

# SAFARI - SAPS

MAILING NUMBER 58 1-15-62

EARL KEMP + 2019 N. Whipple St. + Chicago 47, Illinois

JAMES O'MEARA + 1223 W. 97th Place + Chicago 43, Ill.

As I sit down to start cutting this stencil the old clock turns around to 8:00 PM; the day is Sunday, January 7th -- eight days short of the deadline. This is significant, perhaps, only to me -- I got to bed this morning at 8:00 AM after having driven from Milwaukee in the tail end of the year's worst blizzard; a long, hard sleepless night. This morning I got up earlier than usual, 11:00 AM to greet Big Hearted Howard, Dean McLaughlin and Jim Broderick who also like to drive during near unuseable conditions. Vic Ryan and Jim old buddy were here. After a noon breakfast the Michigan boys left, I took Vic and Jim to their respective transportations (Vic to Evanston and Jim some 125 blocks in the opposite direction). Then I drove around a while, admiring the spectacular snow and ice scenes; counting the large number of automobile accidents, came home, ate and started to collapse. Then I thought of Jim's article he had written for this SAPS mailing and given me over a week ago to put on stencil.

Man, I said, if you don't get those pages cut for Jim you just might be responsible for him missing the mailing. AND if you don't write your own damn pages you're going to be up that stinking creek without a paddle too.

Then I thought of something I had been working on last week, a mood piece about why I hate the holiday season and why I left home and why I have contradicting tastes. I read it and I think if I just do a little studios cutting I might be able to squeeze it through here as a substitute for my page credit. Now I know it is the wrong kind of material, but at the moment it is all I am going to cut. If you're interested the working title was DIGGIN THE BLUES:

\* \* \* \* \*

This night did I give way to an irresistibile impulse.

For weeks, literally, I have been fighting the urge to rush upstairs, dig way into the recesses of the accumulation of records and pull out some particular oldies.

This night I did; they are the "blues".

Usually, once a year like clockwork, I find myself in a morbid pool of dull gray. It isolates me totally from every one who has expressed any desire to be apart; from

LOOK BACKWARD

EARL KEMP

every thing that has any significant meaning to me. Hell, I am sure, is a much nicer place.

Usually it starts in late November, with my birthday, which arrives like the call of a clarion and a swift kick in the ass. Then in rapid succession comes Christmas bearing the other foot. Both of these are for reasons that we will not go into here; or probably ever.

Then comes New Years, brandishing a third foot, for entirely different reasons. Really, this is the loneliest time of the year. Here, if at no other time, you look back and remember (and shudder a little too). Was it really in 1958 (so very long ago) that "old man Kemp," to quote Nick Falasca, treked to Los Angeles? Now too you remember that the old hair line has been receding since you were sixteen; and my but the grey does show through, doesn't it? And remember a Coleman joke about you under a tower and far too many things to mention, because some of them hit too hard...

Now when they get in this condition, I have observed that different people react in different fashions. Some withdraw, some retaliate, some sublimate and replace.

Me, when I get the myserys, I like company. The records are my company as they keep popping away on the turntable. There was Sarah Vaughan, "Mean to Me." There was Ethel Waters, "Am I Blue." And as I write this minute Duke Ellington is conducting his concert arrangement of "Mood Indigo."

Naturally you don't care what they are, but I do; they are my company. There are four hours worth on the turntable. By the time Mildred Bailey gets around to singing "Can't We Be Friends" I should be well into my cups and well on my way out of the blues, if history repeats itself again that is.

Next to the blues I dig "yearning" songs, or is there a difference? I have in mind "Don't Fence Me In" particularly. ...the line, "I want to ride to the ridge where the West commences..." This too is part of the nostalgia kick; thinking backwards.

One of the very few things (besides too much freedom and too little intelligent direction) that I had as a youth was a horse. It was my very own. My father bought a gentle old mare when we moved onto the farm. He had her bred right away so the colt could be mine, and we could "grow up together."

It's funny, really, but I can't remember the mare's name, nor the colt's. I suppose actually I resented both of them; they were symbols of a farm that had taken me away from the "pleasures of city life." But despite myself I did love that colt (although by the time she was old enough for me to ride I had already left home) and the old mare. And this is a yearning time; to feel the saddle bruising the worn tight-ass Levis; to feel the strap of a Marlin dragging your shoulder down. To ride to the ridge where the West.....

commences...to gaze at the scenery until I loose my senses.

God how I love the West.

It must be to my Dad's old mare that I owe this yearning. It was a decided pleasure to saddle her up and ride off through the woods. Here the fantasies can take over and the flattest, woodiest forest erupts into mesas and rolling plains for all the world like the Saturday matinee double bill. You are alone here too, true; but this is a happy alone. It is not bottomless and gray where you are one zero; outside looking in. This alone is as wide as the horizon and as bright as the sun is bright; here you are the number one -- enroute to save the fort, singlehanded perhaps, and the others

they are looking up (but they are not outside, you opened the door for them).

At other times you are not riding alone, but with one or two of your similarly behorsed friends. This ride could take you down the old abandoned railroad embankment. Now you can stop long enough to pull a few of the pine saplings together and tie them at the top; a teepee -- then another, and another: an indian village. If you like you can have a fire, roast a few lizards, poke sticks around looking for snakes. Or move on.

And give the horses another rest by Lucas pond. They pick out a choice nibbling spot while you strip and make it bare in the time you spend splashing around in the brown water, floating on logs or kicking at the courageous fish that bite where they shouldn't.

Always though you should remember to get back in time to save the fort from the hoard of approaching indians.

These could very well be some of the reasons why I love the West. I, who have said on frequent occasions, "when I want something, if it's 4:00 AM I want to be able to go out and find it," "they can't be too big or too noisy for me."

So last year Nancy and I bought a little plot (yes it is little, only 5 acres) near Kingman, Arizona. As insurance, I suppose, it is within easy reach of Las Vegas to the North, Phoenix to the South. I feel now as if I were really a part of this country I love so much. If I had to choose, only New Mexico, by virtue of its magnificent natural beauties, could take preference over Arizona. And you know how I detest both the Arizona drivers and the Arizona highways (Kingman, fortunately is serviced by both 66 & Istate 55).

Even though we may never live there, or spend any extensive length of time there, it is still a place to go. It is like belonging; these mountains are mine -- here I can climb and roam and hunt to my heart's content. These lakes are mine -- for what purpose I want to make of them.

Sometime, I know, I will do just that. It is a part of our heritage; claimed by Nancy and myself. I will walk and climb, I will hunt, I will collect rocks and photograph flowers.

And I might even get inexcusably bored and run into Vegas for the night (or the broke, whichever comes first). But it is a good thing, a bright thing; it sings with the songs from which dreams are made. It must be a dream, because I can put no date on it, nor an extent, I can't see just who the personnel is that populates this dream -- they stand just behind the fog. And funny too, there is no house or shelter in this dream.

At the moment Lena Horne is singing the line "a long way from home," from "Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child." Homes are houses, sometimes. At others no -- I believe in too many cliches, but one that is absolute truth is "home is where the heart is." This is not always the house you live in. Beating the nostalgia a little more on the theme "house".

When I was quite young, before we moved to the farm, we had a chicken house on the vacant lot across the alley from our house. It was a temporary type structure almost identical to the ones everyone else down our side of the street had to house their chickens. And there were hoards of chickens everywhere; clucking, scratching and laying. It was my job to gather the eggs, disturb the sitting hens and toss out a little feed now and then. And one morning, everyone down our street woke up to find all the chickens gone. A clean sweep robbery; the houses feel to disuse and decay. Asi es la vida!

# THE KRAML KID

ANOTHER DEADLINE, ANOTHER COLD, and both of them are making my life miserable for me. Maybe there is some connection between the two of them. Perhaps I should do a survey on it some time. It will have to wait until I have a little more time than at present - - - School work has piled up (thanks to all the holiday running-around) and this cold I mentioned earlier are combining into a conspiracy to keep me from ever catching up. Really I should be studying my German right now instead of writing this, but SAPS must prevail.

So I'll fill this in with some local news, announcements and anything else I can think about at the time until I fulfill my page requirements (Hi, Bruce, does Biology notes count for SAPS credit?).

Like an item to start: I have something like seven or eight past SAPS mailings that I want to dispose of in some manner. If I could get a couple of dollars out of the deal I would be happier about it I'm sure. It is only fair to tell you that I have gone through these mailings and taken out some items I wanted to keep. At least half of each is left and if someone wants these partial mailings they can have them for two dollars plus postage. In other words if someone wants to read some old mailing comments this is a real buy. Drop me a line, my address is on the front of this issue of SaFari.

\* \* \* \* \*

Joe Sarno was home for a two-week leave immediately before Christmas. The Army felt they should do at least this much for him before shipping him off to the frozen wastes of Alaska. It was very good to see Joe again and a hard fact to face that it would be a much longer time before we saw him again.

The day before Joe's leave was up it was decided that Earl and Nancy and I would take Joe out for a night on the town. Since we wanted it to really be a special kind of night for Joe we asked him to name what he wanted; and this we did.

To start everything out with a bang the day was one bitch of a misery. About one o'clock it started drizzling rain on already frozen sidewalks and streets. By five it was nearly impossible to walk outside and driving was extremely hazardous. We were all going to meet at Earl's house at six and start from there, and we all arrived late (including Earl who had gone downtown).

Just to show you how bad it was, Earl's babysitter (who lives two houses away), who was accompanied on the two house walk by an uncle to "keep her from slipping down" was pulled down onto the ice by her uncle when he slipped. A great day.....

So we finally got everything all straight away at the last minute and left Earl's house in his car for our first stop.

# AT THE GATE OF HORN

And we slid all over the streets. When we finally reached our destination, The Como Inn, we were already 15 minutes late to claim the reservation. And the restaurant's 5 parking lots were filled, and the doorman could do nothing for us. Finally we found a spot on our own, about three blocks away, parked and started walking back. Here is where we found out just how bad walking really was. At one point the sidewalk was tilted at a very slight incline, and we kept sliding further and further towards the gutter. Finally we gave up and walked down the center of the street where the cars had beaten out a pathway of sorts.

We made it inside and claimed our table. The Como Inn is a very large, well known Italian restaurant. It covers two or three floors, has several bars here and there throughout, one dance hall and other things but the specialty is their food and the strolling musicians. It has one sort of unique feature, it isn't an open room type restaurant. Every table is set somewhere along a wall and is completely partitioned into a separate room, or miniature private dining rooms.

The menu is about the size of a newspaper, the prices are reasonable. The service good, the food better. And so much of it, in such large servings. Then we noticed the time and we were already late for our next reservation for the evening.

We cut the desert (we were really too full anyway) and slid rapidly back to Earl's car and took off for the new GATE OF HORN.

Our reservation was for the second show, and as I said we were already late. Earl dropped us off at the door (again the lot was full) so we could go haggle over the reservation and went off to find a parking place. And came back to find us still waiting inside the door. The first show was running overtime, so we waited, and waited, and waited. We started to curse for having cut the desert then the people started leaving and they started seating the waiters for the second show. We were real lucky, we got a table right in front of the stage. The Gate of Horn is an old remodeled house, the decoration is very nice inside but they've tried to squeeze in far too many tables. They were very small and very close together.

The waitress took our drink orders and we settled back to watch the show. The second-string act that opened the show was a pleasing surprise. They were called Peter, Paul and Mary (and insisted that they were "more than a cancy bar."). They sang a lot of numbers that I had never heard before, special material and things like that. They were a great team, and I think Joe enjoyed Mary the most. They definitely bear looking into if you see them billed in your territory, go! One of their special numbers was a song about kids playing, all the little chants and songs they sing when they are alone or unsupervised and periodically Mary would break in and sing, "Five, Ten, Fifteen, Twenty" in an exaggeratedly high voice that breaks and goes off-key. The next time she broke in she'd start with "twenty-five" and so on. (And every now and then I hear Earl mumbling, "Five, Ten, Fifteen, Twenty" so I guess he enjoyed them too. Suspicion confirmed, EK).

Then they had a very bad, by my figuring, flamenco dancer who wasn't even listed on the show. Just before she started two couples were seated at an adjoining table who proceeded to laugh, make jokes and in general annoy everyone. And remember this is directly in front of the stage, actually in the spotlight itself.

Then the flamenco dancer was over and the feature act came on, Bob

Gibson. The fabulous "Super Skier" Gibson who proceeded to sing not one ski song (despite calls from the audience). Later he was joined by Bob Kamp.

He had no sooner gotten started good when the annoying two couples finished their joke, their drink and left amid a room of happy sighs.

Bob Gibson was very good, so was Bob Kamp; their voices blend very well together (if you're interested enough they do have an At The Gate of Horn album out, you might give it a listen.)

Eventually the show was over and Earl drove Nancy back to his house to relieve the babysitter and the three of us went on to take Joe home. We did

+++++

A happy Sugar Cane to you Joe!

+++++

stop off just long enough to have a very special drink, for Joe and for the road before we took him home.

Come back soon Joe, so we can do it again.

And Joe left the next day, for Tacoma, then Fairbanks (we had talked about putting him in contact with the Busbys, but knowing he'd have no time didn't work on it), Alaska. We have since heard from him, and all about the exciting -63° temperatures; their +18° heatwave, and many other things that will endear Alaska to Joe forever.

\* \* \* \* \*

Joe isn't the only one of the Chicon III Committee to put on the Army Uniform. Mark Irwin, known to many of you from previous conventions has also enlisted for three years. The only thing we've heard from Mark so far is that Fort Carson, Colorado is cold and that Army life is worse than we had told him it would be when we tried to discourage him from going in for three years instead of waiting to be drafted for two.

+++++

Fly to me, little Robin!

+++++

I think that if I had time to read the mailing I would have an easier time finding something to write about. I do have one important thing to tell you, but I don't think there's time to do it now, maybe I'll come back to it next mailing. It is a sort of a report of the trip Earl and I took down to the Urbana campus of the U of I to see about the room I want for next semester. I start down there early next month, and Earl won't be around to beat the page requirements out of me; but I will always try my very best. After I had finished at Urbana we drove over to Bloomington (some 50 miles away) to see the great man. We didn't know if he was home or not so we went to his house and Fern said he was running the matinee that day. We went on over to the theatre and up to the projection booth where we found Bob Tucker happily running Elvis in Blue Hawaii, ogling a still from a girlie movie and thinking about half of what Rotsler got for Christmas.

Then I ogled the still from the girlie movie and Earl ogled a picture Rotsler had send Bob. The film turned round and round and we talked away, making plans for the Chicon III banquet, sex, sin and many things. And finally the cartoon was over; time to go home.

+++++

ChicaGO in 62 and Sugar Cane too!

+++++