

SCIENCE FICTION ORAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 1994

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

In accordance with the Bylaws of the Science Fiction Oral History Association, as amended in 1988, the annual election of officers will be held in March. As specified by said Bylaws, "Any member whose dues are paid in full shall be eligible to run for any elective office" and "any member may nominate himself for office and receive a place on the ballot."

Offices to be filled include that of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and two directors-at-large. One of the director-at-large positions may be filled by the immediate past-president in the event that he or she has chosen not to stand for re-election. The current SFOHA officers are: Lloyd Biggle, Jr., President; Nancy Tucker, Vice-President; Suzi Nassen Stefl, Secretary; Jean Lynn Barnard, Treasurer; and Roger Sims & Terry Harris, Directors-at-Large.

Nominations will be accepted at the ConFusion SFOHA meeting, scheduled for 12 Noon in the Apollo Room of the Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza Hotel in Romulus, Michigan, on Sunday, January 23. Nominations may also be mailed to Newsletter Editor Nancy Tucker, 695 Judd Road, Saline, MI 48176, and anyone who is nominated is welcome to write a brief statement concerning his or her objectives or goals to be pursued if elected. Nominations and statements must reach the Editor no later than February 20th. The ballot and "platform" statements will be included in the March Newsletter.

Newsletter Editor: Nancy Tucker

Contributors: Lloyd Biggle, Jr.

Nancy Tucker

Illustrations: Larry Tucker, Nancy Tucker

SFOHA SCHEDULES MEETING AT CONFUSION

There will be a general meeting of the Science Fiction Oral History Association at ConFusion, which is being held this year at the Holiday In Crowne Plaza Hotel in Romulus, Michigan located on Merriman Road just across the I-94 expressway from Detroit Metro Airport. The meeting, which is open to the public, is scheduled for 12 noon in the Apollo Room on the first floor of the hotel.

SMOFCON INVITES SFOHA PARTICIPATION

Larry and Nancy Tucker were invited to represent SFOHA at the recent SMOFCON held in Lexington, Kentucky in December, and to videotape the proceedings for our archives. This is a convention for the people who put on conventions, and all the sessions were attended by virtually the entire membership of the convention. We were gratified to be asked to participate in the panels, and in the interest expressed regarding our organization. We are especially hopeful about some indications of willingness to become actively involved in SFOHA activities expressed by some people from diverse geographical areas. We are hoping that some new and exciting things will soon develop as a result. Our special thanks to Scott and Jane Dennis for arranging to have SFOHA participate in SMOFCON this year. and we hope we will be able to do much more of this in the future.

THE LOOM OF ORAL HISTORY

These thoughts concern the accuracy of history. I recently read a charming autobiography by the English actress, Cathleen Nesbitt, *A Little Love and Good Company*. Nesbitt and the English poet Rupert Brooke were sweethearts at the time World War I commenced. Marriage plans were put on hold; Brooke went off to war, and in 1915 he died on the Island of Skyron in the Aegean Sea, perhaps the most famous non-combat war casualty in history because of his famous poem, "If I should die think only this of me..." Nesbitt thought a great deal more of him than that, and it took her years to get her life on track again.

In 1919, some four years after Brooke's death, she was playing the part of Jessica in a London production of *The Merchant of Venice*. A photographer snapped a picture of her in her "Jessica" costume. She gave a copy of it to a friend who had also been Brooke's friend. A few years later, he told her a young Canadian was writing a biography of Brooke, and he asked her permission to lend him photos and letters she had written to Brooke. She gave the permission and then forgot about it.

More years passed. Then one day Nesbitt "...was sent a rather sickly sentimental book about Rupert called *Red Wine of Youth*. In it was the photograph of Jessica with the caption: 'This, Rupert's favorite photograph of Cathleen, was carried by him to the Mediterranean and was found after his death off Skyros among some of his effects. It was sent with his other possessions back to England.'" The photograph, remember, was taken some four years after Brooke's death.

Nesbitt continues, "A number of young Rupert Brooke fans cut the picture from the book and sent it to me begging me to autograph it. I did so and sent it back, adding a friendly warning, 'This caption is not true--the photograph was taken after Brooke's death.' One irate gentleman was annoyed. He even took the trouble to buy another copy of the book and send me another picture.

Please just autograph it. What do you mean "not true?" If you turn to page 262 you will find absolute verification."

On page 262, Nesbitt found this: "Dennis and 'OC' had the sad task of gathering up their comrade's belongings ... his treasured photograph of Cathleen, her black gloved hands holding a dove, and an equally treasured bundle of her letters had to be assembled and despatched to Eddie." That was the "Jessica" photograph, of course.

Nesbitt adds, "Since then I am never surprised--when I see historians arguing among themselves in print about the 'authenticity' of someone's account of something that has happened centuries ago--to notice that the gentleman who says, 'I realize that this account was written fifty years after the incident, but the details are so meticulous, it must be correct,' always thinks he has clinched the argument. I am no longer surprised when I find that stories about myself or about people I know well are accepted as truth once they have appeared in print, even if they have no foundation in fact whatsoever."

I have a number of times seen wildly inaccurate accounts of incidents that I have personal knowledge of. After reading such inaccuracies concerning the early days of Science Fiction Writers of America, I got together with Damon Knight and Kate Wilhelm, two people who, along with myself, "were there," and made a tape about SFWA history for the SFOHA Archives.

But building archives is not enough. We now must encourage those who write about SF History to use them. Rather than go to the trouble to locate a tape with accurate information and take the time to hear what is recorded there, it is much easier to rely on an inaccurate published account--and the fact of publication is of course absolute verification if one wants to take it that way. Too often history is not what we find out, it is what we want to believe.

--Lloyd Biggle, Jr.

A MESSAGE TO SFOHA FROM FIRST FANDOM

The Science Fiction Oral History Association and First Fandom have a lot in common. We both have tried to keep interest in the older material, authors, and others connected with the field alive. I would hope that we may form some sort of loose association between the two groups that may be beneficial to both. Members of First Fandom are encouraged to join SFOHA, and SFOHA members to join First Fandom. First Fandom requirements are: activity before January 1939 for regular membership and 30 years of activity for associate membership. A new category, which any SF fan may qualify for, is Sustaining Patron. This entitles you to all publications and access to First Fandom meetings, but no voting rights. Dues for all categories are \$5 per year.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN FIRST FANDOM

REGULAR ASSOCIATE SUSTAINING
 NAME _____ DATE _____
 ADDRESS _____
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 AGE _____ TELEPHONE _____



Membership in First Fandom is restricted to those fans who can demonstrate a long-standing active association with either Science Fiction or Fantasy. Eligibility for REGULAR membership requires documented fan activity prior to January 1, 1939. Eligibility for ASSOCIATE membership requires documented fanac going back at least 30 years prior to the date of application. Applications for ASSOCIATE membership must be accompanied by a letter of reference from a REGULAR member. No documentation is necessary for SUSTAINING PATRON.

1. Please list the earliest letter or story you had published in a fan or prozine.
2. Please list your memberships in local, national, or pro groups.
3. Please list your fanzine activity. This includes writing for, editing, publishing, or in any other way helping to produce a fanzine.
4. Please list your collecting interests.
5. Give any additional information which demonstrates your conformance with the membership requirements. Please place this on a separate sheet and attach to this form.

Signed _____

Enclose \$5.00 for the first year's dues. Make checks payable to First Fandom, and send both check and this application to:

Mark Schulzinger, 333 Park Central East, Suite 528, Springfield, MO 65806

SFOHA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

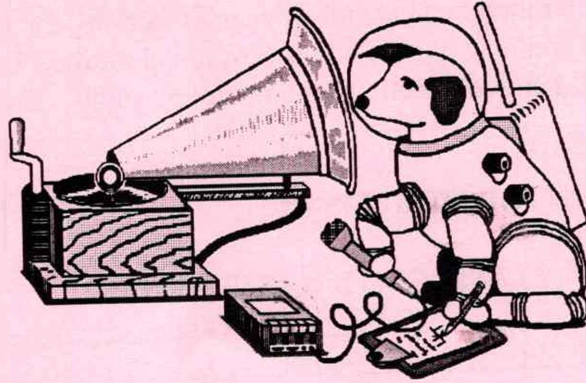
_____ I want to go FIRST CLASS! Enclosed is \$20 for my 1993 dues, T-shirt SIZE _____
 _____ Just give me a REGULAR membership. Here's \$5 for my 1993 dues.
 _____ I would be interested in doing some recording at conventions: _____ audio _____ video
 I have my own equipment: _____ yes _____ no
 _____ I have an electronic address. It is _____

Name _____ Date _____
 Address _____ Phone _____


Mail check made out to SFOHA to:



Mrs Jean L Barnard
 1810 Charlton Ave
 Ann Arbor MI 48103-4174



Science Fiction Oral History Association

**MRS. J. L. BARNARD**
1810 CHARLTON AVE.
ANN ARBOR, MI. 48103



FIRST CLASS MAIL

00167 1992
Dave Locke
6828 Alpine Avenue #4
Cincinnati OH 45236

44 4801 4802 4803 4804 4805 4806 4807 4808 4809 4810 4811 4812 4813 4814 4815 4816 4817 4818 4819 4820

