Westercon taking notes, which had some bearing on how NonCon was set up. I infer that this Westercon at least gave other Northwest fans the idea of starting their own annual event.

Mostly, this "generation" of Canadian fans modelled their image of fandom on fanzine, or fannish fandom -- a leisure community far more centred on enjoying fandom itself, as an alternate family or lighthearted activity, than as either a serious and constructive writing-centred project, or a TV-centred pastime. As I see it now, fans of this generation either wouldn't, or couldn't, quite express their common understandings and expectations. At any rate they couldn't get them across to the swelling ranks of Star Trek and Star Wars fans. But they certainly conveyed their frustration and deprecation for these neos.

1979

SFAV in the late 70's (when I joined up) was a group of 20, maybe 30 fans, ranging from high-school to college age, who held small, informal meetings (10 to 12 people on the average) in members' homes. They barely had any visible activities until *Up the Tubes* was published in June and July of 1978 (edited by Stan Hyde, and basically a solo effort). A piece on Torcon 2 (1973), by Murray Greig, was originally scheduled for *Up the Tubes*, but later appeared in a Victoria paper. (Murray Greig has since become a sportswriter.)

At this point I don't think I, or most other members, had heard much about out-of-town fandom. It was there, but ungetatable, and we didn't hear of Susan Wood, the Derelicts, the famous fanzines of yesteryear or the current Worldcon bid politics. My first inklings came when I pored over all the trade zines in our club library, and tried to get others interested.

SFAV's first zine folded after two issues. For the next ten years, SFAV never topped a total attendance of about 50, and often less. Attendance at meetings usually ran to 6 to 12 people.

By the late 70's, SFAV, its daughter club (UVicSFA) at the University, and the UFCST held summer shopping-mall displays, fall Open Houses, joint dinners and parties and some joint charitable events for a local telethon. Individual activities included SFX amateur films, modelling, writing, drawing, collecting of SF publications; club activities included dances, beach parties, field trips and picnics, swimming, potluck dinners, and attending SF/F film premieres with the other clubs. Dues were \$8/yr, and gave one a membership card, fanzine subscription, and discounts at some local stores.

One Cat Middlemiss was briefly a member of SFAV, until he had some kind of falling-out with Paul Delaney. Cat started what he called the "United Federation of Canadian Star Trekkers", a year later than SFAV arose, and was president until the day he walked off with much of the UFCST's library and possessions. Bernie Klassen wrote in 1985 that this group was forced to set a lower age limit at 16.

Lloyd Penney adds:

In August 1977, I moved from Orillia, Ontario to Victoria, and soon saw a notice of a Trek club starting up. This was the United Federation of Canadian Star Trekkers, founded by Cat Middlemiss, Dan Cawsey, and Tony Sine. I was one of their first members, and for a while we had a great time partying, gathering for workshops, working on various projects, and staging mall displays and shows. There were plans to get to at least one V-Con, usually foiled for lack of money. The club suddenly found that Cat and his wife Lois had disappeared, absconding with most of the club's possessions and its treasury, which had several hundred dollars in it. Lois had some medical problems, and Cat was a struggling artist with a slick tongue, so we weren't too surprised to find them and the money gone. The club staggered on anyway. We later discovered that Cat was no artist at all, but was claiming the products of his younger brother as his own. However, those days of finding out about fandom were amongst the happiest of my life. I finally had some friends with a common interest, like Cat, Dan, Tony, Joanne van Heteren, Stephanie Lightbody, Pat Kilner, Paul Delaney, and Lynne Fonseca. Paul was at one time the second-in-command of both the UFCST and SFAV.

(*Opuntia* #19, May 1994)

When I joined SFAV, about 1979, the Victoria fan groups seemed to be joined by a sort of collegiality; there may have been no more than 50 or so members in all the clubs together, many members held dual memberships, and several executives, I believe, even served in more than one club at once. Things looked different, and more divisive, to Bernie Klassen.

When I arrived in town in 1980 (Bernie Klassen later wrote), sheer chance dictated that I got involved with the ST group instead of with SFAV (of which I had no knowledge until some months later). The UFCST numbered something like 25 or 30 members and SFAV was about 10 or 15 higher in population. By this point there was a certain amount of cross-over between the two groups; mostly in the person of Paul Delaney and his wife Lynne Fonseca. Paul had been instrumental in bringing Greg Benford to Victoria, and was probably the most active non-fanzine fan Victoria has ever produced (although Paul was also active in SFAV's *From the Ashes* and *Phoenix*). Paul had the ability to coalesce about himself much of the loose fannish energy that was about at the time. In 1980, Paul, Bev Cooke, and a

few others rounded UVicSFA, the University of Victoria SF Association. This group was formed mainly in order to gain access to the university facilities, with an eye towards a convention.

(from Klassen, *The Central Ganglion*, Dec. 1985)

The UFCST

Karl Johanson joined the UFCST in 1979, on seeing a Star Trek mall display (advertised on the radio). Thus entered the Johanson Clan, including Karl, his sister Paula, and by extension Bernie Klassen, Bev Cooke and Al Hargreaves. The Johansons (*mère, père* and their children) were the kind of family who sort of adopt everyone else.

In 1979, when Karl Johanson joined the UFCST, the club had 30 - 50 members (25 - 30 by Bernie Klassen's estimate, as of 1980). Karl writes that he participated in quite a number of UFCST activities with Bernie (*e.g.* editing *Trekkada*) and graphic artist Dan Cawsey (*e.g.* almost finishing a float for the Victoria Day Parade), and the whole "Johanson Clan" that soon formed (*e.g., inter alia*, the making of *Dawn of the Living Socks*). The Johanson siblings, their spouses and their friends comprised what became the "Old Guard" in Victoria fandom.

... in (SFAV's) desperate search to discover what a science fiction club was *supposed to do*, the fanzine was again suggested as a way of giving the club direction ...

By this time, two attempts at clubzines had gone *down the tubes*, so to speak. In 1978, a group of active fans had joined the club ... among them were Gary Harper, Dixie Sackett, Garth Spencer, David Thomson and Paul Delaney. As well, long-time members of the club, like Lynne Fonseca, Linda Thompson, Geoffrey Edwards, and myself were anxious to do more than just get together for movies, cons, and meetings.

(Stan Hyde, "Up the Tube?", Aug. 1983)

In 1979, the memory of *Up the Tubes*, plus a summer surge in membership, catalyzed a new zine: *From the Ashes*, a monthly dittoed newsletter, and FTA was followed in November by *Phoenix*, a more genzine-style quarterly (also dittoed at the University of Victoria). Gary Harper edited both SFAV zines until the end of 1980; Paul Delaney, the fannish dynamo from Australia, took them over in February 1981. A new four-member executive took over FTA in May, while Dave Thomson edited *Phoenix*.

Another activity, in 1980, was a telephone/radio interview, arranged with Jack Williamson, Michael Coney (from Sidney, up north on the Island), Julian Reid of Victoria, and Joe (*The Forever War*) Haldeman.

After Paul Delaney joined SFAV and the local Star Trek club, SFAV became as active as it ever did, became something more than a social club with an SF focus. Delaney became an important local organizer, the moving force behind the zines, the regular

events, and the liaison with the convalescent children at the Queen Alexandra Solarium. He was probably the driving force behind Victoria's two minicons.

Delaney told me in the winter of 84-85 that the executive at this time tried to act as a rudder, more than anything; taking care of business, managing the club account and setting meeting times; and they sought to accomplish the club's functions without overstructuring it. (The UFCST had reacted to the Middlemiss incident by trying to set up a constitution safeguarding against EVERYTHING, which effectively strangled the young club.) SFAV, on the other hand, seemed to go to the opposite extreme.

About this time, I had read somewhere that most offices or nonprofit enterprises seem to depend on one overworked person (often a feisty, type A personality woman) to accomplish most things. I had seen this in action at *The Martlet*, the student paper at UVic. Later, I thought Paul Delaney was the active, overworked person who got things done in SFAV. So much was *à droite*. *A gauche*, he seemed to take responsibility for *all* of SFAV's initiatives. Other members then apparently became dependent on him, both to think up activities and carry them out. At any rate, they went along with his proposals.

Although SFAV members were encouraged to participate in activities, generally they didn't. It appeared to me that Paul could not *delegate* effectively; either that, or else other SFAVians were *not* really into organized activities ... such as hosting a radio-telephone SF discussion on CJVI, between Jack Williamson, Michael Coney and Joe Haldeman.

Our First Con

It was sometime in 1980 or 1981 that UVicSFA (SFAV's daughter club at the University of Victoria) was founded, by Bev Cooke and Wendy Hourston, with at least the encouragement of Paul Delaney. Almost immediately, UVicSFA became involved in Fair-Isle, Victoria's first convention.

Victoria's first one-day minicon was held at the University of Victoria's Student Union Building on March 14, 1981. At that time, this two-story structure had some largish meeting rooms available (since converted to new executive offices). SFAV and UVicSFA held "Fair-Isle" one Sunday, and featured F.M. Busby, Gregory Benford, and Michael Coney, and attracted some 475 people. There was a modest but sufficient program, featuring SF films, games, an SF writing workshop, a huckster's room, a group author's interview, and a trivia quiz.

As recently as 1995 I discovered several notecards among my papers, detailing what these student clubs did to prepare for their one-day con ^¾ holding cookie sales and coffee-houses for fundraising; holding mall displays, going to local talk-show hosts and public-access TV for publicity. This has to tell you what level of resources we were working with.

The local fan community arranged for Gregory Benford to speak on a phone-in show on a local radio station, the night before Fair-Isle. Unfortunately the phone-in show paired up Benford with a "white witch", forbye, that being Friday the 13th. "The Fair-Isle concomm weren't thrilled", Rebecca Reeves writes, "but Dr. Benford actually took it very well, much to his credit."

Fair-Isle was a success, attracting over 400 members (many of them first-timers to such activities), made a fair profit, and brought together SFAV and the UFCST for the first time to work on a common profit project. The following summer, Paul and Lynne left for Pinawa, Manitoba, and UVicSFA and the UFCST joined forces to produce a second convention.

(Bernie Klassen)

Both clubs made over \$500 each. The reception was generally favourable, with only a few sour notes ^¾ the con was held within a few weeks of Rain (Vancouver's relaxicon), and *BCSFazine* #94 "condemned" Fair-Isle for not having an alcoholic consuite.

(The BCSFAns somehow hadn't registered the fact that no consuite was advertised, and a number of SFAVians were minors. Rebecca Reeves, among others, wanted to make it clear that minors were welcome ^¾ and safe ^¾ in SFAV. The reason *why* SFAV had to be open to minors, when these members sort of drifted away, *never came out in words.*)

With the profits from Fair-Isle, SFAV bought a duplicator; a ditto machine, costing \$150. Bernie Klassen has since indicated that he got his first mimeograph, about this time, for about \$90. Rebecca maintained that "Xeroxing turned out to be too expensive, and a Gestetner system would have been too messy and too big for storage", and at the time, \$150 was the best price in town for a ditto; so, "considering the almost non-existent participation in zines on the part of the current SFAV membership ... I think it was for the best."

(in *From the Ashes* April '81,
and correspondence to EB Klassen, Jan. 1986)

The club went along with it, as they did with everything.

Although use of the machine was offered to the other clubs, as far as I knew up until 1985, only I took up SFAV on the offer. In this way I turned out *Scuttlebutt*, my first perzine, until the Reeves gave up custody of the ditto machine and I sort of inherited it. Bernie Klassen later wrote how the UFCST got a copy of their zine done by ditto and were very unenthusiased by the results.

Rebecca Reeves wrote later that during her executive's participation in SFAV, "we had quite an extensive trade network built up with numerous zines across North America. There was even one in Australia ... We did everything possible to encourage this. It was shortly thereafter that those remaining with the club decided they really didn't

care for trading ... or for producing a zine, for that matter." Victoria has never been a great fanpubbing centre, before or since, until the mid-80's when I went crazy.

The UFCST promptly arranged for some forty pages of their fanzine, *Trekkada*, to be printed in this manner. The Reeves sisters, who did the printing, ended up with an almost terminal case of Twonk's disease. Never again was SFAV to offer such printing services. After viewing the results, never again was the UFCST to ask them to. Sourness filled many mouths.

Trekkada, the fanzine produced by the UFCST, came out first in '78, and has come out every year or two since. That is perhaps a bit unfair. There have been two years with two issues produced in them. *Trekkada* was very much in the ST fanfic genre, and never really achieved its full potential as a fanzine ^¾ though it did often contain some fine in-jokes and satires.

Also from the UFCST was a version of FTA called *Stardate*. In its original conception, it was to be a monthly newsletter for the club, listing upcoming events and such. Under the editorship of David Gordon-MacDonald, it became anything but frequent, and began running a serial, stories, bad puns, worse cartoons, newspaper clippings, and very little in the way of club news. Never very distinguished, *Stardate* ran seven issues and quietly folded.

The only other fanzine around at the time was Garth Spencer's "exterior to frame of reference" humour [zine] *Scuttlebutt*. Also called *The Black Marxist Lesbian Quarterly*, *The Perfect Paper*, etc., *Scuttlebutt* ran news and views mostly of interest to Discordians and conspiracy freaks. Not a bad fanzine, just one that was rather opaque (to non-Discordians and non-conspiracy freaks). *Scuttlebutt* was simply and cleanly laid out, and for lack of art, Garth discovered the copyright-free illustrations books at the local library. It became interesting to see 18th century woodcuts surrounded by bizarro text or titles.

Garth eventually folded *Scuttlebutt* for lack of response and \$\$, and went on to produce *The Central Ganglion* along with yours truly and Paula Johanson. TCG was an inter-club newsletter with a revolving editorship ^¾ which may read better than it actually functioned. The editing worked quite well, even surviving Paula and I moving to Edmonton for a mercifully brief while. But as a zine designed to break down the years of conditioning keeping the clubs in town apart, TCG did not fare so well.

(Bernie Klassen, TCG, Dec. 1985)

In April 1981 the former executive (Gary Harper, Paul Delaney, and Lynne Fonseca) were replaced by a new executive (Rebecca and Barbara Reeves, Kris Snyder, and Dave Thomson), known as the Gang of Four. Largely at Rebecca's insistence, the meetings became more formal, or she tried to make them so. One gathers that it didn't work (then or later).

Some of the best times I had in SFAV, from around this period onwards, were *after* the meetings, when a gang of us would repair to a glorified hamburger house, and chew the fat. (Metaphorically speaking, that is.) Dixie Sackett, the shapely and married heart-throb of the club, Douglas "Mac" MacInnes, the role model for the Mackenzie Brothers, Paul Fryer, who only talked at meetings while somebody else was talking, and Don Carruthers would pile into each other's cars and go to the Lettuce Patch; so would I, trailing a pile of fanzines I brought along to play Show'n'Tell with, trying to carry on a conversation the while. Although invited, the Reeves sisters never showed up at these gatherings. I think now they missed something.

A Bit of Confusion

That summer, Rebecca insisted on something which meant changing the name for the next minicon. The 1982 con was to be held by UVicSFA and the UFCST, but not officially by SFAV (although naturally SFAV members were involved). Rebecca got SFAV and UVicSFA to draw up an agreement that the name "Fair-Isle" only be used on cons they *both* held.

No-one knew a reason for this. Several years later, I learned the reason $\frac{3}{4}$ Rebecca had been listening to a lawyer. The lawyer, whoever he was, listened to her concerns that SFAV would somehow be held responsible for anything called "Fair-Isle II", and he kept talking about the kinds of things that could go wrong financially and how SFAV executives could be held personally liable for the debts incurred.

Rebecca's way of getting SFAV and UVicSFA to sign an agreement would have made sense, if she was overcoming some resistance; but at the meeting, she met none.

The second convention had some problems in the beginning. First, for lack of anything better, it was being referred to as "Fair-Isle 2". SFAV, who had been asked to participate in the planning and running of this con, but had declined, were a bit milled at the choice of name. "Change the effing name or we'll do Something Nasty to you!" was roughly the way it was put to members of the concom. The members of the concom were shocked, yes, shocked and appalled! at this turn of events. Fair-Isle 2 had only been a name of convenience, and there was, in fact, a sizable segment of the concom agitating to change it. SFAV felt, however, that they had propiterial (*sp?*) rights to the name, and that it was only to be applied to conventions jointly sponsored by themselves.

(Bernie Klassen, TCG, Dec. 1985)

Notice that neither the lawyer nor Rebecca thought of ways and means to *prevent* damaging financial losses. Such as the (normal and conventional) measure of *setting up a non-profit society*, with the limited-liability protection of a corporation, under the provincial Society Act.

What we had here, I think, was a case of no communication. (As usual.) Merely because it's no-one's particular job to pass on good ideas, bad ideas took over.

In October Rebecca resigned from the executive, saying she had tried to lead SFAV in a direction in which the members apparently did not want to go $\frac{3}{4}$ i.e., getting more active, and more organized with it. Barbara soon left too. At that point Douglas "Mac" MacInnes became president.

Rebecca wrote Bernie later that one of the reasons why she segregated herself from SFAV was the rampant misinformation that flies around. I still don't think she communicated effectively with SFAV ... but then, neither did SFAV with her. Someone's got to take the first step, and I guess usually no-one does.

(to be continued)

Also presented for your consideration (and comment ...)

TORONTO FANHISTORY

Garth Spencer

(Part 1)

(Presented for your comments and corrections)

The Setting

Toronto is situated in southeastern Ontario, which is part of the most population-dense parts of Canada. This may explain why more fans appeared earlier in these parts $\frac{3}{4}$ particularly in Toronto $\frac{3}{4}$ than anywhere else in Canada. I suggest it also explains why most of the classic fannish experiences happened earlier in Toronto the Good: finding other fans to share SF with, forming a club, starting fanzines, starting cons, falling into feuding, the burnout and the gafiation, and the rise of different - either mutually alienated, or mutually oblivious - independent subfandoms.

For later reference, Toronto is 399 km away from Ottawa, 369 km away from Windsor, and 2099 km away from Winnipeg, and 1788 km away from Halifax. I have no figures on the distance to London or Kitchener. This may help to explain why Canadian fan groups tend to be independent fan groups, with glancing and occasional mutual contacts.

Like Ottawa, Vancouver and other population centres, Toronto has some suburbs which go by their own names on mailing addresses: Mississauga, Yorkdale, and Scarborough, for example. This should help explain references to municipalities other than "Toronto" in what follows.

The Early 1940s

Several individual fans appeared in southern Ontario in the early 1940s. Fred Hurter Jr. started publishing *Rocket* (later *Censored*) in 1941, while at school at St. Andrews College for Boys, in Aurora, Ontario. (The zine was retitled because *Rocket* was already used by Walter H. Daugherty, later famous for defining "Daugherty projects" by example - anything just a bit unfeasible and unattainable.) In 1942 Hurter conceived of the "Canadian Amateur Fan Press" and formed it with two other fans. Apparently this simply consisted of a notice on covers or in the colophon of three member fanzines: *Censored*, *Light* and *Canadian Fandom*, probably in that order.

Les Croutch, a well-known Ontario fan from the 40s through the 60s, published a regular perzine (*Light*) from his home in Parry Sound. This developed in 1938 out of a magazine-swapping newsletter he started. Les Croutch produced what might be a standard personalzine of the day ... which could mean staid, unimaginative layout, at least as Taral Wayne describes it. *Light* appeared in some of the 1940's mailings of the Fantasy Amateur Publication Association. Les Croutch also appeared in some of the early executive committees of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. Bob Gibson and John Cockcroft were doing on-stencil covers and illustrations for *Light* by 1944.

Canadian Fandom, a general-interest fanzine with a fifteen-year publishing run, was founded by Joseph "Beak" Taylor as *Eight-Ball* sometime in 1943. Nils Helmer Frome, corresponding from B.C., contributed illustrations to *Canadian Fandom*, and so did Al Betts of Kapuskasing, between 1941 and 1948. Beak Taylor and Ned McKeown were both involved in producing *Canadian Fandom*, a Canadian fanzine of the 40's and 50's. CF periodically changed editors and publishers, but tended to stay within the same circle of fans.

I have two issues of *Canadian Fandom* in my possession. These look like average, fairly well-produced genzines, a bit slim by comparison to later embigged genzines. The contents $\frac{3}{4}$ letters, articles, hand-drawn illos, some reviews $\frac{3}{4}$ do not support the impression that this was a major newszine at the time.

Patrick Nielsen Hayden wrote to Robert Runté about his copies of *Canadian Fandom*, after sending photocopies:

They're odd fanzines. Juvenile as hell, and yet, oddly well-done for their time. One thing the Xeroxing doesn't do justice to is the strange technique of on-stencil art and decoration used throughout them; whoever did it achieved a facility with halftones, using narrow wheel stylii, that I've never seen matched. There are a few interesting things scattered throughout; a symposium on the then-new MAD EC comic, some early efforts from P. Howard Lyons, profiles of such luminaries as Boyd Raeburn and Ger Stewart; reports on the early Midwestcons; and a page of drawings of attendees at an early 50s London convention that includes one Walt Willis and "Mrs. Walt Willis".

(*New Canadian Fandom* #1, April-May 1981)

Fred Hurter moved to Montreal by 1946, when the McGill/Montreal SF Society formed and adopted his zine *Censored*. Bob Gibson moved from Kapuskasing that year; he gaffiated before 1948. The last *Censored* came out of Montreal in 1948. Ned McKeown published a couple of issues of CF, one in 1949 and one in 1951.

In 1947, the year flyer saucer sightings were first announced, a Toronto fan group formed later known as the "Derelicts". Some of the Canadians who showed up at the 1947 Philcon ¾ Beak Taylor, Ned McKeown, and John L. Millard ¾ were later members of Toronto's Derelicts club.

The last time Betts' and Frome's art appeared in *Canadian Fandom* was 1948. Joe Doherty and Don Hutchinson in Toronto published two issues of *Macabre* this year, featuring their own art.

Early Genre Publishing in Canada

During the Second World War, Canada and Australia imposed import bans on pulp magazines. Unlike Australia, it was permitted in Canada to obtain paper stocks to start new domestic magazines, so Canadian editions appeared of *Weird Tales*, *Astonishing Stories*, and *Science Fiction*. This phenomenon ceased when the import ban was lifted and the U.S. editions were available again.

The Canadian SF Association

In the 1940s and 50s, a Canadian Conservative party organizer, Jack Bowie-Reed, took the trouble to place ads in local papers, wherever he went, and organize local SF readers into SF clubs. Eventually these clubs formed a short-lived national association.

In 1948 the Canadian SF Association was constituted by three or so member clubs, in Toronto, Hamilton and Montreal. New clubs appeared in Deseronto, Halifax, Ottawa, and Thames (London, Ontario), evidently in the wake of Jack Bowie-Reed, a Conservative Party organizer who was also an SF fan. Rules of the CSFA were: each constituent club had one vote to elect an executive; any three SF or fantasy fans could join, and have membership privileges, but not the vote. (This was to avoid a scattered and lazy executive, and to substitute a centralized executive.) The Hamilton club formed the first executive, and elected one Paul Revey. They issued circulars, established outlying correspondence, and used Torcon (Worldcon 6) to attract interest.

(Jack Bowie-Reed, "History of the CSFA"
in *Fan to See*, Jan. 1953, et al.)

The First Canadian Worldcon

Torcon was held July 3-5, 1948 at the Rai Purdy Studios convention hall in Toronto, which has since been torn down. Ned McKeown chaired and Don Hutchinson and John Millard worked on Torcon; Guest of Honour was Robert Bloch, and Fan Guest of Honour was Bob Tucker. Attendance was something under 200.

As Harry Warner reports in *All Our Yesterdays*, this was the last Torcon held over the American Independence Day weekend, the first in a foreign country, and (unusual among Worldcon sites) fans in Toronto "were neither numerous nor particularly active".

... the fans were housed in the Prince George Hotel, the Windsor Arms, and the King Edward. The Prince George was apparently an ultramodern, glass-doored establishment with pastel and chrome decorations in its giant lobby. ... the King Edward was better-liked, particularly for the phenomenal quality of its roast beef. ...

Reaction to the Torcon was quite mixed. Those who like to chatter and socialize without adulterants in the form of filthy pros were happy for the last time in worldcon history: not more than a half-dozen genuine pros were on hand. Some said that humour formed the predominant note of the whole event.

(Harry Warner Jr., *All Our Yesterdays*)

Aftermath

According to Taral Wayne, fandom in Toronto became dormant after the Torcon, apart from Bill Grant and Les Croutch. A "Torcon memory book" was produced after the con, Beak Taylor handed over *Can Fan* to McKeown, who produced two issues in the next three years, and the "Derelicts" group ceased to exist in 1949.

End of the CSFA

The CSFA had 10 member clubs in 1949, a newsletter and various projects underway. Clare Richards was replaced by Paul Revey. Fans moved around. Hamilton declined to be the CSFA administration, but continued as such anyway by default, up to 1950. The Windsor SF Society was formed, and made contacts in the West.

In 1950, the CSFA newsletter folded. Deseronto, Hamilton, Halifax and London clubs all folded. The Windsor club joined the Michigan Science Fantasy Society. Later in 1950, the Winnipeg SF Society was formed, and tried to revive the CSFA. Ottawa declined to administer the CSFA in 1951.

A Fantasy Clarification System was published in 1952 in St. Vital (Winnipeg), apparently under CSFA auspices. This is approximately the date of publication of the CSFA directory, although I have a note that the means for further CSFA projects were exhausted.

In Jan. 1953 Jack Bowie-Reed published "History of the CSFA" in *Fan to See*, from St. Louis (Larry Touzinsky ed.). The CSFA (as documented elsewhere) eventually dried up and blew away; one fan (Chester Cuthbert, in Winnipeg) preserved his club's library for a future fan generation.

Toronto Fandom in the 50s

Harry Warner Jr. and Taral Wayne both indicate that there were few fans and little fanac in Canada through the 50s; Warner further says the cast of characters changed almost completely, and there was little growth. He attributes this mainly to the low and widely scattered population of Canada, plus the wartime import bans on U.S. pulp magazines, "the normal recruiting grounds for new fans.

The situation was further complicated by the accident that most Canadian fans were either all-out for the fannish attitude or sercon to an extreme, creating still more separation among the nation's fans in an idealistic sense.

The sercon-minded fans seem to have been attracted mainly to the Canadian Science Fiction Association, which had formed in 1948 and started to ail in 1953 or thereabouts. Its members were reputed to buy all the prozines and hardcover science fiction they could afford, took a great interest in scientific possibilities, discussed science fiction itself endlessly, but displayed little interest in such forms of fanac as fanzines and conventions.

(Harry Warner Jr., *A Wealth of Fable*, 1976 & 1992, p. 278)

Warner contrasts this type of fan to the fannish Vancouver Science Fiction Society started by Norman G. Browne, editor of the bulky fanzine *Vanations*.

The Toronto Derelicts

A new group of fans appeared in Toronto after the Torcon, notably Gerald Stewart, who assumed *Can Fan* editorship in 1951, as well as publishing a zine called *Gasp*; his friends P. Howard Lyons and Ken Hall; Boyd Raeburn, and Ron Kidder. In 1954 Lyons started publishing *Ibid*, and Raeburn started *A Bas*. Although "sercon" material such as articles on Merritt and Lovecraft appeared in *Can Fan*, these fans and fanzines were on the "fannish" end of the spectrum. A fan suffering an excess of sercon-ness accused this new group of only being interested in jazz, sports cars, and fandom for fandom's sake, instead of SF.

(Gary Farber, e-mail correspondence, Dec. 95)

In 1953, William Grant did most CF covers, with the next changeover of *Canadian Fandom* editorship. Grant took over editing *Canadian Fandom* in 1954. 1957 was the 15th anniversary of *Canadian Fandom*, which ran a two-page fanhistory. The last *Canadian Fandom* was published in October 1958.

Gina "Dutch" Ellis and Norm Clarke

From 1956 to the early 60's, Georgina Ellis of Calgary (formerly a CF correspondent) edited a fanzine, *Wendigo*, and traded writings and drawings with Harry Calnek, of Granville Ferry, N.S. In the early 60's, she moved to Ottawa and became Mrs. Norm Clarke. The Clarkes were co-editing a zine (*Descant*) in 1967.

Norm's personalzine or FAPazine, around 1965, was titled *Honque*. Both Clarkes and Boyd Raeburn frequently appeared in another zine, *Queebshots*, spiced with Norm Clarke's acerbic humour. Gina Ellis appeared frequently in some apas, including A Women's Apa, through the 70s and is still be a member.

Toronto Fandom in the 60s

On the basis of such documents as I have collected it seems there was still rather little fanac in Toronto, indeed in Canada, through the early 1960s. Apart from the well-known Clarkes, there was Les Nirenberg, and Paul Wyszowski's zine, *Differential*. Les

Nirenberg's zine *Que Pasado* turned into a newsstand humour magazine called *Panic Button*, a semipro humour mag in Toronto, which last appeared in 1964. (Later that year Nirenberg transmogrified the magazine into "The Panic Button Review", a comedy nightclub act in Toronto, which received good reviews from the Toronto *Telegram*.) Most fans gafiated; *Differential* folded in 1966.

The Famous OSFiC

We can credit Tricon, the 1966 Worldcon, with the next generation of Canadian fans. Mike Glicksohn, a long-haired high school teacher, read about the convention in *Famous Monsters of Filmland* and decided to go. There he met Peter Gill and discovered his fellow fan also came from Toronto. Once back home they talked with others they knew, and founded the Ontario SF Club, meeting at first in "Capt'n George" Henderson's "Memory Lane" second-hand shop.

Bookstore owner "Capt'n George" Henderson

is little known in SF fandom, but left his imprint on Toronto fandom by helping to found the Ontario Science Fiction Club, his help on FanFair I, and numerous acts of benevolence. Capt'n George ran a junky place selling comics, pulps, and movie memorabilia, called Memory Lane. It was headquarters of George's Vast Whizzbang Organization, editorial offices of *The Penny Dreadful* and *The Yellow Journal*, and site of many OSFiC meetings in early days.

(Taral Wayne, "Same As It Ever Was", *New Canadian Fandom* #5)

In the next year, Taral writes, OSFiC grew from 4 to 40 members, and gained a branch in Ottawa. Meetings moved around a lot, going from Memory Lane to members' homes to the Canadian Welding Society to churches to the Spaced Out Library, after it was founded in 1980, and in 1981 meeting at Hart House. Newsletter editors changed frequently, too. Early leaders included Peter Gill, Mike Glicksohn, Ken Smookler, John Mansfield and George Henderson; other members included Derek Carter, from England; Gar Stevens; John Douglas; Gordon van Toen; Rosemary Ullyot, and Angus Taylor.

The release of *2001* in 1967 stirred interest in SF, and a number of other Canadian SF clubs formed. Some were transitory (one in Halifax, something called ACUSFOOS in Ottawa), and some lasted (mainly BCSFA in Vancouver). OSFiC arranged a meeting with the Queen's University (Kingston) group (called "Kingcon").

New Faces, New Titles

Don Hutchinson reappeared in 1967 and contributed some reviews to zines by OSFiC members and Capt'n George.

About 1968, artists Alicia Austin (then a college student from Texas) and Derek Carter were living in Toronto. Austin worked on two issues of one zine, *Kevas & Trillium*, with one Rosemary Ullyot. OSFiC started doing a fairly regular zine, featuring art by Paul Doherty (Toronto), Dave Price, and Vaughn Fraser (who was then studying at York University).

Alicia Austin left Canada for L.A. in 1970. She received the fanart Hugo in 1971, for work done mostly in her Canadian period.

From 1968 on, OSFiC members published the *OSFiC Magazine*, later retitled the *OSFiC Supplement*, the *OSFiC Quarterly*, and *OSFiComm*. *OSFiC Magazine* (as edited by Peter Wood) was "almost annual". It was succeeded by *OSFiComm*, which Gar Stevens edited for a year. Gordon van Toen then edited it for three years. *OSFiComm* became undependable by 1973.

The First OSFiC Con

"Fan Fair I" was held July 29 to Aug. 1, 1968, in tents, in Markham Street Village in Toronto. Guest of Honour was Roger Zelazny. R. Graeme Cameron, now living in Vancouver, reports that this event was sponsored by OSFiC, Memory Lane Bookstore, the Canadian Academy of Comic Book Collectors and the Markham Village Film Club. Markham Street Village at the time was a student-artist district; the cover of the admission "passport" showed "a three-headed dragon chasing hippies and beatnik artists through the streets, art canvases flying in all directions. ...

I also still have the three-fold single-sheet program book. Among info provided: Roger Zelazny was sponsored by OSFiC, Stan Lee (Marvel Comics) by the Canadian Academy of Comic Book Collectors, and Canadian comic artists Mauro Martini, Vincent Marchesband and Derek Carter by Memory Lane Bookstore.

The bulk of events took place in Poor Edwards Garden, which I remember as a large patio-like affair of pink and white tiles hidden behind a row of houses and approached by an I-shaped lane about 50 feet long that was too narrow for more than one person at a time. Talk about crowd control! PEG was filled with booths and tables. I do not remember tents, but there may have been some.

Most film showings took place in the Markham Street Village Town Hall and in Poor Alex Theatre, and both the Adams & Yves Art Gallery and the Pollock Gallery exhibited comic book art.

Among events: Zelazny, Stan Lee and Phyllis Gotlieb debated the movie *2001*, slides of past Worldcons were shown, and there were retrospective talks on Tarzan, the history of Pictorial SF, and adult comics. But the dominant activities were the passive displays and the film showings. Among the displays: The Star Trek Corner *exhibit devoted to the Star Trek Program and its cast* in PEG.

(Graeme Cameron, online correspondence, Aug. 1995)

She Came from Carleton University

Richard Labonté introduced Susan Wood to fandom at some point while they were students at Carleton University, in Ottawa. Susan Wood and Mike Glicksohn met at Boskone IV in 1969, and married in 1970. That year, Glicksohn and Wood started working

together on his zine, *Energumen*; together they made this one of the top fanzines of the decade. Susan Wood was also publishing her own zine, *Aspidistra*.

... they notably paid major attention to graphics, mimeography, art, and appearance, as well as text. Really, Mike was one of *the* leaders of this movement in fanzines, which was one of the Biggest Trends in fanzines in the late Sixties ... he helped challenge and inspire other Graphics Leaders such as Bill Bowers and Alpajpuri (Paul Novitski) amongst others. This became a genuinely self-conscious Movement for some. *Energumen* was on 24-lb heavy bond, yellow or blue, and with an impeccable appearance that became positively intimidating towards the end.

(Gary Farber, e-mail correspondence, Dec. 1995)

In 1969 Labonté folded his fanzine, *Hugin & Munin*. A journalist and columnist for the *Ottawa Citizen* in mundane life, he gave up his position to help found A DIFFERENT LIGHT in San Francisco, "one of the most important gay bookstores and enterprises in the world."

(Gary Farber, e-mail correspondence, Aug. & Dec. 1995)

(to be continued)

Addendum:

Susan Wood has since become what I might call an "index fan": that is, it astonishes some fans repeatedly when other fans have never heard of her. It doesn't astonish me at all. It merely signifies, to me, the distinction between fans from a time and a milieu in which she was crucial, and fans from a more recent time, a much larger (and more impersonal) milieu, in which her name never comes up.

To take just one way she touched fandom: writing fanzine reviews for a professional SF magazine. Now, I was in fandom several years before I ever heard there **was** such column, once. (Which helps explain why fanzine fandom ceased to be the paradigm for fandom as a whole.) The closest thing we have now, to provide exposure for fanzines, are the reviews in *Factsheet 5*, or John Labovitz's on-line zine lists. Whether these lead new people into "our" fanzine fandom I leave as an exercise for the reader.

MAILING COMMENTS

To Faye Manning: I was going to ask "What is the 'Scientifiction' variety of fanhistory? What do you mean by 'commission' this stuff?", but you more or less answered that, after your Official Rules section.

My own idea of fanhistory wobbles between the social and the purely practical. On the one hand, and I think this will surface repeatedly in my personal fanhistory, there seems to be a body of things fans need to know ... are expected or assumed to know ... are supposed to learn, by oral history, soon after they enter as neos. My experience, however, is that "common knowledge" is no more common than common sense, or common

courtesy; neither is the effort commonly volunteered to pass on oral history. (Hence Susan Wood quickly became unknown to incoming fen.) One of the things that maintains a community is their common knowledge; making an information base available on a Web page is a somewhat forlorn attempt to contribute to that common knowledge.

The practical side of fanhistory, as I've said *ad nauseam* (remember, Graeme?), is that somehow, some notes have to be taken on what kinds of fan activity work, and what kinds don't. This doesn't mean only convention-running policies, but I grant you that's the largest contemporary sub-interest in which fans are active, with the possible exceptions of gaming, costuming and filking.

To Leah Zeldes Smith: "Never Throw Anything Away"? Yeah, in an ideal world (from an archivist's viewpoint). The practical problem, as P.K. Dick pointed out, is that **kipple breeds**. Remember George Carlin's routine, "A Place for Your Stuff"?

Chester Cuthbert, as I understand it, "inherited" the library of the Winnipeg SF Society in the 1950s, when it sort of folded up. And the collection grew. And grew. And grew until it engulfed and devoured his home. (At least I tell it that way because it makes a good story.) He is now (if I recall correctly) forced to sell off parts of it, just to clear some space.

The ideal might be never to throw anything away. What storage goal would be **practically** feasible?

To Peggy Rae Pavlat: I present more addresses for fanzine repositories -

Science Fiction and Fantasy Collection
Ward Chipman Library
University of New Brunswick
P.O. Box 5050
Saint John, N.B.
CANADA E2L 4L5
Curator (1981): Dennis Abblitt

U.S.A.

(the above is culled mostly from "Canadian SF Libraries", New Canadian Fandom 2/3, June-September 1981)

- and from Australia:

"For your information the University storage of fanzines in Australia is at Murdoch University in Western Australia. It is run by Grant Stone whose email address is stone@portia.murdoch.edu.au ... Hope this helps."

National Library of Canada
Canadiana Acquisitions
Legal Deposit Office
Ottawa, ON
CANADA K1A 0N4

University of Toronto
Serials Department
Toronto, ON
CANADA M5S 1A5

Carey Handfield, 9 Nov 1995
Small Business Matters
137 Green Street, Ivanhoe
Australia 3079
Phone: 61-3-9497-1291
Fax: 61-3-9497-1291 (call first)
e-mail: cch@netspace.net.au

Science Fiction Collection
Popular Culture Library
Bowling Green State University
Bowling Green, OH 43403

To T.K.F. Weisskopf: Your information on Southern Fandom Confederation zines and clubs took me back a few years; some of the first fanzines I read were *Chat* and *Mimosa*, which helped shape my notion of what a fanzine was.

To Rob Hansen: Your description of the mundane background to 1980s gave me pause. For no very good reason, I've ignored the mundane background in Canadian fanhistories, except where it's utterly unavoidable.

(Examples: the 1973 Worldcon, Torcon II, was apparently able to bill their site as "the city that works" as Toronto had gone through a recent spruce-up and modernization; someone who lives there can probably tell me how true or useful that was. The oil boom in Alberta went bust, and the early-1980s recession hit, at about the same time; this had some impact on the people who formed Albertan, particularly Calgary fandom. A good deal of the Canadian-SF issues and rhetoric in *New Canadian Fandom*, and later in *The Maple Leaf Rag*, was shaped by the "Canadian-national-identity" concerns of the previous decade. The 1986 World Exposition was held in Vancouver, which the incumbent provincial government co-opted to "put Vancouver/British Columbia on the map"; this may have a bearing on the subsequent immigration and population boom, with peculiar effects on the local economy, housing prices, and fandom. The emerging Canadian SF magazines and the new national association for SF writers were apparently able to benefit from fairly liberal arts grants agencies, such as the Canada Council, although they too are tightening up under the influence of "restraint" politics. The 1991 Westercon in Vancouver was plagued by a number of rather political events - the implementation of the first parts of the Canada-U.S. "Free Trade" Agreement, specifically unclear changes in the Customs rules, and snap changes in provincial liquor control laws.)

When I started reading your apazine, a curious thing about Canadian fanhistory occurred to me. A disproportionate amount of this (call it Canhist for short) seemed to occur from the late 1970s or early 1980s onward. This isn't just because I entered fandom in that time period. Apparently there really was a pretty modest number of fans in Canada before 1960, and a lull in Canadian fanactivity during the 1960s. At least on paper, it appears that things only started picking up from 1966-69, or after Torcon II, from 1974 on.

To Graeme: Sometime we have to pin down the difference between the details you will select for a fanhistory, and the ones I will. For now, could you just make a note to **attribute** quotations properly? When you quoted Ed Beauregard from my Vancouver fanhistory, it sounded rather as if he had contributed information directly to the article; in fact I quoted his one-shot, *Inside from the Inside*, and said so, each time I quoted him. The actual source is a detail, but it can be a critical one.

In your place, I might have condensed the description of *Stage One* and of the first V-Con, but I regret not having the information in the first place, in order to give some character to these fan activities.