



Rábanoes Radiactivos!

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Los Angeles in 1968!

Thomas Schlück for TAFF now!

Salamander Press no. 153.

I'm sure you'll all be glad to know that I've got another month and a half's worth of inclusions. There was a stamp & coin show in Long Beach this last weekend -- the Long Beach Coin and Stamp Exposition, to be specific -- and I had a great time rummaging around on Saturday and Sunday.

Numismatics is fun, but attending a coin convention can give you a frustrated feeling, and not from just a collector's viewpoint, either. Short of being allowed to run loose in the Philadelphia Treasury, or Scrooge McDuck's money bin, they've got more hard cash at these things than you'll ever see in your life. Boxes full of banknotes, chests full of coins, and gunnysacks full of miscellaneous money. Sure, maybe 2/3 to 3/4 of it is no longer negotiable, but it's still *money*, and it's still got that well-fed atmosphere about it. When you see a dealer open up a large shoe box and pour out a stream of bright, musical, shiny, solid Mexican pesos, and start to arrange 'em in neat little stacks, well, your brain may know they're only worth 8¢ each, but your eye tells you that that's large, silver Money! (Something it doesn't tell you about our new chocolate quarters.) Pesos, heck; some of those booths were displaying stacks of glittering, uncirculated \$20 gold pieces that I couldn't've topped if I turned my entire bank account into pennies. Pardon me if I rave; I'm still dazzled.

There were several numismatic displays, but the one I considered the most interesting consisted of a set of beautiful paper currency issued for the Jewish concentration camp at Theresienstadt, Czechoslovakia, in 1943. Beautiful bills of several denominations, with a picture of Moses holding the Ten Commandments, and signed with the name of the "oldest Jew" in the camp as the spokesman of the community. One of the reasons the bills were so attractive was that they're still in uncirculated condition, and this is mostly because the Jews were never allowed to have any money at Theresienstadt. The Nazi prison officials printed the bills solely in an attempt to impress a visiting Red Cross inspection team, as an example of how wonderfully the Jews were getting along under the benevolent ministries of the Third Reich.

I ran into Walter Breen there Saturday afternoon, and we left early to take in Ron Elik's housewarming party. I figure it must've been a wild success, because I slept through several hours of it, but not before drinking most of the root beer and eating most of the nibbliments in sight, discussing fannish & mundane subjects with great conversationalists such as Ed Cox, John Trimble, and Dave Hulan, and watching Luise Petti dancing furiously & sensuously. You threw a great party, Ron; thanks.

And there's another coin convention at the Statler-Hilton in a couple of weeks. See you there?

-- BEING COMMENTS ON LAST WEEK'S DISTRIBUTION

Bruce Pelz -- A very good pastiche, though I can't help wondering why we get it out of the blue like this? More the sort of thing for the BAKER STREET JOURNAL, isn't it? However, since I don't get the BSJ, thanks for running it through here. ## Okay, so I'll have to take in the McDonald's Farm area the next time I go to Knott's Berry Farm. Sigh, I always miss the trips where the discoveries are made.

Fred Whitley -- Any time you don't feel like coming in to the LASFS Meetings, you can always contribute to Apa L by mail, like our regular out-of-towners. (Assuming you've decided this early enough in the week to get MUSIC MAN run off & in the mail to me by Thursday.) Just send your zine to me with a stamped, self-addressed envelope, or, if you prefer, instructions to keep your copy of the Dist'n for you until the next time you do show up.

Ted White -- Possibly "camp" may refer to nostalgia value, but I've never heard it used in a pure sense that way. It's always been in the context of a phrase like, "Gee, that's real campy!", invariably followed with a snicker of some sort, as if to say, "Gee, we must've really been nuts/immature if we ever saw anything of serious value in that crud." The level of "camp" humor at which the new "Batman" show is aiming is an excellent example of this; nostalgia, yes, but not what you'd call a fond nostalgia, a wish-we-could-return nostalgia. Always with the so-bad-it's-funny overtones. On thinking about it, though, I will admit I can't recall the term being used in connection with anything modern, funny or not. ## As I said, I don't consider Cugel the Clever to be colorless, but neither do I consider him as one of the Immortal Characters of Fantasy Fiction. Amoral, yes; witty, no -- or only in comparison to the other inhabitants of Vance's series, and not to Heroic Fantasy in general. In fact, the whole series can be compared pretty closely to Keith Laumer's Retief stories, with Cugel the counterpart of Retief: daring, flippant, with about as much finesse as a mud brick, "clever" only because of the utter stupidity of everybody else in the story. (The readers have figured out what's going to happen from page 2.) Actually, Cugel's a couple of notches under Retief in the Brains Dept.; in the last story, he got suckered twice into deals that were transparently phoney to the reader from the start. Retief at least lives up to his billing of infallibility, which may get boring, but isn't any worse than a "clever" scoundrel who spends all his time in getting out of situations that he shouldn't've been in in the first place, if he'd shown an ounce of his much-vaunted intelligence. Vance's "Dying Earth" series, of which this is a part, is worth reading because of its beautiful background settings and the imagery of Vance's word-poetry; not because of any of the characters or characterizations, and only to a minor extent because of any of the plots. ## In the line of a semantic quibble, I don't see how the Cugel book or series can be called a "sequel" to the original collection of short stories published as The Dying Earth, since it doesn't directly follow up any of them, as a true sequel should. The Cugel stories are just written in the same setting, as many authors write all their stories in the same overall framework -- de Camp's Viagens series, for example; or Piper's Terran Federation-Space Viking universe; or Andre Norton's commercial-feudalist galaxy; or Murray Leinster's landing-grid-world stories. Individual stories are all parts of the same series, but not necessarily sequels to each other. ## The Bradbury Building is an old (1903 or thereabouts) office building at 3rd & Broadway in downtown L.A., loaded with old rococo iron stairways and balconies, cage-type elevators, and glass-fronted office buildings. Everything faces inward onto a large, glass-roofed central plaza; standing there, looking upward around you, it's like being in some sort of crystal palace, or an immense doll house in which one of the walls is glass so you can look right into any of the little rooms.

June Konigsberg -- Harness' "Hoag der Kaiser" is a referent to Heinlein's The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag, and an excellently sneaky one it is, too. I did think, though, Jack, that the villains should've been wearing sashes labeled "Detheridge & Co.", rather than SOB Jewellers, since Heinlein clearly established the name of the jewellery/front organization hiding the evil Sons of the Bird.

Dave Fox -- Your history of Khorlia is very interesting, and reads rather like the early history of Coventry, back when Coventry was still Paul Stanbery's private fantasy world, before all the other fans jumped in and took it over and turned it into a fannish battleground. I'll look forward to reading more Khorlian history, and I hope than Dan Alderson will reprint any of Stanbery's notes on "pure" Coventry that he may have.

Don Fitch -- You're right in that Tom and I can't Forbid anyone from reprinting something from Apa L that we might want for The Best from APA L. In fact, this point came up last year, in a slightly different context, when someone suggested that we didn't have to bother getting permission to reprint material; since almost none of it had been copyrighted, we could reprint it even in the face of a flat refusal to grant permission. However, things never came to this point with anything we wanted to reprint, which made things easy all around; we want to publish in a spirit of good will, as it were, and not in a spirit of defiance. Similarly with respect to conflict with Dwain's Best of Fandom anthology, we're happy to arrange our spheres of interest in a peaceful manner, without any shouting of, "You can't reprint that!" and "You can't stop me from reprinting it!" Actually, as one with a lot of pride in Apa L, I would otherwise be very happy if Dwain found a lot in Apa L worthy of reprinting in a collection of the best from all Fandom. However, as we do have our separate projects, I suppose it's best that we go our separate ways. ## Your suggestions as to Works of Art produced by Committees is taken notice of, and we're always interested in hearing people's suggestions for inclusions in this year's Best from APA L volume. We're not ready to start working on it just yet, but there's already enough worthwhile material in evidence that we'll be able to get under way before the June 1st deadline we gave ourselves last year, so that we won't have to rush quite so much to get it finished by WesterCon time. ## Hm, we'll also have to continue with last year's policy of no free copies to contributors, I'm afraid. An Apa L anthology contains so many short one- and two-page contributions that if we were to give free copies for all that we reprinted, 1/3 or more of our print run would disappear on the spot. Not to mention that, unlike a collection of the best from all Fandom, which will have a more general appeal, our most solid market for the Best from APA L consists of the Apa L contributors themselves, and giving out free copies would therefore destroy most of our market. I've still got enough copies of last year's Best from APA L on hand that I'm not sure whether I've broken even on expenses or not (we didn't keep records that closely), though I'm not that worried about it -- they'll all sell in time, and I'm not so desperate that I have to make back my expenses immediately. But the margin is close enough that giving out 30 or 40 free copies would make a definite difference between a minor profit and a big loss. ## Yes, I still call Dave McDaniel as Ted Johnstone myself, though generally speaking, I don't see much use for all these phoney names in Fandom. At least Ted, Steve Tolliver, and the few others who're serious about their pseudonyms, have worked to really establish them in Fandom, and they have in fact become Names. (Ted, of course, had a good excuse for getting in Fandom under a phoney name: he wasn't sure when he first made contact as to what kind of people fans were, and wanted to be able to lose himself again quickly in case we turned out to be serious Flying Saucer nuts or the like. I've occasionally wished I'd thought to use a phoney name before signing things that got me onto various mailing lists, myself.) But I don't really see much point to such cute pseudonyms as Kali Brandagamba, or 5/8, and the like, which are so obviously not real, and which aren't consistently used, either. On their Apa L zines, possibly; but that's about the only place; in all other manners, their real names are used. This lack of consistency is dooming their Special Fannish Identity from the start. The whole thing just seems pointless to me. ## A difference in format is also handy in telling fans apart. As long as the Pomona Fans' zines are either dittoed or mimeoed together, on the same goldenrod paper, we're going to tend to confuse them and their contents. If you'll check Barry's and Flieg's early Apa L zines, you'll note that they're almost identical in format and publication, which is one reason it took us so long to tell them apart. It took a fair while for Fred to develop a distinctive format. I rather wish there'd been something like Apa L around when Ed Baker and I first got active in the club, because our fanzine formats are nowhere near alike, and it might've helped people to differentiate between us sooner.