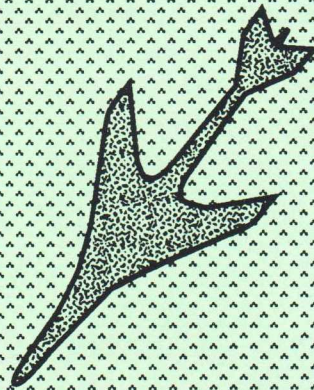
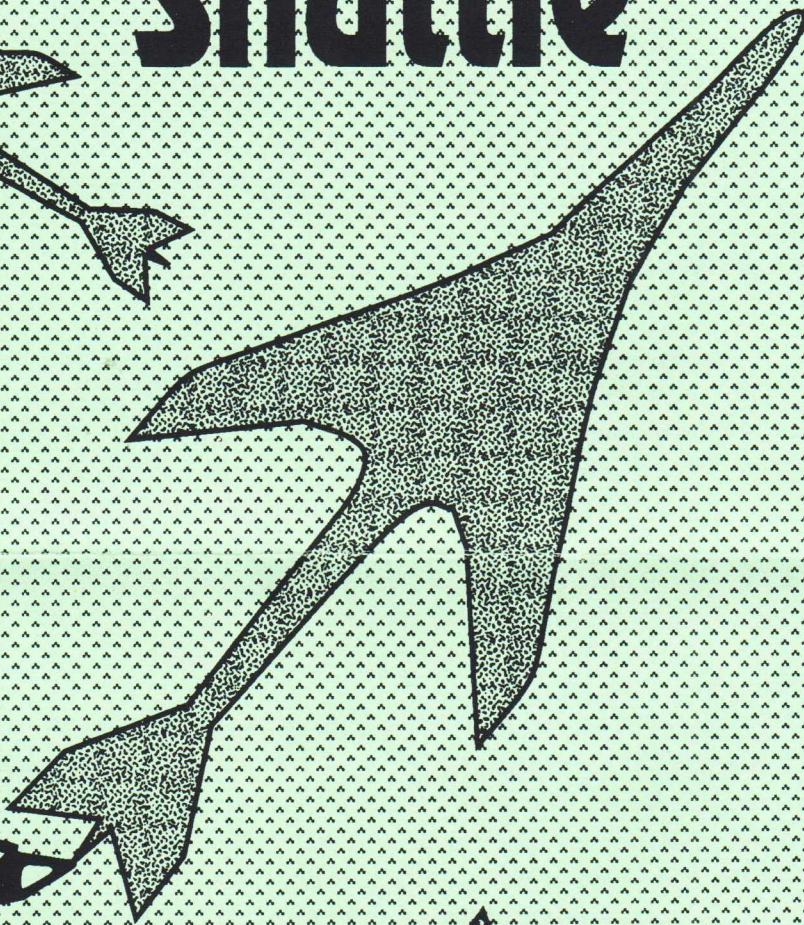
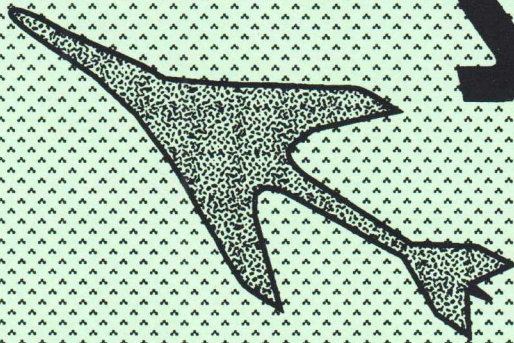


SFSFS

no. 134

Shuttle





South Florida Science Fiction Society
 P.O. Box 70143
 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143

1998 SFSFS Officers and Board Members

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Library: Cindy Warmuth
Media Research: Adam-Troy Castro

Editorial Schedule:

July/August:
 Mal Barker
Sept./Oct.:
 Shirlene Rawlik
Nov./Dec.:
 Mal Barker

Shuttle Manifest

- 2...Lists, lists, and more lists (aka table of contents and legal stuff...)
- 3...Upcoming meetings and events
- 4...The past months, in review. . . by Mal Barker
- 6...Tropicon Flyer
- 7...The nutshell version of why I enjoy the works of Neil Gaiman by Pete Rawlik
- 8...Essential SFSFS info and map to the SFSFS Clubhouse by Joe Siclari
- 9...The Babylon 5 Report by George Peterson
- 11..The Nebula Awards in New Mexico by Adam-Troy Castro
- 15..Book Reviews of Kirinyaga (by Dan Foster) & The Bogie Man (by Adam Castro)
- 16.."LOCs to the left of us, LOCs to the right of us..."
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- 23..The Back Page Editorial by Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik
- 23..SFSFS Membership Application
- 24..You Are Getting This Because...

Art Credits:

Gail Bennett, SFSFS Logo, 2, 24
 Sheryl Birkhead, cover;
 Shirlene Rawlik, 9, 13, 14, 15
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SFSFS Shuttle #134, May-June 1998

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Upcoming Meetings and Events

The Secret History of Babylon 5

Date: Saturday, 18 July 1998

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: SFSFS Clubhouse

(please see map on page 8 for directions)

Presented by: George Peterson

Join us as George takes us through the fascinating, lesser known parts of the history of Babylon 5, as well as giving us a preview of what will be in store for the future. Audience participation will be encouraged!

For more information on this event, contact Judi Goodman at 305-385-1793.

Board Meeting

Saturday, 18 July 1998 at noon at the Clubhouse

Contact: Judi Goodman, 305-385-1793.

Tropicon Progress Report Work Session

Sunday, 19 July 1998 at 1 p.m. at the Clubhouse

Contact: The Rawliks at 561-844-6336 for details.

Writers' Workshop

Sunday, 26 July 1998 at 1 p.m. at the Clubhouse.

Contact: Adam-Troy Castro at 954-418-0832, to confirm time and date.

Book Discussion

August

Program: *Boy's Life* by Robert McCammon and
Three Hearts and Three Lions by Poul Anderson

Contact: Joe Siclari, 561-392-6462.

Gaming

every Sunday from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Clubhouse
unless otherwise preempted by activities.

Contact Ned Bush 954-584-2140.

Future General Meeting Dates

August 15, 1998

An introduction to Tropicon's Guests of Honor: Neil Gaiman and Charles Vess
by Pete and Shirlene Rawlik

September 19, 1998

Worldcon War Stories with Edie Stern and Joe Siclari

October 17, 1998

Tentatively "Mystery Writers"

November 21, 1998

TBA

December 19, 1998

Annual Dinner, location TBA

Visit our website at <http://scifi.squawk.com/sfsfs.html> for more information

The past months, in review. . .

by Mal Barker

MARCH As you may last recall we left SFSFS in the month of March with the *International Conference on the Fantastic In the Arts* where our hero bought some *Tom Swift* books and a similar book about a trip to discover the North Pole in an amazing electric airship. This year's *Conference* had to compete with a party scheduled opposite it {actually, it wasn't just "a party". . . it was a young woman's *bat mitzvah!* - Shirlene} This party consisted of very loud booming music and small children running about half undressed in their Sunday Go-to-Church {Temple, whatever - Shirlene} finest. Still, no doubt a good time was had by all. We also had a book discussion which I already went into about *City on Fire*, *His Share of Glory* and *Infinite Worlds*, the Vincent DiFate book. And so ended the month of March.

APRIL The April general meeting featured *Tokyo Stompers and Other Town Totallers* presented by Bill Wilson. This was a program about giant monsters of the silver screen. Our host entertained us for well over an hour with a tape of video clips he had compiled through incalculable hours worth of work. (Something Cindy Warmuth can wearily testify to.) Bill ran clips and talked about movies, holding the membership in thrall. Many of the membership participated as well. Besides the run-of-the-mill monster movies many of us had seen, Bill had several clips from more modern Tokyo giant monster movies, including one from the latest Gamera movie that looked well worth watching. Gaos is back and Gamera is there doing battle, all with modern special effects. This program was in preparation for the upcoming release of *Godzilla* in the theaters. Overall, this was one of the best presentations we have had in a long time. Anyone who missed it missed an event.

April also consisted of a trip to the *Star Trek* museum exhibit that will have to be discussed elsewhere since I did not attend. Apparently there was quite a turnout, and I only heard good comments about it. This show is now up

in Orlando and SFSFS's mailbox is being bombarded by advertisements for it. One has to wonder why there was no such advertising for it when it was in South Florida. SFSFS seems like the ideal group to hit for this event. For those of you who have not heard about this, there is a traveling science show of *Star Trek* that goes from museum to museum the way they exhibited King Tut's remains at one time.

We also had a writers' workshop where we continued to read parts of Adam-Troy Castro's upcoming *Spiderman* novel. I have enjoyed reading it, and suggest that everyone buy it when it comes out in print. Even if you do not know much about *Spiderman* you should be able to following along. This novel is chock-full of humor, small details, and touches that bring the characters to life. Often it was hard to put down the bits of copy we read because we were so enthralled by it. This is the first of a trilogy, which hopefully Adam will share with the group. I suppose another big plus for this book is the fact that I happen to be a character in it.

We also had a media event to see *Lost in Space*, which I think I mentioned in my issue. It's been discussed elsewhere and let's just say that I have a negative opinion of it. (Hey, I have to write this. I can say what I want.) We saw it in a packed theater the Sunday of the time change. About an hour into the movie, a family came in whom, I assume, had forgotten to change their clocks.

MAY In May, we had a SFSFS workday at the clubhouse (only a handful of members showed up). This doughty handful was able to get much done. More shelves were put up for the ever-increasing collection of paperbacks. Now perhaps there is enough room to get them all sorted and alphabetized properly. More old documents were gone through and organized in an effort to turn the piles of SFSFS archives into something that at least *looks* organized.

The assortment of antique computer equipment was sorted out with the intent to be sold off like an old horse to the glue factory. Lights have begun to be installed in the book alcoves to prevent members from falling asleep in them during general meetings. Wheels were put on the "lecture thingie" so it can be pushed around. On top of this, thanks to George Peterson, there is now an automatic closer on the entrance so we do not have to yell at people to shut the door all the time. (You'd think people were born in a barn or something.)

This month was also Oasis and many SFSFS people made the trek up to Orlando. We were there to make sure there was a SFSFS presence, advertise for Tropicon and support the "Boston in Orlando 2001" Worldcon bid. The Guest of Honor was Larry Niven and the Artist Guest of Honor was Mary Hanson Roberts, whose illustrations have graced the Shuttle in the past. At the opening ceremonies, each of the GOHs received a pile of dragon droppings as a welcoming gift. It was a charming iridescent green pile, at that.

JUNE The June general meeting was a picnic. Your secretary was sick, and missed out, so again I have to go by hearsay. The members had a good and very hot time of it. An assortment of those plastic chairs which the clubhouse originally started with were sold. Resident SFSFS dog Basker treed a racoon, then ran over Edie. Our resident novelist went swimming in the ocean and left a ring visible as far as the Azores. No doubt I've forgotten a few things, but at least those of you (like me) who missed this gala event see that fun was had.

That night was the first of two book discussions on the Hugos held at the clubhouse. (I can't talk about the second discussion because it will occur after this *Shuttle* is done.) I attended, seeing as I'd made an effort to read just about everything related to the Hugos. We concentrated on two books this time, *Jack Faust* by Michael Swanwick and *Forever Peace* by Joe Haldeman. Also, all the media presentations and fiction shorter than novella length were discussed. In everyone's opinion, none of the shorter works discussed seemed to merit a Hugo. As for the novels, *Jack Faust* was terribly grim and

negative, but of the three books read so far, it was the one worth winning a Hugo. Don't let the grim and negative discourage you. It's a very good read. *Forever Peace*, was disappointing, not because it was a thematic sequel but because part of it seemed rushed. Some story elements were thrown in which were never fully explored and left the reader wondering what was happening. As for the movies, there was talk of *Gattaca* winning the Hugo but only one person has seen it, though he highly recommended it. The other two possibilities were *The Fifth Element* which people thought was fun but flawed, and *Men in Black*, which everyone liked. For sheer fun *MIB* would win hands down, though is sheer fun what makes a Hugo winner? Also, there was a discussion of which magazines publish which type of short stories and why sometimes this can mean some magazines get fewer nominated stories than others.

Finally we had yet another writers' workshop which went as well as last time. They did the conclusion of the *Spiderman* novel with everyone bombarding the author with questions about the sequels. Also, everyone about sprained their brain attempting to give advice on a poem presented to them. Usually all these reviews started with "Well, I don't know anything about poetry, but..." or something of that nature.

And then we had a Tropicon meeting, which I'm sure there will be information about elsewhere in this issue. Basically, Tropicon is still on course. Various ways of getting the word out to the public, in the real world and on the internet, were discussed. So far, things look very good, as more and more guests continue to be added to the list.

We also had a media event to see *Godzilla* which I missed and which hopefully someone, somewhere will write about.

There was also the Travelling Fete which I did not attend, and which I hope will get covered elsewhere. If not, from what I heard people had a good time.

Tropicon XVII

November [Friday, the] 13th to 15th, 1998

Author

Guest

of Honor:

Neil Gaiman

The author of many things, including: *Neverwhere*; *Good Omens* (with Terry Pratchett); and *The Day I Swapped My Dad for Two Goldfish*. He's also the co-creator and writer of *The Sandman* series, *The Books of Magic* series, and *The Stardust* mini-series (just to mention a few) from DC/Vertigo Comics.

Artist Guest of Honor:

Charles Vess

A marvelous artist and illustrator whose art has graced the covers of magazines as diverse as *Heavy Metal* and *Reader's Digest*. He **IS** Green Man Press and the man behind the illustrations of the *Stardust* mini-series.

Other Confirmed Guests:

Lynn Abbey, Adam-Troy Castro, Hal Clement, Charles Fontenay, Joseph Green, Caitlin R. Kiernan, Holly Lisle, Mike Resnick

3-day membership rates are:

\$23 until May 31, 1998
\$25 until Oct. 31, 1998
\$28 thereafter

Location:

Sheraton Suites Cypress Creek
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
(954)772-5400
nightly rates:
\$84 single/double;
\$94 triple/quad

For more information on the Art Show, Dealers' Room, or anything Tropicon-related, contact Pete or Shirlene Rawlik via phone: 561-844-6336 or e-mail: tropicon@scifi.squawk.com

for up-to-the-minute information, visit our website at:

<http://scifi.squawk.com/tropic/tropic17.html>

Please make all checks payable to SFSFS

Shuttle 134

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

I have enclosed a check for \$ _____ for _____ 3-day memberships

return to: Tropicon XVII, c/o the Rawliks, 539 37th St., WPB, FL 33407

The nutshell version of why I enjoy the works of Neil Gaiman

by Pete Rawlik

It was December 1988, I was in my third year of studies at the Florida Institute of Technology and the world of comic books was a welcome relief from the drudgery of the week. Except it wasn't. Marvel Comics was reinventing itself and the heroes that I had grown up with were being molded into new, more commercial directions. After ten years of being faithful I was ready to call it quits on comics all together. It was then that a few friends introduced me to a whole new world of comics.

I discovered Matt Wagner's noir cyberpunk, *Grendel*, and James O'Barr's ultra-violent and ultra-poetic masterpiece, *The Crow*. Last, but definitely not the least, was Neil Gaiman's *The Sandman*.

I had heard of Gaiman before when he had writing duties on the British comic, *Miracleman*. Gaiman's "Golden Age" storyline dealt with a world where super-heroes have reached god-like power levels and yet must find ways to retain the link to their own humanity and the entire human species. This theme of the relationship between normal humans and those whose abilities set them apart and above, is central to Gaiman's speculative fiction.

In *The Sandman*, a 75 issue masterpiece that interweaves dark fantasy, fairytales, cosmic powers, and urban magic realism, Gaiman introduces Morpheus, a universal meme of the collective human unconscious. The first half-dozen issues follow a classic hero quest that eventually leads to Morpheus regaining his divinity. While it would seem that the tale should end there, Gaiman skillfully guides the storyline into a discussion of what it means to be human and what responsibilities gods have towards mankind as both individuals and a culture.

The same theme is used in Gaiman's *Black Orchid* mini-series, where Gaiman redefined the character by examining what it really means to be a super-powered, cloned, plant elemental, crime-fighter. Meanwhile, in *Books of Magic* the "young-boy-coming-of-age" story is thrown a twist when it is revealed that he has the potential to be the greatest wizard on Earth and must choose what kind of mage he will be. Gaiman has also worked on *Swamp Thing*, *Batman*, *Spawn*, *Hellraiser*, and *Hellblazer*.

His more literary work includes the novel *Good Omens* (With Terry Pratchett), the short story collection *Angels and Visitations*, and the adaptation of his own teleplay *Neverwhere*. *Good Omens* is a comedic apocalypse featuring the Four Bikers of the Apocalypse, UFOs, Atlantis, satanic nuns, and the witchfinder army (all two of them). It is a light-hearted romp that I highly recommend.

Angels and Visitations is subtitled a miscellany and really showcases the range of Gaiman's work. The short story "Murder Mysteries" has to be one of the seminal works in the Angelpunk subgenre. In the same category, but delving deeper into the realm of urban magic realism, is the long poem "Cold Colours". I highly recommend this collection.

Neverwhere, Gaiman's first independent novel is based on his own BBC teleplay and tells of one man's descent from the real world of London business to the hidden world of London Below, a dark faerie world ruled by rats and an imprisoned angel. It is a beautiful tale of the dangers when man interacts with powers he doesn't really understand or can control.

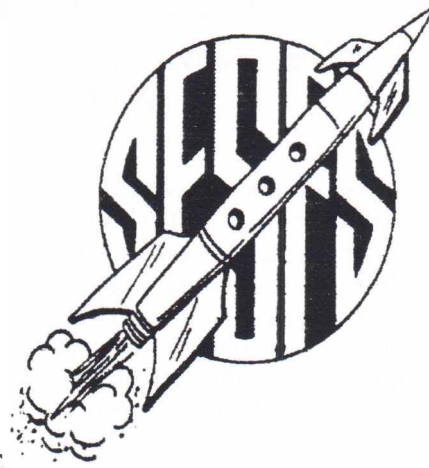
Gaiman's latest work, while presented in comic book format, is more of a novella with illustrations accenting the text. Called *Stardust*, it is the latest collaboration between Gaiman and artist, Charles Vess. Gaiman and Vess gained critical attention when their issue of *The Sandman*, "A Midsummer Night's Dream", won the World Fantasy Award. Both *Stardust* and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" use man's relationship with faerie as the central theme.

With *Tropicon* just four months away I am looking forward to the chance to meet and discuss this author's incredible body of work.



SFSFS Mailing address:

South Florida Science Fiction Society
 P. O. Box 70143
 Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307

**SFSFS Information phone numbers:**

Dade County: Judi Goodman, 305-382-3330
 Broward County: George Peterson, 954-739-4376
 Palm Beach County (south): Peter Barker, 561-883-5126
 Palm Beach County (north): Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik, 561-844-6336

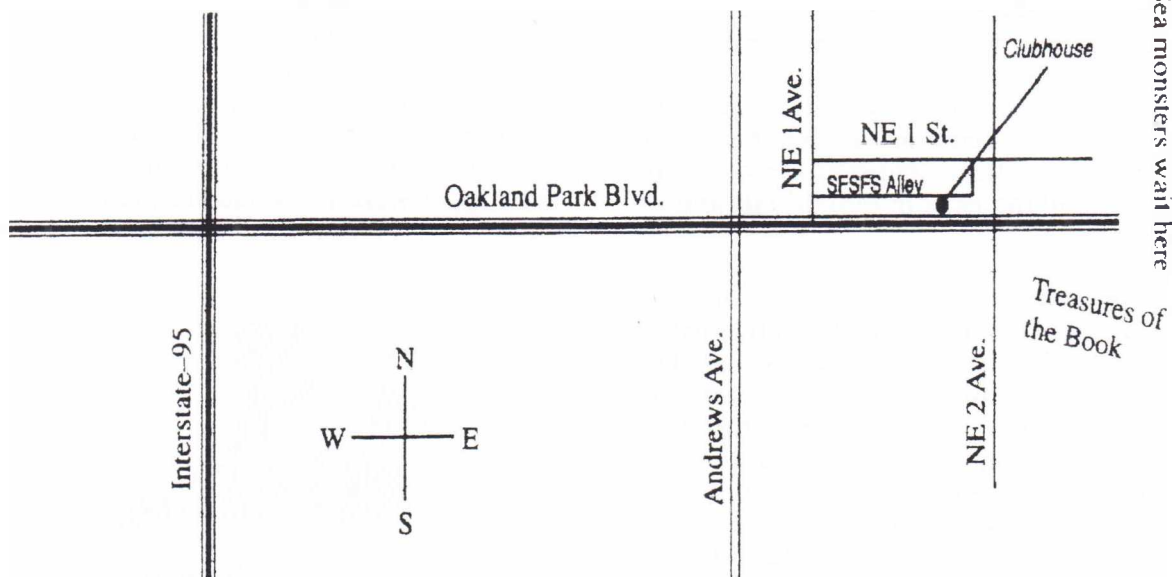
SFSFS Clubhouse address:

The SFSFS Clubhouse is located at the back of the offices of Michael Block, C. P. A., 275 East Oakland Park Blvd., Oakland Park, FL 33334-1155.

Clubhouse Directions:

- Take Interstate-95 to the Oakland Park exit.
- Go east to NE 1 Ave. (that is a very short block east of Andrews Ave.)
- Turn left onto NE 1st Ave.
- Immediately turn right into an alley.
- The SFSFS Clubhouse is located near the end of the alley. We have a sign on our door.

All monthly SFSFS meetings and most of the special interest meetings are held at the clubhouse. Check the *SFSFS Shuttle* or the SFSFS web page (<http://scifi.squawk.com/sfsfs.htm>) for meeting schedules.



The Babylon 5 Report by George Peterson

Seasons 1-4 are running on TNT 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday
Season 5 episodes run on TNT at 8:00 PM on Wednesdays, with an encore showing at 11:00 AM on Saturday.

Current Schedule of Up-Coming Season 5 Episodes:

Air Date	Ep#	Title
98/05/27	102	Meditations on the Abyss
98/06/03	103	Darkness Ascending
98/06/10	104	And All My Dreams, Torn Asunder
98/06/17	105	Movements of Fire and Shadow
98/07/01	089R	No Compromises
98/07/08	090R	The Very Long Night of Londo Mollari
98/07/15	091R	The Paragon of Animals
98/07/19		MoW1 Thirdspace
98/07/22	092R	A View from the Gallery
98/07/29	093R	Learning Curve
98/08/05	094R	Strange Relations
98/08/12	095R	Secrets of the Soul
98/08/19	096R	Day of the Dead
98/08/26	097R	In the Kingdom of the Blind
98/09/02	098R	A Tragedy of Telepaths
98/09/09	099R	Phoenix Rising
98/09/16	100R	The Ragged Edge
98/09/23	101R	The Corps is Mother, The Corps is Father
98/09/30	102R	Meditations on the Abyss
98/10/07	103R	Darkness Ascending
98/10/14	104R	And All My Dreams, Torn Asunder
98/10/21	105R	Movements of Fire and Shadow
98/10/28	106	The Fall of Centauri Prime
98/11/04	107	Wheel of Fire
98/11/08	MoW3	The River of Souls
98/11/11	108	Objects in Motion
98/11/18	109	Objects at Rest
98/11/25	110	Sleeping in the Light
99/01/03	MoW4	A Call to Arms
99/01/06		The Babylon Project: Crusade (premiere)

****Spoiler Alert!!****

Some of the information below may reveal stuff you don't want to know!

"Meditations on the Abyss" - Delenn sends Lennier on a special mission to find the source of the raids -- without Sheridan's knowledge.

"Darkness Ascending" - Sheridan finds out about Lennier's mission and confronts Delenn as Lennier strikes out on his own. Lise Hampton shows up on Babylon 5, unexpectedly.

"All My Dreams, Torn Asunder" - The Alliance reacts to the information as to who's behind the attacks on Alliance shipping.

"Movements of Fire and Shadow" - Lyta and Franklin head for the Drazi homeworld to investigate the disappearance of some Centauri - things don't go well. Londo and G'Kar end up as bunkmates in an uncomfortable place.

"The Fall of Centauri Prime" - The title is spoiler enough...

"Wheel of Fire" - We get a major revelation about Lochley.

"Objects in Motion" - No plot information at this time.

"Objects at Rest" - As Delenn and Sheridan prepare to leave Babylon 5 for the Alliance's new facilities on Mimbar, they get some dubious going-away gifts.

"Sleeping in the Light" - Series finale. 20 years later, Sheridan calls his friends and colleagues together to say good-bye.

TV Movies:

"Thirdspace" - Set during the 4th Season, a mysterious artifact, several miles across, is discovered in hyperspace and brought back to Babylon 5 for examination. Soon, strange things start happening...

"River of Souls" - Set after Sheridan and Delenn have left Babylon 5, a renegade archaeologist shows up with an artifact stolen from the Soul Hunters. Captain Lochley must save the station from an impending attack from the Soul Hunters, as well as the wrathful souls released by the object who begin taking over the living. Martin Sheen plays one of the Soul Hunters.

"Call to Arms" - Sheridan must make a new alliance with three new allies to help defend the Earth from a major attack. Two hour premiere for the new series.



It's a wrap!

That's it, Babylon 5 is done and in the can. The final episodes were shot in March and most of the post-production is done. Work is currently being done to get ready and begin shooting the new series.

Yes, in case you haven't heard, the sequel series is in the works. The 2 hour premiere is due to air on the January 3, 1999, with the first episode scheduled for January 6th, 1999.

The title is officially "The Babylon Project: Crusade" but everyone is calling it "Crusade". At the moment there are few specifics. No current casting decisions have been released. But, despite rumors, it doesn't seem likely that any characters from the current series are going to be in the new one, except for the occasional guest part.

The over-all plot, starting about 5 years after the events on Babylon 5, is that the baddies have tried to invade Earth, but have been defeated. In revenge, they've seeded the Earth with a virus, a piece of leftover Shadow technology. The Virus takes five years to adapt to the host species, then turns lethal. Since the technology is countless thousands of years ahead, there isn't time to break it. So the Ranger fleet takes on the mission of searching the ancient vaults and lost cities of the departed First Ones for a cure.

The show will center around the explorations of the starship Excalibur, a joint Human and Mimbari ship. Instead of being centered on the Babylon station, we're going to get to see much more of this universe.

For interesting tid-bits, come to my up-coming talk, "The Secret History of Babylon 5" coming-up at the July Meeting.

The Nebula Awards In New Mexico by Adam-Troy Castro, resident novelist

{the following is a compilation from several posts that Adam wrote in his author's topic in the Science Fiction Reading RoundTable's Category 29, Topic 27 of Genie.com. Used with his permission}

Waaaaal, just returned, sans lucite block, but it was a good trip overall, with lotsa lotsa sightseeing (accomplishing only a fraction of what I had hoped for, but still), a fair degree of egoboo, time spent with friends, a couple of new friends (I believe) successfully made, at least two incidents of bizarre behavior witnessed up close, the great pleasure of seeing Jerry Oltion receive his Nebula, and (the one discordant note) a strange insult delivered at the last minute by one of the other writers attending the event (and not the usual suspect, either). Details will follow.

Thursday, came into Albuquerque at about 11 AM local time; had to hang around the airport for an hour before I could pick up my rental car at noon. At that time I found out that there was a shortage of rental cars in my reserved size and therefore I was being upgraded. Got a convertible, which enhanced several trips through the New Mexico countryside.

Got into Albuquerque a little after noon, parking in Old Town. At which point my number one consideration was essentially just marking time until the mass signing at the Page One bookstore gathering at 4 PM. There is, however, stuff to do in Old Town; it is essentially just a small square with lotsa determinedly colorful shoppes, which I, as a nonshopper, found of limited interest. I browsed several crafts shoppes anyway, getting another in a series of cups of coffee at the snack place puckishly called Zane Graze, and browsing through another shop with a Rattlesnake Museum in its backroom. Also went to the local Museum of Natural History (which was okay) and the Zoological Park (which was more than okay, the spectacularly designed gibbon habitat alone being worth



many hours of burnt-out staring). Managing all this before 4:30 was power touristy. Drove to Page One bookstore, which is on one of many long New Mexico roads that point directly at some mountain but never seem to reach it.

The mob signing was large and well-attended; one of the first folks I met there was Author Emeritus Nelson A. Bond, whose prolific days are more than forty years ago, but who, well in his nineties, remains energetic, sharp as a tack, and interesting to talk to. (I would later get to see gatherings of writers in their twenties, thirties and forties kept awake way past their bedtime simply out of refusal to let themselves be outlasted by the still-partying Bond). The mob signing was, well, a mob signing, with Gardner Dozois shouting at the top of his lungs that there was Hot Sex to be had at his table. (Ellen Datlow bravely sat beside him and only covered her eyes a few times.) Other attendees at this mob function included Kris {a.k.a. Kristine Kathryn Rusch, former Tcon GoH!-Shirlene} and Dean {a.k.a. Dean Wesley Smith, I believe the first consort to accompany a Tcon GoH <g,d, rih!>--Shirlene}, Joe Haldeman {another Tcon former GoH!}, Esther Friesner {most recent Tcon GoH!}, Stephen Gould, Jack McDevitt, and Paul Levinson.

After the signing, took Esther Friesner and Laurel Winter to Santa Fe in my car. The drive presented my first real look at the New Mexico landscape; Santa Fe is about one hour away, and the distance is (like all drives in New Mexico) spectacularly scenic, with lotsa distant mountains and craggy scrub-covered buttes of the sort that always gave Wile E. Coyote, of Warner Brothers fame...for those of you who might have been pop culturally deprived - Shirlene} such memorable trouble. There are several indian reservations along the way; as the road passes through each individual one, it presents you with a new casino. There are LOTS of casinos, none particularly fancy-looking; they are probably gold mines for the various tribes involved. However, if you don't plan at stopping at any of those, the real lesson of New Mexico driving is learned by this short hop: and every time you start approaching the crest of another rise, you exercise that lesson, by making yourself ready for the spectacular vista certain to await you at the top.

So, Friday AM, troll for folks to go sightseeing with, enlist Laurel Winter, and together we go driving up to Taos, gaining about 2,000 feet in net elevation on the way. The scenery between Santa Fe and Taos is spectacular; much of the ride is alongside the Rio Grande, with lotsa, lotsa rock cliffs and distant buttes. Taos, when we come up to it, turns out to be a really small town so sparse that but for a few blocks it is barely there.

From there we take the Enchanted Circle through Kit Carson National Forest, following first a twisting trail through thick woods, noting fancy houses and ramshackle places equally. It is a slow drive on a narrow road, with a couple of genuinely sudden switchbacks.

In Angel Fire, a very small town 1/3 of the way along the Enchanted Circle, we locate the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. The DAV Vietnam Memorial, outside Angel Fire, is a wing-shaped chapel on a hilltop surrounded by mountains. It was commissioned by Dr. Victor Westphal as a memorial to his son, David. After visiting the chapel, Laurel and I proceeded to the Visitor's Center, where we were surprised to meet Dr. Westphal himself; he sits in the vestibule in his wheelchair to greet visitors and thank them for coming. Dr. Westphal is a remarkably warm man, who is genuinely happy to see people come

to this memorial he built for his son and other veterans. The interior of the Visitor's Center contains an exhibit about the country of Vietnam (tracing its strife back to the year 0...good God), photos and murals of soldiers in-country, poetry and other writings carved into lucite, rubbings from the black wall, etc. The letters of David Westphal, who appears to have been a promising writer (and who was quoted in the film DEAR AMERICA: LETTERS HOME FROM VIETNAM), are prominent. It was at an exhibit with rubbings from the black wall, beneath photos of the young men in question, that both Laurel and I simultaneously lost it. (She had lost it once before, elsewhere in the Visitor's Center). I was far more affected by this memorial than I was by the black wall, mostly because here I did not know what to expect and there I was already substantially traumatized from the DC Holocaust Museum (an experience that made a mere 50,000 names seem a less appalling figure).

After leaving the museum through the back, we returned to the front entrance to shake Dr. Westphal's hand and thank him for what he had built.

From the memorial, continuing around the Enchanted Circle, climbing to 9000 feet through rocky gorges and past very small, isolated towns. We stop at Red River, a ski resort above Taos, eat paint-thinner chili, and continue past more gorgeosity back to Taos, where we turn right on 64. This is where a particularly interesting site awaited us. Although this stretch of road is on land as flat as a checkerboard, it is actually pretty high of elevation, and the Rio Grande has cut an impressively spectacular gorge that the road passes without warning. The bridge is the second-highest expansion bridge in the entire country, and the gorge is invisible until you are actually upon it. (There are parking areas before and after for folks who wanna walk on the span -- we did). The view is dizzying, one of many I encountered during the weekend; a narrow, lazily moving river, its surface brown and smooth as glass, meandering through a great deep scar in the earth; this being the same Rio Grande that is just a surface-level creek down south in Albuquerque.

The Taos airport is somewhere around there. We passed it. It is the only time I have ever driven past an airport and not been able to see it. I think it's one strip of concrete and a low hangar. Don't expect to see any jets.

Back down to Santa Fe, through more gorgeosity. Notable element of the trip was a rock formation that stunned me for its resemblance to a Camel. I said, "Camel Rock!", thinking myself clever, and over the next bend passed the Camel Rock Casino. Yes, Camel Rock is an established tourist site, and New Mexicans do know what it looks like. Oh. Never mind.

From there back to the hotel, meeting up with the Oltions, Scott E., F. Paul Wilson, and diverse others. Joined one group going out to dinner at a place called the Cowgirl Hall of Fame, where I had my first unprecedented meal of the weekend: an Ostrich Burger. It does not taste like chicken, more like hamburger. Still, it was ostrich. I have eaten ostrich. **Two points.** {And I have had emu... it was very dry...you probably enjoyed your ostrich more than I enjoyed my emu!...-Shirlene}

Closing out Friday night in Santa Fe, ran into Amy Stout, who is doing well, and bulging with kid number four.

One tidbit from Friday: driving back from Taos, past the Santa Fe opera house, with its "truck entrance". "Yeah," I said, "you can always tell a good opera, because it has all the trucks parked out front."

Laurel Winter said, "The opera ends when the fat lady goes," and she did a fairly impressive imitation of a car horn.

Anyways. Saturday AM. Piled Scott Edelman and the Oltions into a car and drove up 'round Los Alamos way to check out Anasazi ruins in and around the Bandelier National Monument. Checked out two separate sets of cliff dwellings, actually: one outside the park, which required more energetic climbing; the paths were not walkways, but narrow grooves worn into the rock itself by the vanished inhabitants. These grooves, worn into sheer rock, were sometimes several feet deep. I had a fair degree of difficulty getting past several of these thingies, but made it to the summit, where we were greeted with a remarkable view that went on for miles. Getting down, I braved a particularly narrow crevice with not a tremendous degree of grace.

From there to another Rio Grande Canyon overlook, which was gorgeosity (and, disconcertingly, in the middle of a suburban neighborhood; I wondered how often kids went over the edge), and from there to the Bandelier monument and still more cliff dwellings. Checked out some kivas, then climbed up walkways to the cliff dwellings themselves, climbing up ladders to enter a few of them. Some are small, some are fairly large, one is a "condominium-style residence", all are significantly cooler than the hot afternoon air, which is, I guess, one reason why the Flintstones do not require air conditioning. Too many of these caves are covered with modern graffiti, some of which obliterates actual ancient pictographs. Nice going, morons. We hung out in some of these caves for minutes at a time, enjoying the cool air.

Mid-afternoon, with the Nebs only a few hours away, we piled into the car again to proceed further west.

Half an hour in the jacuzzi. Yum. Got dressed for the Nebs, milling about in the hour before, listening to various last minute cries of good luck and predictions of bad luck. Two separate people told me I was going to lose. One, Allen Steele, I did not mind; he was simply expressing his belief that Olton had a lock, and as things turned out, he was right. The other was considerably more obnoxious about it, though not as obnoxious as the person who would turn out to be the single most obnoxious person of the weekend.

Dinner: buffalo steak. One night after eating Ostrich. An adventurous culinary weekend, for me.

At one point loud laughter came from the next table over. I declared that they were having too much fun. I said this with mock severity, and Esther Friesner, with my permission, went over to report that I was being the Monty Python Colonel. Word came back: lighten up. I still dunno how seriously I was taken.

Then came The Awful Speech. Hoo boy. Look, the guy had a good point to make. Interactive fiction does have potential as an art form, and we should not dismiss it. However, his belabored delivery and borderline insulting presentation turned off a lot of people. Major exodus during the speech. I politely watched until I had to look away, and saw Nina Hoffman laughing so hard that the tears were pouring down her face. Notes were being passed. I participated. (Later, I'd enter the elevator, and the Bad Speaker would follow in after me; he was seriously bumming. I told him he did fine. Upon hearing of this Dean Smith would say that I'm a nice guy and a liar, both of which are true, I guess.)

Did fine until the minute the novella names were read, at which point my carefully-maintained composure shattered. Flop sweat erupted. When Jerry's name was read, I felt both intense relief and intense joy -- and, though it may seem ingenuous to say so, no disappointment at all. (That came later, in twinges). I guess it helps to also be rooting for somebody else, along with yourself; helps put these things in perspective. I did, however, find interesting, for the rest of the night, that people kept treating me as if I should have been

devastated. There were lots of back-pats and soulful looks and statements that, well, don't feel bad, it was still an honor to be nominated, etc.; the effect, in context, a lot like having a nurse insisting on placing salve in a place where you know you have no wound. Long before leaving the ballroom, I was already a little dumbfounded by all the sympathy, and I was wondering whether anybody would ever take their loss so badly that they'd need to be treated with such over-solicitousness. That answer, alas, was not long in coming...

Post-ceremony: I am walkin' around with my camcorder, getting reactions. I film Paul Levinson, KD Wentworth, and Bud Sparhawk, all of whom camp up their magnanimousness in defeat, Sparhawk being particularly robotic as he stiffly intones, "It...is...an...honor...just...to...be...nominated...I...would...like...to...congratulate...t he...winners..."

{big chunk o'words deleted per request of writer--Shirlene}

Ending the trip report, which I guess I gotta do just to get it out of the way: Sunday AM drove Scott E to the airport, then doubled back and rode the Sandia Peak Tramway, a cable car which is billed as the longest in the country.

One of the highlights of the trip, btw, was stunning Robert Silverberg with a reference to my judaism. He hadn't known I was Jewish, was surprised to hear it, and needed about five seconds to say, "Ohhhhh. Sephardic."

{Thus ends a really entertaining and educational road-trip report by our own Adam Castro! Thanks, Adam! Oh, and don't think I didn't notice your abundant use of the word "gorgeosity" throughout! Makes me want to go out west and see more than I did the last time I made the trek! -Shirlene}

Book Reviews

Kirinyaga by Mike Resnick

The place is Kirinyaga, a terraformed asteroid where a group of East African settlers has come to establish a Kikuyu utopia, where all things European are rejected and ancient customs rule daily life. They are led by Koriba, the village mundumugu, a witch doctor, the voice of Ngugi, and principal narrator of *Kirinyaga*. He is the self-proclaimed defender of the faith, one who must keep his people on the straight and narrow path of traditions; as he sees fit. It is said the road to damnation is paved with good intentions, but as we watch the rise and inevitable fall of utopia, Koriba proves to be an excellent travel guide.

Kirinyaga, a fable of Utopia is a collection of interconnected stories written over the past ten years, more or less sequentially. The first story to appear was in 1987, originally intended for a shared world anthology called *Utopia*, edited by Orson Scott Card. While it has yet to appear, Resnick continued finding inspiration for more tales in the 'Kirinyaga Cycle', primarily while on safari in Kenya. Many of these stories were nominated for the prestigious Hugo Award (he won twice) and he received many of science fiction's other top honors. These stories also remade his career; Mike Resnick was known for his novels. In the book's afterward, Resnick says he intended *Kirinyaga* as a novel, written a chapter at a time in various lengths over the years. As a novel it doesn't quite work, it lacks cohesiveness. These stories stand on their own. Presented as a collection, much like Ray Bradbury's *The Martian Chronicles*, they are moving and powerful, showing us the history of a land in the midst of change despite the most dogged attempts at preservation. From the frequently anthologized title story 'Kirinyaga' where Koribu defies maintenance (the off-world station that controls Kirinyaga's weather and acts as a safety net but is unknown to all but a few Kikuyu) and lays down tribal law and his final authority over such matters to the softer more heroic portrait of him in 'Bwana', to the eventual of Koriba in favor of progress by a second generation of Kirinyagans in 'When the Old Gods die', we see a stagnant society crumbling ever so slowly under the pressure of humanity's quest for knowledge.

Kirinyaga is science fiction at its finest. Imaginative and thought-provoking, it is Mike Resnick's best book. I highly recommend every science fiction fan add *Kirinyaga* to their bookshelves.

Review by Dan Foster {this review and others like it appear on the www.classicbookshop.com/reviews/index.shtml - Shirlene}

THE BOGIE MAN, a graphic novel
written by John Wagner and Alan Grant art by Robin Smith

Recently read: THE BOGIE MAN, written by John Wagner and Alan Grant, Art by Robin Smith. A graphic novel compiling two previous graphic novels, about an escaped mental patient who believes himself Humphrey Bogart, whose trenchcoated misadventures create absolute havoc in Glasgow, of all places. Since both stories involve him with genuine gangsters, it's tempting to believe that he might emerge an actual hero, but not really; in both cases he wreaks total farcical terror, making bad situations significantly worse for everybody concerned. In the first story he mistakes a hijacked truck full of frozen turkeys for Maltese falcons; in the second he escapes again and utterly destroys a Chinese wedding. In both cases what makes the stories thoroughly hilarious is that they're also thoroughly convincing -- with both the Glasgow settings and the protagonist's Bogart mania captured perfectly. Recommended.
Reviewed by Adam-Troy Castro

disconnect the club newsletter and the monthly schedule from each other because of how hard it is to keep a firm deadline on the Shuttle. I'm sure you can tell from the way the Shuttle comes out these days we tend to be fairly liberal about meeting a deadline.] {It's the curse of the SFSFS Shuttle editors, I tell you! It's not that it's not that we don't want to meet the deadline...it's that the little glitches of life are forever interfering with our ability to spend big chunks o'time devoted to editing the Shuttle!-Shirlene, she who's in denial}

I don't recall that the *Final Blackout* left a bad taste in anyone's mouth at the time it was written. It was, after all, published in 1940, when the Nazis had swept everything before them. I read it some years later, and thought it wasn't all that well written, but it was at least different. [Mal says: The thing that left the bad taste in my mouth was all the business about the Lieutenant and how his command would carry on even though he died. All that I suppose one could call philosophy stuff reminded me strongly of *The Iron Dream* by Norman Spinrad. The *Iron Dream* was, as far as I know, a satire. From what I know of *Final Blackout*, it wasn't supposed to be satirical. Also the ending, besides everyone dying, did not sit right with me. The business with America and all just was weird.]

Ah, the era of the cut and paste fanzine; it's an improvement, but my fanzine days were spent cutting mimeograph stencils on the typewriter and listening to Juanita swear at the mimeograph!

[Mal says: Even in these modern times one has to resort to cut and paste now and then because the technology gets in the way. I've run into several situations at work where someone spend several hours on a computer and still did not have it right when a pair of sissors and a xerox machine would have set matters right in a few seconds. One of the departments where I worked the other day threw out a bunch of ditto masters and 5 or six gallons of fluid. I hopefully asked them if they perhaps had the machine and would they be willing to give it to me. Sad to say they had thrown the machine out years before and just kept this stuff because they had so much of it. They had to call in the hazardous waste people to deal with the disposal of the fluid.. I'd have love to do some stuff for SFSFS on it for fun.]

I'm not sure if Edie's question is about my becoming a minister or how I performed fan marriages. Anyway, I became a minister when Minneapolis fan Denny Lien sent my name in along with his to the Universal Life Church. First I knew about it was when my ordination certificate arrived in the mail (It was a bit of a shock!). Then a couple of our son's friends wanted to get married but not in a regular church ceremony, so Bruce announced, "Well, my Dad's a minister!" Before I could

strangle the kid I was talked into agreeing. I got Judge Joe L. Hensley's fairly simple civil ceremony and have used it in I think 7 marriages. To become a legal minister in the state of Ohio (where most of my ceremonies have been performed) you get a form from the Secretary of State, fill it out, and return it with \$10. In Indiana, there are no ministerial requirements whatsoever. If the participants accept you as a minister, then the state does as well. I've performed two weddings and one renewal of vows at conventions, and I guess another renewal is coming up sometimes this year. All my marriages have been legal; none have been terribly religious. I don't know if Universal Life is still around; it was very popular in fandom in its day, and I've heard that Universal Life ministers have more or less regular reunions, or at least the fannish ones do. I don't attend.

[Mal says: Hey, I'm a minister in the Universal Life Church too. One of my friends signed us all up once. I'm not sure where my credentials went. The last time I heard about them they were fighting some sort of defense against the IRS who insisted that all they had set themselves up to do was be a tax dodge. Another thing to add here, that Ericka and I were married here in Florida to make it legal and then went up to Indianapolis and had another ceremony there by her uncle for all the relatives. If we had known the laws of Indiana at the time he could have married us for real instead of just for fun. He wrote a ceremony and we had about thirty people.] At least one Indiana fan who recalls the Decker Dillies (I think that's right, Harry?) hasn't entirely gafiated. Joe L. Hensley still attends Rivercons now and then, and communicates with a few fans including me. All I know about the group is what I've read and what Joe told me.

Of course de Camp knows that Juanita set his verses to music; she checked with him. Anyway, he sent them to use originally; while checking his 3 books of verse I discovered that our fanzine was first published of more of his poems than any other publication. And he's heard her sing some of them.

I'd never before head of the *Battlefield Earth* CD. I have the book, and a lousy one it is. (You'd never know it from his later work, but Hubbard did write some quite good fantasy and some mediocre stuff before he got tied up with religion and forgot how to write.) [Mal says: I've not been able to get very far into *Battlefield Earth* myself. I had it in my car for a number of years and would try to read it to kill time waiting for something. I never got very far. The CD is about as good as the book in many respects though the songs still make me chuckle at their memory. If anyone is interested, Bridge Publications has a web.page somewhere which has much of the CD on line. Maybe even those godawful songs.]

excitement. Most of my exposure to Verne has been through an assortment of movies, which are not doubt watered down, if not completely wrong. Then again when one watches something like *Mysterious Island* one is watching the Harryhausen effects and not the Verne plot line.]

This happened to everyone. You may have seen the new J. R. R. Tolkien book *Roverandom*. He had written it in the early thirties and had given it to his publishers Allen & Unwin when, after *The Hobbit*, they asked if he had any more stuff. Whereupon it was rejected because it was not *The Hobbit #2: Again There and Back Again*.

What I liked about *City of Fire* was how it took its world for granted. So often in SF & F we have characters who are not of their world and are just overawed by it. (Not to mention holding anachronistic, inappropriate, or just plain incredible views but that is another matter.) But the people in *City of Fire* see the wonders and, well, that goes on all the time, so, so what? [Mal says: Good point and very true. I think with *City of Fire* many of the folks who read it had not read *Metropolitan* and treated the characters attitude toward the Plasm from the angle of them having gone through the gee wizz gosh wow phase in the previous book. I kept thinking I was missing something because there was no explanation. What you point about above makes perfect sense. I maybe have to go back and give this book another chance reading it in that light. (I only managed to get through the first half of the book.)]

You should pay close attention to *His Share of Glory*. I wish they would reprint Kornbluth's novels but nowadays a writer's old work only gets reprinted when he does something new. CMK hasnot been in a position to do much new stuff since '57.

[Mal says: I was planning to pick up a copy of this book when I first heard it came out. Ive been a Kornbluth fan for years. Thank goodness we had a book discussion which gave us the opportunity to do a bulk purchase of it. Ive got several other books by Kornbluth. They are all old copies. His works are well worth reprinting. Much of his future predictions seem to be coming true today.

I feel the same way about Doc E.E. Smith and Talbot Mundy. (Reprinting not future predictions. Though I'd much prefer if E.E. Smith's predictions came true rather than Kornbluth's so we could be flying around the universe in spheres at several thousand times the speed of light.) When are they going to get around to reprinting them? Once a year or so someone on the internet announces that the *Lensmen* series will be reprinted but it never seems to happen. Thank goodness for NESFA.]

Mal Barker wrote trippingly about *The Inspiration of Tom Swift*. The original Tom Swift series was written by Howard W. Cans, under his

own name the author of books aimed at a somewhat less sophisticated audience, the *Uncle Wiggly* books.

[Mal says: I don't think blazing "By the author of the epic *Uncle Wiggly*" across the cover of a Tom Swift book would do much for sales. It sounds like I'll have to look for some *Uncle Wiggly* to read to see if the author has the same fascination for plots driven by traffic accidents.]

"Tom Swift himself- a strange mechanical genius who can fix and improve any mechanism that happens to come to his attention." But back when the Stratemyer Syndicate was putting those books out, the Heroic Age of Invention was still going on. Tom Edison was every tinkerer's poster kid, the Bill Gates of his day. If you read about Edison's feud with Tesla, Westinghouse, et al. over alternating current you will see how complete that parallel is. (Calculating alternating current flow requires using complex mathematics, imaginary numbers, and Edison had trouble with that sort of math.) Not to mention that in New York City you buy your electricity from Consolidated Edison, and GE was originally the Edison General Electric Corporation.

[Mal says: Okay, so if Tom Swift is for the age of Edison, who is for the age of Gates? Are there series of books like Tom Swift today to provide such inspiration to people now? Tom Swift is an integral part of our culture. When one mentions Tom Swift people may laugh, but deep down inside somewhere they know not only was that stuff entertaining but it shaped futures.

I have trouble putting Gates and Edison in the same category even though they are very similar. Edison seems to me to at least have been involved in many inventions. I never get the sense Gates is involved in the actual creation process. All he seems to ever do is give big demos at conferences that often go awry. Edison ever have a pie thrown in his face?

I can see one hundred years from now people laughing at the incredible stupidity of Windows the way they shake their heads at the ideas of direct current. Still one can't very well go on a road show these days and demonstrate how Unix or the Mac operating system kills dogs and elephants while Windows remains perfectly safe.]

Not that such mechanical geniuses are unlikely. Both Henry Ford and Sir Henry Royce (the mechanical half of Rolls-Royce while Sir Charles Rolls was the financial end) had the unusual talent of being able to file by band a piece of round bar stock into a perfect square cross-section. Emulating that model is not the best to do in all circumstances; one trembles at the thought of *Tom Swift and the Elders of Zion* - Ford circulated *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and Edison's

P0 Box 430314

Big Pine Key, FL 33043-0314 June 13, 1998

Dear Editor (TBA) {That would be me, I didn't run fast enough when they were looking for another editor! -Shirlene},

I was surprised to receive Shuttle #13, since I'm not a member. I thought Joe Schaumburger might have been responsible, but he disavowed all knowledge. It's apparent that someone in SFSFS thinks I deserved an ish, because the checklist on the last page headed "You Are Getting This Because:" has the "You are held in great esteem by SFSFS" line checked. To my anonymous benefactor, I send my thanks!

[Mal says: Well if the truth must be known. It's my fault you are on the list. I saw your LOC in the Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin mentioning something about Fandom in Florida or a Con in the Keys. I can't quite remember what all exactly happened after that but I put you on the SFSFS mailing list and so you started receiving stuff.]

Nearly all the names in the LOC section were familiar, so I guess my neeness is wearing off (I still have a few squeaky spots left, I think). I enjoyed the Neil Gaiman interview and the piece on the Tom Swift books. The cover art was also worth seeing!

[Mal says: Hopefully you'll like the next Shuttle as much as this one. After Shirlene I have to do the Shuttle again so lord knows what to expect. What we really need to do for the LOC section is get some people who aren't familiar. Writing a LOC to the Shuttle is very easy. In fact members of SFSFS can even write LOCs if they want. You'll just have to put up with my comments to them at least for the moment until the Shuttle's Anarchy of Editorialness takes another bizarre turn. Maybe we could raise more money for the clubhouse by starting up Delphi poll (or was it pool?) to predict what will happen to it a year from now. I've been trying to get the Shuttle out to more and different people and get SFSFS some more notice. As far as I can tell it works. We seem to be mentioned here and there a lot more which is always nice. Hopefully it will help people find out about us in a similar manner to how we found out about you though looking at you in fanzines.]

How did the Traveling Fete fare? I look forward to seeing non-scandalous photos in a future ish of the Shuttle, if this LOC will get me same. If not, thanks for the look-see. My ability to attend fannish events is hampered by various mundane obstacles, not that I haven't tried to attend a fannish event such as a con. Stuff just keeps happening! In the meantime, I'll keep reading all the zines I've been getting from kindly fen, in preparation for my first con, where I intend to say to each face whose name I recognize, "Hey, I've read your Locs/articles!"

[Mal says: All I heard was good stuff about the Fete. There are some pictures from it posted on the web at: <http://www.geocities.com/TheTropics/Cabana/8787/fete98.html>. I assume there will be more to come. I'll have to see about putting some pictures in here so people see what happened. I'd like to get some pictures of the Clubhouse in the Shuttle as well because I'm sure many people are curious to see what it looks like as well.

Attending Fan events in South Florida can be a bit of a problem. We are spread out over a very large area. Ft. Lauderdale is sort of the most centrally located so that is where our clubhouse is. Sometimes attendance at events varies greatly on where the event is held. It can also effect who shows up by how far they had to travel. Still there are a bunch of bad crazies who will travel any distance for SFSFS who are the backbone of the club when it comes to filling out meetings.]

Regards,

Janine G. Stinson

(*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*) (*)
423 Summit Avenue,
Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740
May 4, 1998

Dear Mal or whoever {Geeze Louise! I'm beginning to feel like the towheaded stepchild here! I'm kidding, of course -Shirlene}:

Just the other day I wrote a long delayed loc to the 132nd *Shuttle* to Joe Siclari, who was probably its editor. Before I had the time to mail it, the 133rd *Shuttle* arrived. I'll send this to the SFSFS post office box because I don't quite understand the editor changes in your clubzine {That's our strategy, Harry, we just keep bombarding you with issues until you just start writing us letters automatically, month after month! -Shirlene}.

I'm surprised your book discussion group disliked *Final Blackout* so much. Maybe the opinion was partly caused by the author's later lifestyle. Maybe you had to be a mature person at the time the novel was written and fearing what the war would do to civilization to appreciate Hubbard's story sufficiently. I haven't re-read it in many years but I still have grim but good memories of it.

Electric typewriter and I are allergic to one another. I used an old Underwood typewriter for most of my fannish career, from the mid-1940's until around the start of this decade. It finally behaved like the Wonderful One-Hoss Shay with everything breaking down almost simultaneously. So I switched to an electric typewriter, never felt comfortable with it, and it had two breakdowns in the two or three years I used it. So I remembered there was a tiny Royal portable in a closet that had been property of an old aunt and hadn't been out of its case in at least three decades. I tried it out, it worked perfectly at once, and I've been using it since. The need to exercise

some muscle when typing is one of the main appeals of an acoustic typewriter to me: it makes me feel as if I'm expressing myself and my opinions firmly, in contrast to the delicate touch of an electric typewriter or computer keyboard where I feel as if I'm afraid to utter anything above a whisper or a murmur. The editorial concert about where to find a replacement for his non-electric machine can be mitigated by the current catalog of The Vermont Country Store, P.O. Box 3000, Manchester Ctr., Vermont, 05255-3000. It offers an Olivetti typewriter guaranteed to have "no electronic parts to fail or malfunction" and "built like a tank" for \$185.00. Ribbons are available at tow for \$9.00. I obtain ribbons to fit this Royal at a stationery store not far from Hagerstown although above the Mason & Dixon Line in Pennsylvania.

I'm so old I read a few of the Tom Swift books before Tom, Jr., was even a gleam in his parents' eyes. Some of them weren't science fiction but they were up to date. A book about motorcycles published in 1910 was the equivalent of today's books for teen-agers about kids monkeying around with computers, no matter how outdated it may seem today.

You provide me with my first look at the Hugo nominations. I regret to admit that I've never head of one of the fan writes nominees or one of the best dramatic presentation candidates. Either I'm completely split off from reality or there's some bloc voting involved.

It wouldn't be hard to keep fanzines supplied with Rotslerillustrations for at least a half-century in the future. Even if the supply of previously unpublished drawings should dry up in a decade or so, there will be thousand of reprint candidates form fanzines published too long ago for almost anyone in fandom to remember their first appearance.

Buck Coulson will probably answer for him about his marrying activities. In case he doesn't, someone sent him a certificate attesting that he was ordained to be a minister in some obscure denomination that I doubt if even he had heard of before.

Every so often someone in or out of fandom urges me to start tracking down ancestors. But I've resisted so far, and I'll probably never get around to it now. Someone was compiling a family history of my material grandmother's family but I don't think it ever got published. I know my maternal grandfather's family came from Germany and a cousin once told me my paternal grandmother came form a Virginia family. Other than that, I know absolutely nothing about family members before my grandparents. The only temptation in this regard is

my curiosity about where my middle name, Backer, came from. My father said it was bestowed upon him because of a friendship with a man named Backer by one of his aunts. I've never run across it in 19th Century documents about the Hagerstown area and it didn't very often found as either a given or a family name in the United States.

I should have pointed out that I used a worn out ribbon when I was typing on the electric machine, so that's the fault of me, not the non-electric typewriter.

Yrs., &c.,

Harry Warner Jr.

Tropicon Update

by Shirlene Ananayo-Rawlik

Preparation for Tropicon XVII progresses steadily. Our room party at Oasis was a lot of fun and it ended in a late night drawing for a variety of books for the eight new members who joined Tropicon at Oasis.

We recently received word that our hotel/venue, the Doubletree Guest Suites Cypress Creek, has changed ownership and is now the Sheraton Suites Cypress Creek. Our original contract and rates are still being honored by the new management. We have not gotten definite word yet as to how the renovations, if any, undertaken by the new owners will affect our con space; but they have assured our hotel liaison that any work will be completed by November. The bummer is that there won't be any yummy, warm-from-the-oven cookies waiting for us when we check in.

A new addition we'd like to welcome to Tropicon is HOLLY LISLE, a newly relocated author with more than a few novels and honors tucked under her belt! Also confirmed is former Tropicon GoH, Lynn Abbey!

The Progress Report will be mailed out after the collating, folding, labelling, etc. work session that we'll be holding on the 19th of this month. If you've got the time and a pair of hands, we could probably use them!

If you haven't already joined, now is as good a time as any! See the flyer on page 6 for more details.

The Back Page Editorial!

Throughout this entire editorial process, the one thing I was most worried about was what to write my one page editorial on. Meanwhile, Mal kept sending me more and more LOCs through e-mail. Before I knew it, I had to put aside one book review {sorry, Dan. I'm sure that Mal will find space for it in his issue!}, shrink the LOCs to a small size, and decide that I was going to go for a "minimalist look" with regards to the use of artwork in this issue, and cut my editorial to this. Well, such is life.

Thinking back, I am shocked to realize that I've passed the ten year mark of my time in fandom. While I realize that a mere decade may not seem like much to most of you "oldtimers", it means quite a bit to me.

I came into fandom in a roundabout way. I read a book and found out that the author had a fan club. I sent away for more information and got a personal, handwritten letter in response from one of the club's co-founders. And, before I realized what I had gotten myself into, I was travelling to Biloxi, MS for my first convention and the chance to meet Misty Lackey. Still, it

was not so much meeting my favorite author of the moment that got me hooked. It was the interaction with Judith Louvis, the aforementioned writer of handwritten notes and letters. She encouraged my curiosity and enthusiasm. I started my first newsletter because of her example. She has a no-nonsense approach that I have found to be a wonderful view of fandom. Basically, one is in fandom because it is what one is doing for fun. Once you find that you aren't getting much fun or pleasure out of it all, you've got to reconsider what you're doing. And, if you really get fanatically, then you need to "get a life!" Sometimes we forget that fandom is not the end all and be all of reality, although some act as if it were. Most of us have jobs and commitments that exist outside of fandom. I forgot that at one point. Judith reeled me back to reality.

Consider how you really got hooked into fandom. And, if you have the chance, thank the person who started you on the road to the fan you are today. It's a good thing, trust me.

Hope you've enjoyed this issue. Sorry I had no dirt eating photos to scan in! --Shirlene

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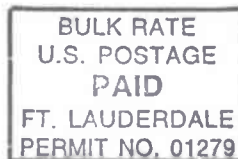
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