

# WALDO



J. CAMITHORN '81

# JOURNEY THROUGH

SOMETIME SOON I'M GOING TO WRITE THIS IMMENSE CELTIC TRILOGY FULL OF DAMP INNER-MEANINGS: FEATURING A WELSH TREE WIZARD WHO SUFFERS FROM TWONKS DISEASE AND LOOKS VAGUELY LIKE DAVE LANGFORD....AND I'M GOING TO CALL HIM DAI BARK....

But for now; come fly with me to a land full of western promise... and volcanic ash.

# THE EYE OF A SPACE NEEDLE



JULY 3RD. (Exit Manchester - vertically - arrive Vancouver.)

It isn't easy to evoke a sense-of-wonder when you are sat ten-to-a-row with some 230 other people in a bulbous metal cylinder; not even when you have a Cosmic Mind and the drinks are free, and in all honesty I only managed one quotable flight of fantasy. I'd wandered up the spiral staircase into the Jumbo's upper lounge at a time when we were passing over land, and the act of standing looking out downwards momentarily cast me in the role of Robur...mighty conqueror of the skies....no matter that what was below was frozen Canadian tundra and hardly worth conquering, I was for a few moments in the gondola of my ship of the air, lord of all I surveyed.

Well, maybe the free drinks were helping a little.

The pilot brought me back to reality with one of his occasional statements on where he thought we were and what the weather was like at his end of the plane. He was a bit of a joker this pilot, I thought; he kept telling us that Vancouver was wet, cold and miserable and suffering from a surfeit of isobars.... Now we'd left Manchester ( a city that has a certain reputation for dampness) in brilliant sunshine and it was traditional that wherever we went on vacation was fine, sunny, and warmer than where we came from. Bloody pilot was right, though...it was no use my sitting camera-cocked ready to get a fabulous aerial shot of Vancouver as we came into land, the clouds were very dense and obviously, rather porous with it.

Beryl's sister had been to British Columbia a couple of years before; }  
" Just take lightweight clothing, that's all you'll need" she'd advised.

We thought of her often if not kindly as we shivered our way into Canada.

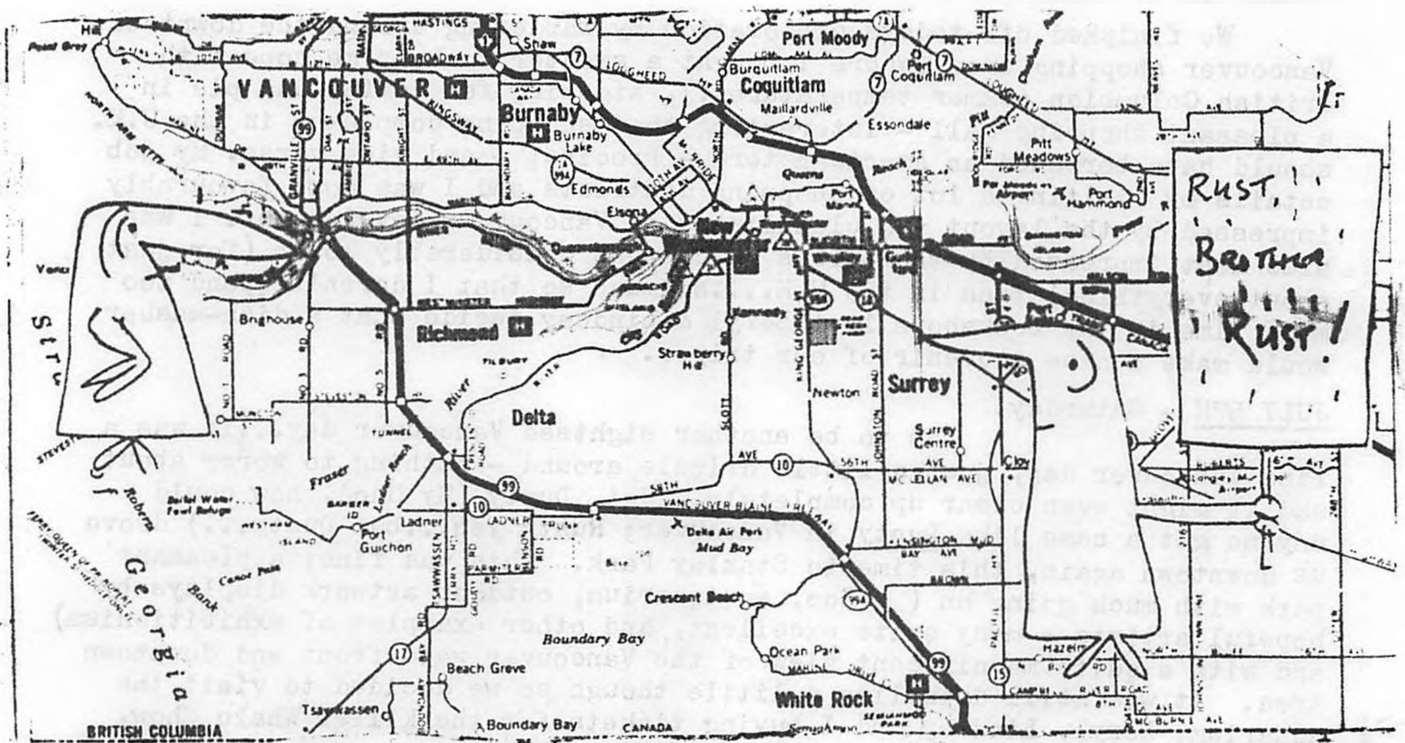
The welcome we received from Beryl's relatives, Dusty and Arlene Brown, as we exited immigration helped warm us though, and they quickly had us through the airport concourse and into their car (where it was warm and not raining) and en route to Richmond and and Keno...

Keno ? Dusty had mentioned in correspondence that they had a canine member of the household, a Tibetan Mountain Lion Dog no less...I hadn't heard of the breed but I like dogs and generally, dogs like me. Beryl isn't keen on dogs (she was bitten once and has reason), Lindsey likes them and this sounded like a big cuddly thing carrying a flask of fermented yak-juice - or whatever passes for brandy in Tibet - just the kind of hound we would all like. Ha!

Have you ever seen a negroid pekinese with a face like Chewbacca/ Gregory Pickersgill, that's snappy with it ? Actually, it isn't easy to tell which end is which until it's too late with a Tibetan Mountain Lion Dog, but one end looked like that...and had a similar disposition. Looking at it I wasn't sure whether to pat it or stuff it...and after doing the former, wished I'd done the latter. I don't suppose many fans have been savaged by a Tibetan Mountain Lion Dog that looks like Gregory Pickersgill /Chewbacca at one end. Indeed, I feel very proud and lonely about it all.

We went to bed early that night; pausing only to set a dog-trap or two, we had got to Vancouver only an hour after leaving Manchester but it felt like longer.

JULY 4TH. Woke to sunshine. Good, this was more our usual vacation pattern...but discovered later in the day that the Pacific North West has certain climatic affinities with Wales: ie, if you can see the mountains it's going to rain - if you can't, it's already raining! However, it was fine and sunny now and Arlene's waffles were like I'd remembered North American waffles to be - delicious.



After a leisurely breakfast we embarked on a sightseeing expedition starting with Queen Elizabeth Park, a former Quarry now turned into pleasant gardens infested with Japanese Tourists...it was sight of these slant-eyed gentlefolk dashing around with cameras that made me realise just how far from home I now was; Japan being much closer to Vancouver geographically than the U.K. - and not only geographically, I'd already noted that the North American Robin has a yellow-breast. My resultant sense of disorientation (did you get that folks..disorientation...Oops, sorry!) was further intensified when Dusty suggested we lunch at a Chinese Smörgasbörd....and during the drive down to Vancouver's chinatown I was taken with periodic visions of a flaxen-haired, slant-eyed being offering heaped platters of sweet 'n sour Danish Pastries. I was disappointed by the reality, but not by the food, and all was made clear to me as I noted that you could help yourself to as much as you wanted at a fixed price. Damn clever these Chinese...and surely a fine example of ethnic mingling.

We strolled through Chinatown after lunch en route to Gastown, a dockside area of Vancouver previously somewhat derelict, but which has been renovated in 'period' fashion. I almost writ 'Olde Worlds", but it is rather difficult for someone from the 'old World' to consider architecture that is only a couple of hundred years old (at most), to be old. An interesting area nonetheless, and we were enjoying it when it started to rain heavily, very heavily. Egad, I hadn't known they had monsoons here! Fortunately, the downpour didn't last long although grey-skies threatened its return for sometime afterwards, and prevented my getting some of the photo's I would have liked to be, sunlit.

I did get a good shot of that quite fannish object the "STEAM" (Pat. Pending) CLOCK, literally steaming in the sunlight after the rain and mused that even those fine fannish discoverers of this form of energy (Vinçe Clarke and Ken Bulmer) hadn't thought of this use for their discovery.

We took a ride there-and-back via Sea-bus to North Vancouver; an interesting mass-transit concept with s-f connotations, since both Ferry-shuttle and terminals are very much to a space-station concept of design. The ride gave good views of the waterfront area generally and the mountains surrounding the city - I'd like to take that ride again when skies are clear; it was quite an impressive site even with low cloud-cover.

We finished off todays exploration by wandering around the downtown Vancouver shopping area (where I bought a sweater to help me cope with British Columbian summer temperatures!), stopping for coffee and pie in a pleasant shopping Mall - interesting that shopping complexes in the U.K. should have borrowed an American term - Precinct - and vice versa. My job entails my visiting a lot of shopping districts and I was most favourably impressed by the layout and cleanliness of Vancouvers development. I was also most impressed by the prices which were considerably lower (for just about everything) than in the U.K....so much so that I daren't spend too much time in the bookshops lest Beryl & Lindsey decide that a dish-washer would make a nice souvenir of our trip...

JULY 5TH - Saturday.

Was to be another sightsee Vancouver day...it was a fine Vancouver day, just a little drizzle around - nothing to worry about and it might even clear up completely. Ha! Dusty (My Ghod, how could anyone get a name like Dusty in Vancouver; Rusty yes...but Dusty...) drove us downtown again, this time to Stanley Park. This was fine; a pleasant park with much going on ( a Zoo, an Aquarium, outdoor artwork displays by hopeful artists - many quite excellent, and other examples of exhibitionism) and with a quite magnificent view of the Vancouver waterfront and downtown area. It was still drizzling a little though so we decided to visit the aquarium; Beryl, Lindsey and I buying tickets for the Killer Whale Show.

This was quite something...there aren't many Killer Whales in Cheshire, you understand, and to see this massive beast hurtling out of the water, acrobatically turning in mid-air seemingly able to treat both elements as one, was quite impressive. And in true Vancouver style it landed back in the water with a sufficient thump to wet most of the audience!

Now I'm not saying that this was perceived as an insult by whichever deity usually ( and very efficiently) ensures the inhabitants of Vancouver don't run short of water...but about then it stopped drizzling and started to rain. VERY HEAVILY. I can understand why it isn't difficult to get Killer Whales to jump out of their pool in Vancouver - its just as wet out as in!

We sheltered in the aquarium complex for awhile, its piscine residents giving us amused and somewhat condescending glances, but the torrential downpour showed no signs of abating and eventually we squelched our way back to the car, and drove, damply, out to Surrey (most of the Vancouver suburbs have English names) to visit Dusty & Arlene's daughter and son-in-law. They were busy putting in a pool which, in view of today's weather, smacked rather of vulgar ostentation, I thought.

We'd stopped en route at a WENDY'S to introduce Beryl and Lindsey to American food in the form of a hamburger and malted...the Burger was quite a good one, but the malted a little plastic when compared with my 1960 memories.

The day had been fouled up somewhat by the weather; we'd had the intent of visiting other scenic parts of the Vancouver area, Crouse Mountain and the Capilano Suspension Bridge et al, and although consoled by the fact that this was real North American weather we were experiencing decided we'd have to take...ahem...a rain check...

#### JULY 6TH - Sunday.

It never rained at all! This could be because we spent the day in Richmond ~~while our clothes dried~~ preparing our hosts trailer rig for a safari into the hinterland. This seemed to take an inordinate amount of time with Arlene and Beryl loading, it seemed, most of the household contents into the trailer which, periodically, regurgitated one or the other as cupboards fought back. The trailer can be identified to Canadian and Stateside readers as a "Fifth Wheel" type; to describe it to anyone else is not so easy and I'm no artist. It looked something like a cubic dinosaur, the 'kneck' portion hooking onto a half-ton Ford truck for towing purposes. Fortunately, it was roomy and capable of sleeping five adults and one Tibetan Mountain Lion Dog and their appurtenances. Just. In view of the fact that I would be spending some time in its close confines with Keno I devoted part of the day attempting to establish a better relationship with him - try to think of him more as Chewbacca and less as Gregory Pickersgill, I implored myself...this was not easy though, since he worried everything bearing print that came within his reach. I took him for walkies, even... which wasn't easy since his legs ( which couldn't easily be perceived) must have been exceeding short...if I had a Tibetan Mountain Lion Dog for a pet, I'd mount it on castors... The walkies weren't entirely successful due to this shortcoming, although I did get a certain perverse pleasure (which Keno didn't share) from experimenting what depth of puddle he could negotiate without having to swim. I suspect that either this animal is an unfavourable mutation, or Tibet is not the sort of country I thought it was.

By early evening everything that could possibly be loaded had been (several times, I suspect!) and we set forth towards the Fraser River Valley and Highway One (the Trans Canadian Highway). To recount the scenes of North American suburbia would probably be exceeding boring for the reader, but when you are there it isn't - everything is strange and interesting and enjoyable, some differences are subtle, others more obvious.

Advertising billboards are a typical example of this...more, in every respect than their European equivalent, glaring and garish even, and yet here they looked right and each small community we passed through offered its own exotic (to us) implorings. These began to diminish as we left the Vancouver delta and started to get into more hilly country - as if the billboard erectors didn't have stepladders with uneven legs! - but would re-appear as a precursor to each town off the highway.

Our immediate destination was Cultus Lake which we reached in the late evening after a pleasant drive, finding the camp-site easily. This, like all the other Trailer and Camping sites we were to stay at were far superior in facilities to those found in the U.K., with plug-in electrics, water, and (in some cases) sewerage for your trailer. I've never considered a touring 'van or trailer to be a particularly civilised form of vacationing, but this I could live with. Cultus Lake was in a wilderness area and the site itself only a few yards from the lake shore, idyllic.

After parking, and connecting the trailers umbilicals to suitable sockets we went to visit friends of Arlene and Dusty who lived half-way up a nearby mountain with a magnificent view of the town and valley of Chilliwack...the derivation of this as a former Indian name I challenge; it has to have been named by a former Liverpudlian who got there on a cold day. Explanations regarding this devious derivation may be obtained from any denizen of Merseyside.

---

"The Vancouver monsoon had given me a hacking cough, but a remedy was found - a Canadian Specific, no less!"

---

MONDAY JULY 7th.

Keno further endeared himself to me by wanting to go walkies at a mere 6am. However, I partly forgave him when I stumbled out of the trailer to view a very serene and beautiful Cultus Lake; the previous evening the surface of the lake had been ruffled by the day-time cavortings of motor-boats, this morning it was tranquil and a perfect mirror for the tree clad slopes surrounding the lake. Nice...this outdoors life was really great, I thought, until I found I had to shave in cold water.

After breakfast we drove 200+ miles from Chilliwack to Kamloops paralleling the Mighty Fraser River...but rather too quickly. Prior to setting out on our trip inland we'd talked about where to go, what to do, etc, and whilst I'd read much about the area before leaving England I could only suggest that Dusty and Arlene show us as much of British Columbia as was possible in the time available without any of us achieving extreme exhaustion. This they did, but on some days (and this was one such) we drove too much, perhaps, and saw too little...the view from the Trans Canada Highway was always great, interesting and scenic - it isn't a motorway in these parts, just a well-graded road - but we went by a lot of places I would liked to have stopped at; Hells Gate, Harrison Hot Springs, Bridal Veil Falls, etcetra. Dusty took our suggestion a little too literally, perhaps, and certainly there were parking problems with a rig as large as this. It was a fantastic days drive all the same passing through diverse countryside, semi-alpine valleys and desert-like scrub; the latter the sort of country you expect to find red indians busy marauding in...and they were but using roadside fruit stands rather than traditional methods.



The Fraser River accompanying us for much of the days journey, gradually changing from blue-water to white-water as it narrowed, being replaced by the Thompson River and then by a series of blue lakes as we drove north.

This had been a hot day and in the narrow defile of the Fraser canyon a fierce and torrid heat encouraged our hosts to keep moving and keep the air flowing. We stopped a couple of times in a convenient lay by, but our first real break was at Cache Creek towards the end of the afternoon. It wasn't difficult to picture this crossroads town as a former hive of gold-rush activity, a staging post in the rush to the Yukon of some few years ago; it still had a raw, slightly temporary air about it and I'm quite sure the locals could tell all about Eskimo Nell if anyone were incautious enough to drop a hat. We stayed only long enough to buy some steak for supper, and to eat large dishes of ice cream then back onto Highway One to a trailer park near the city of Kamloops for an overnight stay.

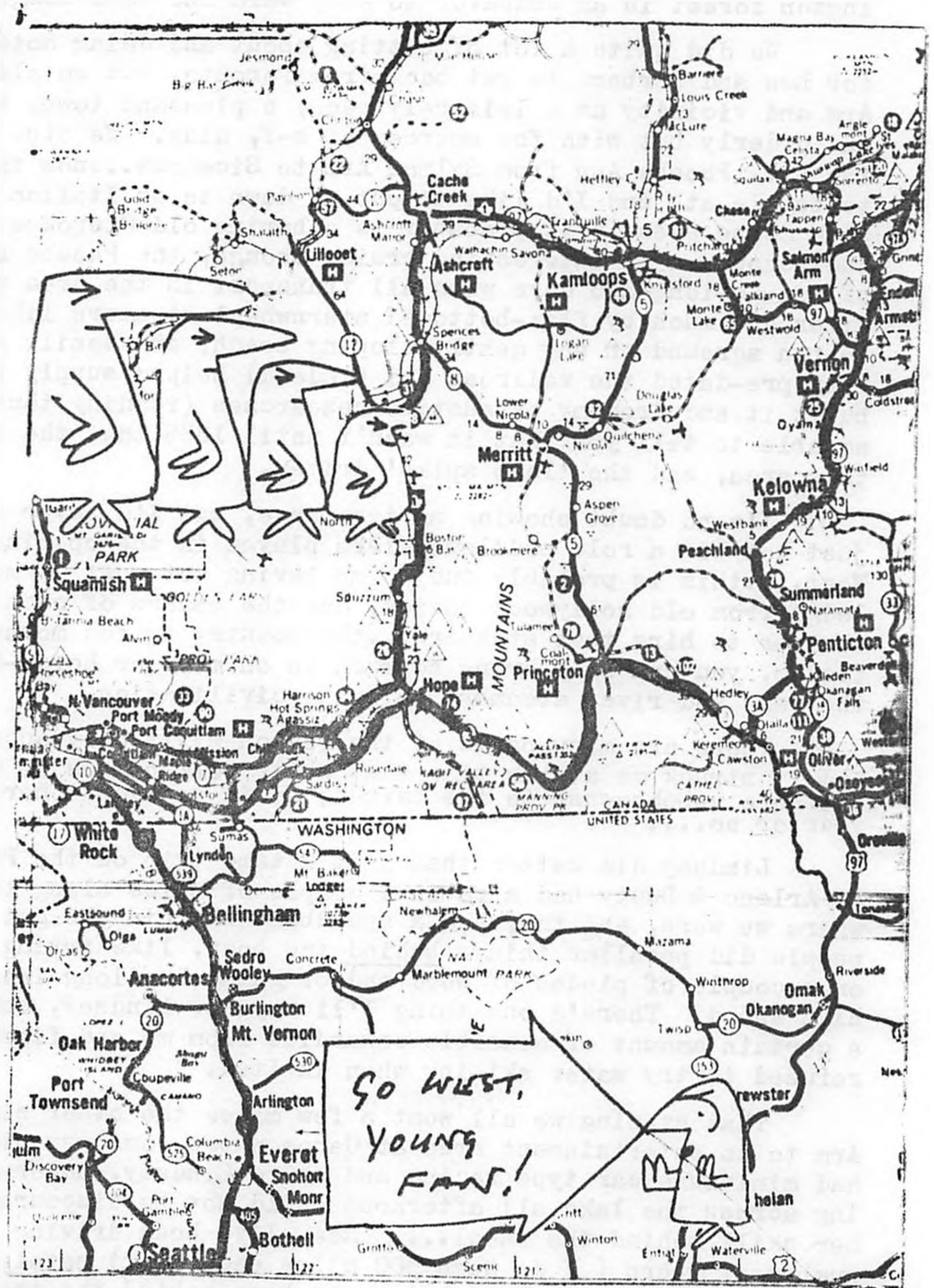
TUESDAY JULY 8TH

FRIDAY JULY 11TH.

At liberty in Salmon Arm... as they say in the travel brochures...with optional excursions.

We drove from Kamloops to Salmon Arm early on tuesday with the intention of visiting Les and Barbara Demeter - other distant relatives of Beryl's who, unfortunately were more distant than expected, being in Toronto until thursday.

We decided to stay anyway as Salmon Arm looked a nice little town and its setting on Shuswap Lake a pleasant one - it is named for one arm of that lake, a large body of water shaped rather like a distorted letter 'H'.



8

We found a nice trailer-park set amidst the lakeshore firs and with a pleasant sandy beach for Lindsey to sunbathe on. Like the other sites we had used it was remarkably free of insects, but it was infested with Seattle Firemen (I mean no disrespect to that gallant breed...) who also appear to swarm in summer. Dusty is a fireman at Vancouver airport and his truck carries some symbol apparently immediately recognisable to all other firemen - quite possibly its that 40foot ladder he told me was for getting up high rockies... - for as we pulled into a parking space on the Sandy Point site we were at once surrounded (literally) by visiting firemen who were all from the Seattle area, and who had arranged to meet up at various trailer parks whilst touring. I wasn't too unhappy about their presence having noted with some concern the eagerness with which the vacationers built fires as soon as it was decently dusk around here - the firemen just as eager as everyone else to start a conflagration, although they gave frustrated looks at other fires as if wishing to charge over and extinguish them. The aroma of woodsmoke and charred steak quite took me back to long-ago Liverpool Group parties and our attempts to burn down Bebington forest in an endeavor to keep warm and cook bangers.

We did quite a lot of sitting about and doing nothing whilst waiting for Les and Barbara to get back from Toronto, but we also explored Salmon Arm and vicinity at a leisurely pace, a pleasant town, very clean, neat and orderly but with few sources of s-f, alas. We also took a boat ride on the M.V. Phoebe Ann from Salmon Arm to Sicamous...now there's a place name to boggle at, and I'd like to put it down to an Italian immigrant with a sick moose even if it probably is a boring old Cherokee word for something indigenous. An interesting cruise though, the Phoebe Ann being a survivor of not-so-long-ago days when all transport in the area was by lake or river and much by flat-bottomed sternwheel steamers like this which could be run aground on any gently sloping beach, and easily reversed off again. They pre-dated the railroad and (indeed) helped supply the camps that built it and from my exhaustive researches (reading tourist brochures) I am able to tell you that it wasn't until 1885 that the railroad reached this area, and the 'last spike' driven.

I'm no doubt showing my ignorance, but I'd never realised before just how big a role paddlewheelers played in the opening up of the North West....this is probably due to my having got most of my historical knowledge from old hollywood movies, and the makers of such finding mules cheaper to hire than steamers...the country is too mountainous for wagon-trains, you can only bring so much in on mule or horse-back, so it took the lake and river steamers to bring civilisation.

There are many parts of the region still only accessible by boat, and it struck me at the time that whole communities of folk could live out here unbeknownst to the taxman; so if you don't here from me for a year or so....

Lindsey did better than just a tame trip on the Phoebe Ann; friends of Arlene & Dusty had a cabin a couple of miles along the lakeshore from where we were, and they had a speedboat wherein she got to ride whilst people did peculiar things behind the boat, like trying to stay upright on a couple of pieces of wood and/or going headlong into the lake at high speed. There's one thing I'll say for Lindsey, she has inherited a certain amount of sensible cowardice from me and firmly, politely, refused to try water ski-ing when invited.

That evening we all went a few miles the other side of Salmon Arm to an entertainment area at Canoe where, amongst other things, they had miniature car type racing and where Lindsey, power-crazed from hurtling across the lake all afternoon could not be discouraged from trying her skill behind the wheel.... Now, I've been driving for quite a number of years ( I do some 500 miles each week) safely but not slowly; Lindsey on the other hand had never been behind the wheel of anything more powerful than a pedal car in her life before, but she massacred me.



A manic grin on her face, she put the fear of Ghod into all other users of the track, terrorising what appeared to be the local equivalent of Hell's Angels in the process - when she wants to learn to drive it will not be in my car! 9

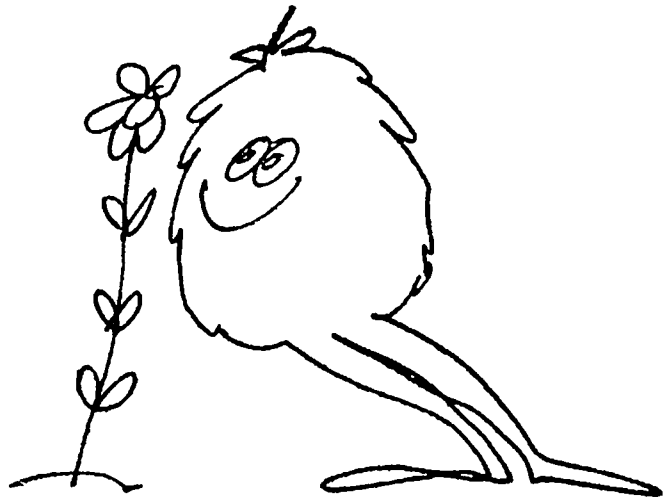
Les and Barbara returned, fortuitously, in time for Beryl's birthday which was celebrated at a local Chinese restaurant and later at Sleepy Hollow, their home on Mount. Ida. Les owns the Mt. Ida Concrete Company and, apparently, most of Mount Ida as well, and their home is about half-way up the mountain in an idyllic setting - peaceful and pleasant but with every mod. con. An ideal place to have a birthday, Sleepy Hollow... and the party, with some fourteen or so vaguely related people emerging to wish Beryl 'All The Best..Hic,' a lively affair.

#### FRIDAY JULY 11TH.

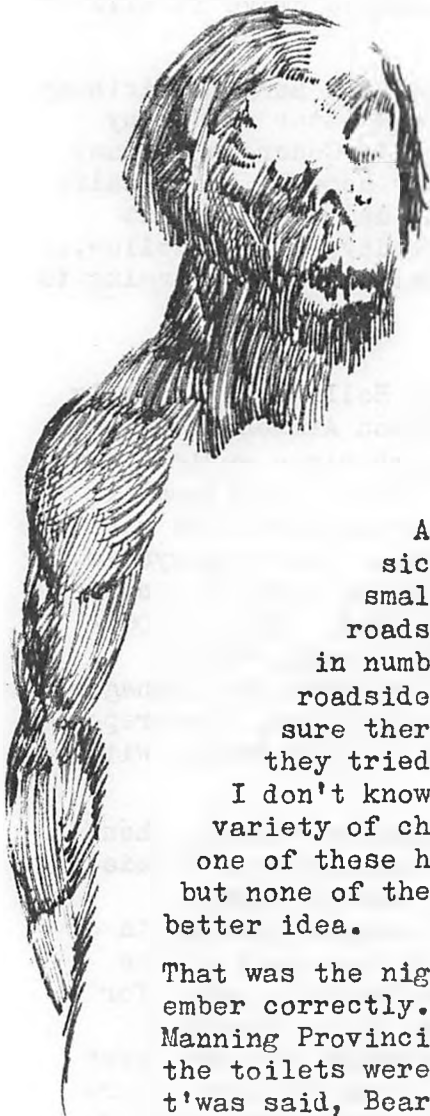
We had a late breakfast at Sleepy Hollow, regretfully bade farewell to Les & Barbara and headed out of Salmon Arm on Highway 97 for the Okanagan Valley. The weather had been superb since we left Vancouver; clear blue skies and pleasantly warm with just an occasional shower to freshen things up...since much of the American continent was suffering extremes of heat we were probably fortunate. The countryside was great with ever-changing vistas of clear-blue lakes, verdant pasture and hillside with, always, mountains not too far distant. This is OGO-POGO country...and if you have never heard of OGOPOGO, well, tush! OGOPOGO is a relative of the Loch Ness Monster and inhabits the Okanagan Lake. Because, and only because, he has such a fannish name, I'm prepered to believe in him/her/it. I wished I'd had my I GO POGO button with me.

We had a lunchtime break overlooking the Coldstream Valley, then drove on down the Okanagan to the city of Kelowna, passing over Canada's largest floating bridge - and I'd hate to be doing that if OGOPOGO decides to wrap himself around it - finding a trailer-park just south of the city. One of the snags with trailer-touring is that most of the best sites are well outside of town or city, and whilst this makes for peaceful nights it does limit you to what you can do in an evening. Most evenings we didn't stop until it was time to discuss the day over supper and then bunk down, anyway, but we got to Kelowna in late afternoon and since Dusty and Arlene had relatives in the area, and since my legs were starting to atrophy, I suggested we wouldn't mind being deposited somewhere and going walkabout whilst they did some visiting.

Beryl, Lindsey, and I spent the evening exploring a large out-of-town shopping complex....now that sounds like a mundane thing to do and normally you will never find me going on such expeditions at home (I'm too involved in the distributive trade in my work to want to get involved in it in my leisure time), but this was interesting because the goods in the shops were different (generally), the shopping-malls were well planned and spotless clean, and the sales assistants friendly and helpful - and I found a good s-f book shop! We were strangers in a strange land and exploring; its as simple as that.



SATURDAY JULY 12TH.



We journeyed from Kelowna to Manning Provincial Park via Peachland, Summerland, Penticton and Princeton, stopping as the fancy took us. Penticton was interesting and here was a really big paddle-steamer, the M.V. SICAMOUS, beached and being used as a restaurant by the lakeside. I find a fascination in the use of such leviathans to open up the area (rather like the colony ships of s-f), and if anyone has (or knows of) good, preferably well-illustrated, source material thereof, I'd appreciate any information. I could enjoy - should the unlikely opportunity occur - hiring one of the houseboats which abound on these lakes, and re-tracing some of the old routes.

A little later in the day we were startled and then sickened by the behavior of one species of bird, a small yellow-breasted avian; these were hovering by the roadside until a vehicle approached then deliberately, in numbers, flying at and into the car or truck. The roadside for miles was littered with dead birds and I'm sure there must have been accidents to the roads users as they tried to evade the birds 'attack'.... The cause?

I don't know, but this was a heavily wooded area and quite a variety of chemical sprays are used and I can only assume that one of these had blinded or deranged the birds...I'm guessing, but none of the people we mentioned the phenomena to had any better idea.

That was the night Lindsey slept with her legs crossed, if I remember correctly. We parked in a true wilderness area within the Manning Provincial Park, hard by a rushing mountain river where the toilets were singular and well-screened by bushes - and where, t'was said, Bears sometimes came for a sniff around after dark in search of supper. I suggested we stake out Keno to...ahem.... warn us of their approach, but couldn't get universal approval for the idea even though my argument that any Tibetan beastie, used to coping with Yak and Yheti shouldn't find a mere bear frightening, was admitted to be a strong one.

SUNDAY JULY 13th.

Today's journeying completed our all too brief tour of British Columbia, the route bringing us back to Vancouver and Richmond but, as usual, stopping at a few points of interest en route. At Hope to see the after effects of an immense landslip, where half a mountain had literally descended into a valley and raised that valley-bottom by quite a considerable amount and burying a highway in the process. If you get the urge to feel insignificant anytime, the Hope Slide is a good place to go.

We reached Richmond in late-afternoon and after helping offload the trailer, and eating, I 'phoned Frank Denton in Seattle to arrange a rendezvous for the next day. Originally, I'd thought we'd make the trip from Vancouver to Seattle by either train or boat; but both these turned out to be impracticable....the only train of the day left Vancouver at 7am!! ...and going by sea would have entailed keeping to a set of coincidence points that only a secret Time-Lord could have guaranteed. So we decided to have a lie-in and travel Greyhound, instead.

MONDAY JULY 14TH.

Was the day we started phase two of our vacation...exit Canada stage left...enter U.S.A. stage right. We'd seen a lot in our ten days in British Columbia, not as much as we'd intended to - we hadn't done a lot of the things planned when looking through brochures and maps of the area prior to our vacation: we hadn't taken a boat ride to Victoria, or through the inner-passage, we hadn't taken the Royal Hudson Steam Train excursion from Vancouver to Squamish, or seen a genuine (restored) Injun village. However, we had seen and done a lot of things we hadn't expected to do which were equally pleasant and enjoyable. Things balance out.

Just before four o'clock in the afternoon we took leave of Arlene and Dusty and boarded the Greyhound bus for Seattle. It was motorway almost all the way and non-stop - apart from the border stop for customs and immigration. The Greyhound bus station in Vancouver had been just what I expected, noisy, a little sleazy, and rather disorganised; the border crossing wasn't, the officials were friendly and the formalities courteously and quickly disposed of. Once over the border into the U.S. the road got wider and the traffic moved slower...traffic hadn't moved particularly fast in Canada (relative to U.K. Motorway's frenetic pace), but the 55 mph Stateside speed limit reduced it to an apparent crawl. In America you have to be more courteous to your fellow driver - you are driving (literally) alongside him on the freeway for mile after mile!

We got into the Seattle Greyhound depository a few minutes ahead of schedule and Frank, but he appeared from one direction as I vanished in another, looking for him. It was great to see him again and to be welcomed to Seattle by a fine fannish, furry, friendly face. We were quickly into the Denton Toyota and off to Burien, the south-western suburb of the city where the Denton's live, and where Anna-Jo awaited us with a fine meal. En route we skirted the waterfront area on the Alaskan Way viaduct, which also gave us a good first view of the Seattle skyline. I've always liked seaport cities - generally they have a vitality and variety lacking in inland areas of population, and Seattle looked like a good one ....and perhaps it wouldn't rain here as much as in Vancouver.

That first evening was spent reminiscing, and discussing where we were going to go...what we were going to see...what we were going to eat (let's get the priorities right...right!), during the next few days. Frank and Anna-Jo have a very pleasant home in which there are many things of interest (not the least of which being Frank's book-collection) and it was great to be there, and in their company. And it was about half-way through the evening that I began to really feel I was in that strange land across the sea where all the tv programs come from...the sound-effects off, were right, convincing. In the B.C. wilderness there hadn't been (not surprisingly) any cop-car sirens or tyre-squeals in the background as we talked, ate, drank, etc; but Seattle's 8th Avenue has got busier since Frank and Anna-Jo came to live on it and a para-medical team was based quite nearby and, occasionally, things sounded like America was just outside the window. I wouldn't have been too surprised if Kojak had wandered in to enquire if we loved him...

TUESDAY JULY 15TH

Refreshed by a good nights sleep and a leisurely breakfast we set out to explore downtown Seattle...well, part of downtown Seattle, it is a big city. Frank managed to park close to Pioneer Square in the older part of town; an area of interesting architecture where the old and the new blend fairly harmoniously. We strolled around for awhile, then took the Underground Tour - which interestingly told of the cities past whilst conducting us through its nether regions. Almost a hundred years ago, apparently, all the toilets in Seattle got blocked up, so the then inhabitants decided to build a whole new city on top of them. The resultant tendency of the sub-strata to liquefy during certain climatic conditions lead to nearby Yesler Way becoming known as 'Skid Road' -

this is the true derivation of the term 'Skid Row' and one should not be taken in by the facile and inaccurate dissertation on the subject by John D. Berry in TELOS 2....

As I remarked to Frank after our underground exploration, 'only in America would a dodgy stroll through several dark and dank cellars become a major tourist attraction,' it was well done though, and like those blocked-up toilets of many years ago, a tribute to American get-up-and-go!

Our underground sorte having given us an appetite, we looked around for a suitable place to assuage it - never a difficult task in America where eating-out is much cheaper and far better value for money than in the U.K. - we had excellent 'burgers and unusual service at The Iron Horse restaurant on 3rd Ave...this is probably a mecca for railway buffs and rightly so, the walls being covered by railroad memorabilia and the food delivered to your table by model train. Fun...and the meat was very tender.

Afterwards we continued our stroll in the area and here, I feel, I should pay tribute to Frank's skill as a guide...no matter where we went during our stay with the Dentons we would (quite accidentally...) come upon a really excellent bookstore whenever our legs tired of sightseeing. The only time he let me down was 10,000feet up on Mount Rainier and whilst he cannot be blamed for the fact that nowone (as yet) has had the initiative to open one there, I do consider he should have packed the car trunk - or, at least, a knapsack, with a good selection of new s-f..... Today's bookstore was The Elliott Bay Book Co - I think, I can't be quite sure of my facts here since Beryl has thoughtlessly destroyed the collection of s-f related wrapping-paper I aquired whilst abroad. It certainly was a good bookstore anyway, and with an excellent s-f section and it was only hunger, and the promise of more of Anna-Jo's excellent cooking that lured me back to the car.

#### WEDNESDAY JULY 16TH.

Was Waterfront Day...after another leisurely start. Both Frank and Anna-Jo had arranged vacation-time to coincide with our visit and this allowed us to talk late at night, get up late the next ~~Afternoon~~ morning, but still see and do a lot because we had excellent guides. Both have lived most of their lives in the Seattle/Tacoma area, apart from frequent expeditions to s-f conventions and England, and really know it well. It was fairly typical of our touring modus operandi that by the time we had talked our way from Breakfast to the harbour area, we were ready for a snack!

I gather from slogans abounding in the city that it, like Vancouver, suffers from regular precipitations, but we were fortunate in that it stayed fine for us and today we had a fish-and-chip meal outdoors on Pier 56 while we waited for the S.S. Goodtime to berth, and take us for a tour of the harbour. Pier 56 is in the middle of what was 'The Goldrush Strip', an area that is now part busy ferryboat termini, partly redeveloped pier-complexes abounding with speciality shops and restaurants, a bustling interesting tourist-oriented area where you can take a boat to Alaska or eat Hawaiian-style. The harbour tour was fine, the S.S. Goodtime sweeping out into Elliott Bay (Puget Sound) and giving us an excellent series of views of the Seattle skyline and the many different craft using the harbour facilities.

That evening we went to see "THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK", which was, if you will allow typical British understatement, A Bloody Good Film, and given a little extra piquancy by being seen in a real American movie house. Whilst waiting for the film to start I experienced certain misgivings as everyone around us was stocking up with peanuts and popcorn but ....such was the impact of the film on the audience...not a crunch was heard during its screening. Really superb space-opera and better than STAR WARS, I think.

THURSDAY JULY 17th. Anna-Jo woke everyone with a shout from the bathroom, "I can see Mount. Rainier, everyone!!!".

Since it was a mere 10am and I was having difficulty focusing at all, I was greatly impressed by this feat and clapped briefly before slumping back into unconsciousness. I was not allowed to remain in this blissful state for long, however...several minutes later Beryl yelled that she could see it, too. The reason for all this excitement is that 14,000ft high, 95mile distant Mt. Rainier is only visible from Seattle when the ..er..visibility is right, if you see what I mean, and it had been decided that as soon as the visibility was right we'd go and visit the mountain.

Later that day I was very pleased Anna-Jo had the perspicacity (and the eyesight) she has....whilst touring British Columbia we'd passed by a lot of mountains, admiring them from afar, today we saw what a mountain was like close-up. Mount Rainier, like the more newsworthy Mt.St.Helens, is volcanic in origin and looked to me somehow odd...when I first viewed it, blearily, from the bathroom-window; this being due to my being used to see mountains in ranges not singly, I think. This one appeared to float above the clouds and no doubt has been responsible for certain of the larger UFO sightings made in the area...and just as UFO's (it would seem) vanish just when you have them in focus, so did Mount Rainier; I honestly don't know how Frank found his way there.

En route we stopped a couple of times; at Air Puyallup for a coffee.... "Air Puyallup", I like that name but don't think I'd care for it too much if I were pilot of a Bessarabian Jumbo-jet in distress - by the time I'd figured out how to pronounce it so I could arrange an emergency landing...ZONK!!! We also stopped at NorthWest Trek a quite sizeable wildlife preserve to see some of the animals indigenous to the area; interesting, even though they didn't have a Bigfoot.

Naturally, we also stopped for lunch (cunningly prepared beforehand by Anna-Jo) since breakfast was by now several hours talking behind us: we pulled off the road quite suddenly into the forest, stopping with the car bonnet almost buried in the undergrowth and completely surrounded by trees. 'Funny place for a picnic', I thought...then Frank led us through the bushes along a very narrow trail and 'Lo', the Denton cabin revealed itself. Lightly coated still, with volcanic ash from the Mt. St. Helens eruption but fortunately otherwise undamaged.

We were now within the Mount Rainier National Park and after a pleasant lunch we proceeded to climb 4,000ft of the mountain...naturally, being trufans we did this in a civilised way - by car! However, because both Anna-Jo and Frank know the mountain intimately (and have climbed it without mechanical aids on several occasions) we were given an enth-ralling guided tour, stopping at all the best vantage points. I'd like, one year...to come back and really climb that mountain with the Denton's, such was the fascination their knowledge of the area imparted.

Late in the day, as we descended the mountain slowly, a Doe and her young tripped lightly and fearlessly across the road in front of us. A most pleasureable sight in the gloaming.

Supper was also a most pleasant sight; we'd spent much of the journey back in discussion of what it would be and eventually, decided on doughnuts. But we foreigners hadn't realised just how many different doughnuts -



could be had at a speciality doughnut house....there were even doughnuts left over, and that's a lot of doughnuts!

#### FRIDAY JULY 18TH.

Was an equally fascinating day in a completely different way....we all went shopping. The girls bound for SALES: Frank and I visiting a succession of increasingly well-stocked bookshops. I could quite easily spend a vacation in the bookstores of Seattle and area...in fact I think our last call that day was in the city of Renton. It seemed that no matter how many titles I bought at each call, there were always several more I wanted at the next - I'm not sure, but its possible Lester Del Rey, Don Wollheim, Mr. Dell, Mr. Ace and other wily s-f publishers were busy in the background bringing out new titles as the rumour went round that Bentcliffe and Denton are buying up Seattle....

Such a relatively mundane thing as a shopping expedition may sound dull...after the places we'd been, the sights we'd seen, but the differences made it all quite fascinating. And the prices...we'd thought things in Canada were cheap, but America was one big bargain basement - by comparison to hyper-inflated U.K. prices.

#### SATURDAY JULY 19TH.

Also started out with a shopping expedition.....to Pike Place Market to buy a sockeye salmon. Public Markets (apparently) are something of a rarity in the USofA, though I understand they are proliferating; and it was interesting to note their adherence to the original market-place concept, ie, a place where local produce and crafts were sold...the U.K. equivalent has (generally) been debased (with a few country-village exceptions) and become a 'market' for goods which are inferior or have 'fallen-off-the-back-of-a-lorry'. We bought our salmon and Lindsey aquired one of the biggest ice-creams extant; and Frank and I were pleased to observe that s-f and allied publications were not being neglected at Pike Place.

This was a day we did a heck of a lot: from Pikes Place we headed for the Seattle Center and its soaring 600ft SPACE NEEDLE, our first objective at this former Worlds Fair site. It was a perfect day, quite hot and with a clear blue sky ( not a sign of rust in the atmosphere ), ideal for photography and looking down on things. Seattle from above was interesting and it was possible to fit our topological impressions into a more coherent whole, as well as admire the view. I could have stayed up there for hours, just looking...but Lindsoy had chickened-out when she saw the elevators were exterior ones and awaited us somewhere below; and there were other things to see. The Seattle Center is another place I could spend a lot more time at than was possible now; why, it even has its own bookstore with a good s-f line.

Next on todays tour was the Chittenden Locks which allow shipping of a wide variety to pass between Puget Sound and Lake Washington and where there is also a salmon-ladder with underwater viewing. I'd heard, vaguely, of this natural (?) phenomena by which Salmon return to their birthplace to spawn, and that it was a do or die thing with them...the reality (as it usually does) had quite an impact. To see these (literally) bleeding fish throwing themselves time and time again up a series of concrete steps, landing on step-edges and losing a slice or two of fish-flesh in the process but leaping again and again and again...it explains much: fish, after all, are our ancestors, and if they are that thick.....well, it explains much. Why, for instance, people keep sending Joseph Nicholas their fanzine to review... possibly.

It might even explain why that chap at the Baseball game later that evening kept throwing the ball to this other chap who had a bat even tho' this latter chap seemed totally incapable of hitting it! I mean, there must be an explanation for behavior like this...

15

Incidentally, they didn't have a s-f bookstore at the Baseball Stadium; although the stadium itself, the huge covered KINGDOME is somewhat science-fictional itself in that just a little imagination is required to convert it into a Martian Dome. It would certainly be an ideal place for flying model airplanes.

We rounded the day out with a Mexican supper - I'd never eaten Mexican cuisine before and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Perhaps The Alamo turned out for the best after all, I theenk!

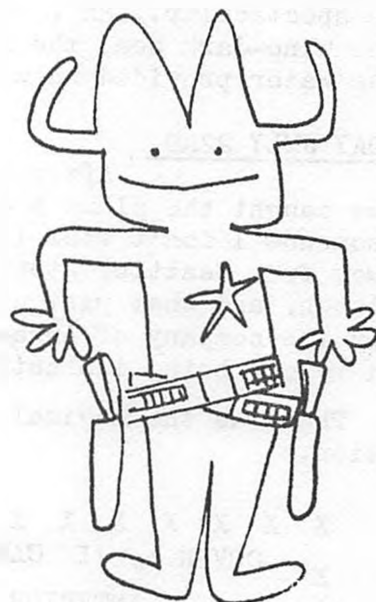
#### SUNDAY JULY 20TH.

Time was getting short, only two more days to go and I hadn't seen a BATTLESTAR GALACTICA episode yet...mebbe if I talked our hosts into a good long excursion I wouldn't see one today, either! And we all went off after lunch bound for Fort Naquissy...but that's a very discourteously curt way of dismissing the superbly cooked sockeye-salmon which Anna-Jo had been ministering to all morning. I, with due forethought and gluttony in mind had gone for a walk after breakfast and was able to scoff probably more than my share, but nowone rose other than turgidly from the table and Anna-Jo was awarded the tail of the beast (we'd have given her the ears as well, but someone had eaten them...).

And we all went off to Fort Naquissy after lunch with the Toyota very low on the ground. Fort Naquissy is a restored settlement typical of the frontier days in Washington State, and of the kind nasty, hurtful injun's are seen throwing sharp things at in Hollywood movies. I managed to get one or two good shots of the place by all the 20th Century children who would charge out of a 19th Century doorway whenever I clicked my shutter release. If time-travel ever does become possible, it's going to be hell for photographers...

The fort is set on a headland looking out over Puget Sound to the Olympia Mountains, a very pleasant spot and we stayed quite a while enjoying the different perspectives and watching the varied craft on the Sound. I noted, as I had in Canada, the number of Houseboats cruising the area - we don't have these in the U.K. (our nearest equivalent probably being the humble canal barge) - and was impressed with there obvious potential for vacation gafia; heck, I suppose you could even have one built with torpedo tubes and missile-launchers in case you got persistent infestation of water skiers and speedboats. That's yet another way I could spend a holiday in the Pacific NorthWest.

And we didn't escape Battleship Galactica after all...but this was nowones fault. The intent was to watch a rather good s-f movie on cable-tv; our hosts did not subscribe to this system but Frank's inventive nature had led him to devising a way of receiving it...this involved a hank of hair, eye of newt, and sundry other esoteric ingredients. Alas, one of these (possibly the Herzwestern Dark it doesn't usually travel, eh, Frank?) wasn't of the required potency, and all we got was multi-coloured fog 'till we switched channels and Battlestar Galactica impinged on our senses with mind-numbing intensity. I admire the cunning cost-cutting of the producer in having all his aliens disguised as Earthmen; but little else. Compared with this show the number of plastic-ears for Spock bought by the STAR TREK team makes it a big-budget production!



MONDAY JULY 21ST.

Our last full day in Seattle...so we'd better beware of over-exertion. The day started pleasantly leisurely (as they all had at The Denton's); Frank reckons it takes at least six cups of coffee to get his personal time in synchronisation with the clock, and my own metabolism had begun to go along with this...that's six cups of coffee before breakfast, of course. Between cups I'd investigate further the large and catholic book and Fannish Memorabilia collection that occupies two full rooms of the Denton menage and threatens to take over a third in the near future; this was an enjoyable pastime I indulged in whenever time allowed, Frank assisting by digging out one fascinating item after another that I hadn't seen before. It's a nice place, the Denton place...a house to relax in where good conversation, food and books can be enjoyed.

This was the day I was to meet Stephen Donaldson, author of the 'ILLEARTH WAR' trilogy. Frank does book reviews for one of the Seattle papers and had been invited to a meet-the-author-session together with another local reviewer: I was going along as foreign correspondent (unpaid, of course) for ANSIBLE! We were to meet Steve Donaldson in a bar not far from the University, which allowed nice time for investigating yet a few more bookstores at which I was (again) tempted to purchase...Hmmm, I wonder if Frank was getting commission on my purchases!

Regrettably, friend Donaldson didn't materialise at the appointed time or place and I can only assume that, like his principal character, he had suddenly to dash off into some other troubled world to help make matters worse... The bar was interesting, redolent of student drop-outs and gregorian chants; the house speciality tho' was a particularly vicious lemon-juice which whilst it fitted the general ambience was not to my palate. I suspect the bar-keep had heard of Donaldson and brewed it specially as a prophylactic against leprosy, it certainly tasted that way.

Meanwhile...Lindsey had spent the afternoon sunbathing, and Beryl had inveigled Anna-Jo into visiting a Burien cocktail-lounge where, after a long price-comparison chat with the bartender, she was presented with a large number of instant-coffee sachets which still keep appearing out of odd items of clothing some months after our return. If the right people had been around I think we could have stayed in Seattle on welfare.

That evening we took the ferry boat to Bremerton, a ride that somehow was completely right for the last evening of our vacation - the setting sun gilding the Seattle waterfront as we glided out into Puget Sound. It had been a fine clear day and the sunset over the distant Olympians was quite spectacular...and, as we returned from the round-trip, across a serene wine-dark sea, the fairyland skyscraper lights of Seattle reflected in the water provided us with an image no Bentcliffe will forget.

TUESDAY JULY 22ND.

After breakfast the Denton's drove us to Vancouver... and we caught the plane home. That's a bald and unilluminating statement, but somehow I don't feel like writing about that last day...we took the freeway from Seattle, stopped at a Black Angus in Bellingham for an excellent lunch, and that part of the homeward journey was made much more pleasant by the company of Anna-Jo and Frank...but, the vacation should have ended by our being instantly transported home from that ferry boat ride.

That was the magical moment, the full-stop to a most pleasureable vacation.

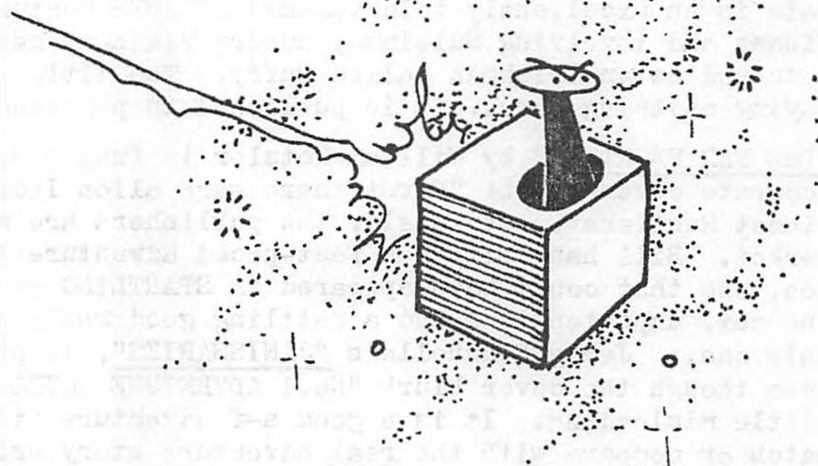
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
																			X
X																			X
X																			X
X																			X
X																			X
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

16



THE  
TOWEL  
AND  
SCIENCE-  
FICTION  
REVIEW  
SECTION.....

FANALOG



When we came to unpack after our journeyings quite an intriguing and indicative assortment of souvenirs were unearthed. Lindsey had aquired various articles of apparel plus a good assortment of postcards, maps, handouts, used-tickets, serviettes; which should make up into quite a good scrapbook - plus a quantity of genuine Hamburger-crumbs for which there is no known useful application. Beryl brought back clothing and a whole pile of towels (!!) which she and Anna-Jo had found on special-offer at J.C. Penney's...whilst at the time I found this a strange thing to do I must admit that towels do make a logical sauvenir of the Pacific North West, and certainly whenever we use them we think of Vancouver...

I brung back a sizeable stack of paperbacks which I'll enjoy reading all the more because I actually bought them at an American bookstore - just as seeing THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK at an American cinema added a little piquancy, a certain panache to the viewing - which is just as well since one or two of the clunkers I brought back need all the help they can get! I'm not going to review them all ( I haven't read them all - yet), but there are a few I'd like to make comment on.

The DEBU Trilogy by F.M. Busby, for instance, which I now think of as the 'Damn You FM Busby Trilogy'...I bought it because I used to enjoy Buz' writing in CRY - what better reason could one have? - but had to give up on it because of the EESmith american-schoolboy dialogue that infests it. I mean, I can't easily suspend disbelief in regard to a merciless, exo-skeleton alien that quails and reveals the hidden secrets of its race on being threatened with "Crab Salad"...even if the 'hero' had eaten part of its "Egg Child". Surely, even the most naive of aliens would realise this was due more to the American craze for Fast Food than to any real animosity. "Cage A Man", the first part of the trilogy wasn't half bad...but the rest made up for it!

"ROADMARKS" by Roger Zelazney, was another disapointment although not a real clunker. In fact, the basic idea of a drivable road through time is an excellent one and it is developed convincingly, entertainingly, as are the characters until Zelazney remembers that all his principal characters have to be Gods in disguise and starts getting obtuse. I've enjoyed many of his novels because of their tie-in with mythology, but when he starts inventing that mythology things get a little confused, to put it mildly. Possibly this is yet another trilogy, and the confusion is necessary to the developement of his plot to get money out of the publishers - if it isn't, this is a clunker.

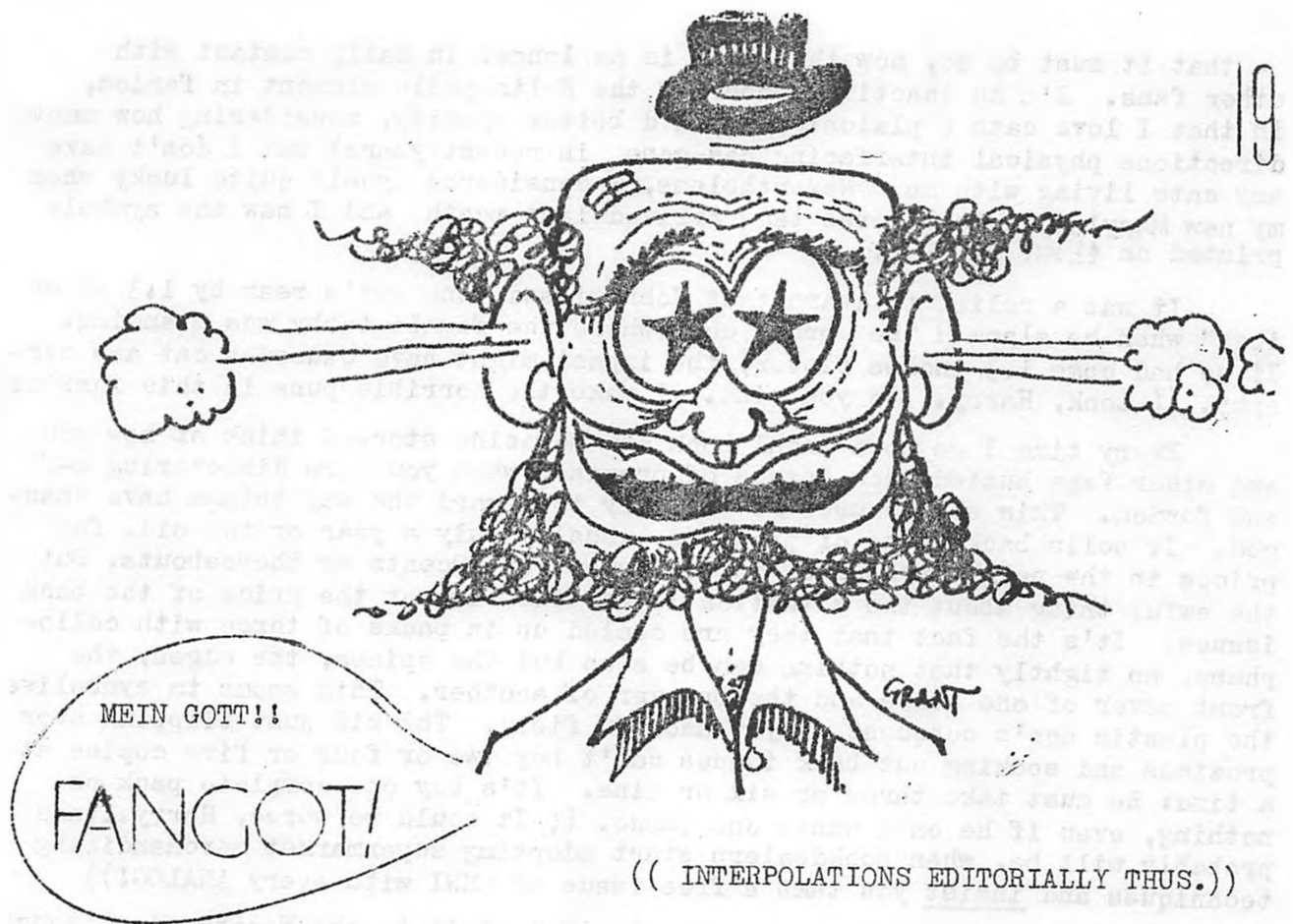
"THE DRAWING OF THE DARK" by Tim Powers, is something else. The most enjoyable Fantasy novel I've read for a long time - I almost said since LoTR, but there are no comparisons to be made; DRAWING OF THE DARK is a completely different kind of fantasy from that indulged in by Tolkien and I mention my mention only as an illustration of how easy it is to falsoly describe something. It would be almost as easy to (falsely) relate it to Zelazney's ROADMARKS since myth also plays a role herein, but here it is effectively and intelligently blended with real events and history. Blow comparisons.. this is an excellently told fantasy of 16TH Century Europe, set mainly in Vienna and involving Suleiman, sundry Vikings, Merlin, and a King Arthur returned as an Irishman called Duffy. The title is a nice pun and I'm not saying anything more...it is published in paperback by Del Rey - Ballantine.

"THE FAR FRONTIER" by William Rotsler is fun, too...and with an unusually accurate cover-blurb: "First there were alien Indians, now they had to face planet Rustlers". Obviously, the publishers are aiming at more than one market. Bill has written a fast-paced adventure in the 'pulp s-f' tradition, one that could have appeared in STARTLING or TWS if you pruned out the sex, unpretentious and a rattling good read. There's no mythology in this one. Jerry Pournelle's "JANISSARIES", is pretty fast moving, too, even though the cover blurb "No.1 ADVENTURE NOVEL OF THE YEAR!" is a little misleading. It is a good s-f adventure story but no way will it match or compare with the real adventure story writers; Bagley, Cussler, MacLean, et al. Its well told, if simplistic, plot provides an entertaining read and the many illustrations (by Bermejo - who?) are of a quite high standard...and if it had been blurb'd as 'No.1 Adventure Novel of 1951!', I'd have gone along with that.

"STAR PRINCE CHARLIE" by Poul Anderson & Gordon Dickson was bought, as were many of the titles I aquired, on a whim - I was so bedazzled by the vast displays of s-f in the bookstores Frank took me to that my sensa-wonder completely swamped my critical faculty. A Good Whim this one tho', since I hadn't realised at the time I bought it that it had a Hoka therein...and I like Hokas. Here, alas, the Hoka is an incidental (rather than principal) character but it still manages to generate goodly amounts of entertaining illogic. Pleasant. "ORPHAN STAR", "BLOODHYPE", and "THE END OF THE MATTER" are all by Alan Dean Foster who comes in for a lot of stick from our Deep Thinkers...which could be a little unfair since he has never-ever professed to be one himself. He is a fairly competent writer of space-opera and these three titles are all such - and all set in his TAR AIYM KRANG universe and relate the colourful adventures of Flinx and his faithful (and unbelieveable!) minidrag, Pip. ORPHAN STAR and THE END OF THE MATTER are sequels to that earlier novel; BLOODHYPE written a few years earlier uses the same scenario and Flinx at a later stage in his life-cycle as a main character. If you are not now confused.... read the books! Incidentally, Foster deserves some sort of award for naming one of his characters "Abalahalamatandra", as cunning a padding-ploy as I've yet come across.

"Dunno about going to Seattle to see EMPIRE STRIKES BACK - Mike (Moorcock) always claimed to have gone to New York to see STAR WARS; and finding the audience more terrifying than anything on the screen"...Jim Cawthorn.

X				X
X	<u>WALDO 6</u>	<u>WINTER 1980/81</u>	Comes to you from <u>ERIC BENTCLIFFE,</u>	X
X			17, <u>RIVERSIDE CRESCENT,</u> <u>HOLMES CHAPEL,</u>	X
X			<u>CHESHIRE,</u> <u>CW4 7NR.</u> <u>ENGLAND.</u>	X
X				X
X	<u>IS PUBLISHED TO CELEBRATE SURVIVING YET ANOTHER WINTER SOLSTICE,</u>		<u>and</u>	X
X	<u>a JOURNEY ABROAD.</u>		With the assistance of <u>JOHN BERRY,</u> <u>ARTHUR</u>	X
X	<u>THOMSON,</u> <u>JIM CAWTHORN,</u> <u>BILL ROTSLER,</u> <u>PAUL &amp; CAZ SKELTON</u>		<u>and all who</u>	X
X	<u>wittingly (or unwittingly) aided and abotted.</u>			X
X	X	X	X	X



Harry Warner, jr, 423 Summit Ave, Hagerstown, Maryland.

I enjoyed this issue very much, particularly for the long conreport. Lots of lines in it are very much in the same spirit and on the same quality level as the fine things Willis used to write about cons. It was particularly gratifying to find a conreport in which most of the fans mentioned are known to me. I keep reading reports on experiences at Stateside cons in which individuals are mentioned only by their first name and I frantically search memory trying to recall the identity of Zebediah and Orson and Uriah. It's no use to ask who they are because they are obviously prominent in a subfandom unknown to me. ((Shucks, Harry, you should have recognised Zebediah Korshak, Orson Eshbak, and Uriah Evans!))

At the same time, as I read your narrative, I kept realising something nasty. With every page I became more and more certain that I no longer have the stamina to attend a worldcon or any other large con in the way you did, day after day of a long weekend with intense partying and lobbying and conversation and so on for many hours. I felt sort of exhausted just reading about the prodigies you achieved. (( And it isn't easy writing in a prone position either, Harry, even though I didn't mention that's how the last issue was typed....)) It must be seven or eight years since my last worldcon, and I don't quite know where to go to find a con which would be congenial to me. There are still a few regional cons over here with attendance in the low hundreds but I gather that these draw very few fans whom I know, so I'd probably feel as lost at one of those as at a con where thousands are registered and 49 out of every 50 attendees who squint at my nametag don't recognise the name and assume I'm just another neofan. (( At least at the BIG cons you'll meet some people you know, Harry, and the Fan Room concept we have helps ensure this. If there was a SEACON in the UK every year, I'd go to a con every year!))

Much of the old Berry flavour ((Is that pun intentional or did it just creep in!)) and vigor emerges from PUSS IN CAHOOTS. I miss the old faanish content which was always a major ingredient in the hundreds of Berry articles and stories published during his heyday but I can accept the fact -

- that it must be so, now that John is no longer in daily contact with other fans. I'm an inactive member of the Felineophile element in fandom, in that I love cats ( platonically, I'd better specify, considering how many directions physical interfacing has gone in recent years) but I don't have any cats living with me. Nevertheless, I considered myself quite lucky when my new Maryland auto license tags arrived last month and I saw the symbols printed on them: CAT 955.

It was a relief to learn that John missed "the cat's rear by 1.3 of an inch" when he slammed the broom down where the female tabby was standing. If he had come 1.3 inches closer, the impact might have caused a cat ass atrophy. (( Look, Harry...do you mind...I make the horrible puns in this fanzine!))

Every time I go to a local book and magazine store, I think of how you and other fans hunted back issues of prozines when you were discovering s-f and fandom. This shop causes me bitterly to regard the way things have changed. It sells back issue of prozines, usually only a year or two old, for prices in the neighbourhood of three issues for 79cents or thereabouts. But the awful thing about the situation is not the age or the price of the back issues. It's the fact that they are sealed up in packs of three with cellophane, so tightly that nothing can be seen but the spines, the edges, the front cover of one issue and the back cover of another. This seems to symbolise the plastic age's conquest of yet another field. The kid just flipping over prozines and seeking out back issues can't buy two or four or five copies at a time: he must take three or six or nine. It's buy one complete pack or nothing, even if he only wants one issue. (( It could be worse, Harry...and probably will be, when bookdealers start adopting supermarket merchandising techniques and insist you take a free issue of OMNI with every ANALOG!))

I'm glad to hear about your prospective visit to the Northwest, although in view of the current situation at one point out there, July may be too late to view anything you couldn't see by a shorter trip right now to Pompeii. I understand that Phil Farmer is considering revising one of his old stories and selling rights for a new edition under the changed title of "The Lava".

Bob Shaw, 3 Braddyll Terrace, Ulverston, Cumbria.

Reading through the letter column, I was impressed once again with the way fans can remember every detail of their first encounters with SF. I saw my first copy of ASTOUNDING during the war, and I remember staring in through the shop window for ages as my mind brimmed over with all kinds of wild surmises about this strange magazine. The cover was not particularly impressive - it was for del Rey's "LUNAR LANDING" - but something about the whole package told me I was looking at something which was going to play an important part in my life. Until then the only SF I had seen had been in the boys' papers, but I could tell that ASF was for adults and I had a powerful yearning to know what sort of SF grown-ups would read. My mother refused point blank to buy the magazine for me, but I returned to the shop day after day and gazed yearningly in through the window until eventually the zine disappeared. I was quite certain it had gone out of my life for ever because, having been brought up in the normal world, I knew that no adults would be crazy enough, interesting enough, wonderful enough to store up years-old SF magazines. Years later, however, I met Walt Willis and Irish Fandom and - lo! - Walt had a collection of ASF which went back a long way and it contained the right magazine, my magazine. That was the first one I borrowed from him, on my first ever night in fandom, some thirty years ago, and I can still remember the elation I felt as I walked home from Oblique House filled with the knowledge that at last I had met my kind of people and that my life would never be the same again. Fandom didn't disappoint me, which I suppose is why I still go on writing for fanzines when common sense tells me I should only write for money.

John Berry was in as good a form as ever, and I enjoyed his account of the Cat Wars, especially as I have been through similar episodes. The people next door to us have a miserable mean-looking black hound which refuses to crap anywhere else except in my front garden.

21

One day recently I happened to see it coming in under the gate, so I tapped the window loudly and made threatening gestures at it. The dog regarded me balefully for a moment, then sauntered right up the garden to within a few yards of the window, calmly lifted its leg and - peed into the strawberries! I dashed downstairs and grabbed my Webley .22 but by the time I made it to a good vantage point, the brute had vanished which was just as well for it. I'm a good shot with that Webley and the place I was planning to put the slug would have complicated the dog's sex life while at the same time enabling it to pee in three different directions at once. (( There's something about being observed that brings out the worst in animals...we recently had a patio-door installed and can now see ( and be seen) by previously unobserved moggies who, now, do a suprised double-take when they slink past en route to my rose bushes. I'm thinking of taking advantage of that off-guard moment...but I just need to get the pit dug under the crazy-paving first and one slab to revolve smoothly and quickly...and a few sharpened stakes for the bottom of the pit and....I think I just got drummed out of cat-lovin' fandom!))

Eric Mayer, Spring Lake, 140F Powers Ln, Rochester, N.Y.

John Berry's article was very fine indeed. It seems he can always be counted on to come up with good humorous stuff. I never had experience with cats ruining our gardens back home. Out in the country where we lived the deer, woodchucks, moles, raccoons, crows and so forth took care of that job more efficiently than any cats. Stray cats tended to intrude upon our lives by having kittens in the tool shed, or the back seat of the car whose window had been left down overnight. We sometimes took strays in, out of misplaced kindness. They usually put up with us for awhile then moved on, meanwhile earning their keep by leaving headless moles next to the door. (( Obviously, you were considered to be some sort of cat deity and they were venerating you...I'm not quite sure whether this is a good thing for you, tho'...))

The cat we have now is more civilised. He's city-bred and doesn't go out. Seasonal change for him is when we open the windows in the spring and he can lay on the sill against the screen and smell the world more clearly. Like Berry's cat he is fond of chairs. My chair specifically. He will demand it in a querulous mewl. He will not accept Kathy's chair, or another chair moved into the space usually occupied by my chair. I don't think he's really interested in the chair. I think it's a power-play designed to move him up in the hierarchy of the household. ((No...you are definitely being venerated; he wants to be in the lap of the gods, watch out when he/she/it starts making sacrifices in there...)) Animals aren't necessarily content to stay on the bottom rung. Kathy used to have a Scotty when she lived at home. When she disciplined the Scotty, the Scotty disciplined Kathy's little sister.

Our present power crazed feline has another annoying habit. He has decided he can't deign to drink the still, stagnant, room temperature water we set out in his bowl. He likes to drink from the faucet of the bathroom sink. That way he can let the water run down over his head and lap it up as it drips down into the drain. He scratches at the bathroom door and demands to be served. I suppose he will want Perrier soon. ((No, no...you have it wrong, Eric, this is merely part of his purification rite before venerating you...er, rite ?))

You know, I cannot remember how I started reading sf. I've tried to recall often enough since it's a question that comes up in fanzines all the time. It may have been a Tom Swift book. (Did you know that Victor Appleton Jr. is really Victor Appleton, and in fact the same woman who writes HARDY BOYS and NANCY DREW ?) ((Get rid of that cat, Mayer, he's getting at you!)) Is there a book called CAVES OF MERCURY ? That might well be the first one I read. But the way I was back then I would have read that one in the afternoon and two more in the evening. I soon went through the selection in the children's library and had to get my father to visit the prissy old librarian to demand I be allowed into the "Adult" section. Ah well, it is all lost in the mists of time, which sounds like one of the books I read.

Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave, Toronto, Ontario.

Good to see another WALDO and good to see Jim Cawthorn artwork (and words) once again! I've long admired Jim's work and there's damn little of it being published nowadays.

As one of fandom's more notorious non-cat people, I thoroughly enjoyed the Berry article about man's superiority to felines. Despite the many words, the many thousands of anti-cat words, I've given fanzines in the last twelve years or so, I've never actually taken out my feelings via actual aggression on a particular cat so it is a vicarious joy for me to read such articles as John's and such as the one Harry Bell recently published describing his similar skirmishes with sneaky, scabby scurrilous cats. I look forward to the wrap-up piece about how he does a number on the Siamese!

As you yourself point out, there were three thousand different SEACONS experienced at Brighton. Mine was certainly a great deal different from yours (and we only met a couple of times, briefly, as I recall) so I enjoyed reading about the con as you lived it. I expect you'll be waiting a long time to see all those other con reports, though; so far I've read one report from a North American couple who were there and the rest of the Seacon material I've seen has all been written by English fans. And when I say "all" I'm still only talking about a mere handful of articles. Unlike AUSSIECON IN 75 and the recent spate of (generally disappointing) North American worldcons, SEACON doesn't seem to have inspired voluminous coverage in the fan press. I haven't done a report, even though I'd originally planned on one, for example. In my case, that's because the entire week in Brighton passed in a fog and I have absolutely no notes about what happened at the con itself and only the vaguest memories of incidents which I took part in, none of which I'd be able to place chronologically correctly. (( OK, Everyone, now you can ~~take up~~ relate all those scurrilous Seacon incidents which involved Mike at Seacon...secure in the knowledge that he is in no position to deny them!))

Robert Bloch, Los Angeles.

Your Seacon report helped give me a clearer picture of what I missed - I'd had accounts from Fritz Leiber and other attendees, and read a few in various fanzines, but yours included some aspects which they didn't touch on. Now that these affairs have grown so large it's impossible for any one person to cover everything that goes on. Why, it's a full time job just keeping track of Tucker! Which I intend to do, come July, at St.Louis, where I'm GofH and he is Toastmaster. ((It isn't difficult to keep track of him, Bob, you just listen for the cry of 'SMooth' ...followed by the dull thud of neofen passing out!))

That in turn brings me to a somewhat dismal observation: according to this issue you'll be in this area, or within a thousand miles of it, in July - while I'll be in St. Louis (as mentioned), then Chicago, then in Atlanta as GofH at yet another convention, with return scheduled just before August 1st. Very bad timing, if you ask me. ((T'was, t'was, mebbe another year we'll make California...although the way things are here at the moment I suspect it could be quite some time off, alas.))

Boyd Raeburn, 189 Maxome Ave, Willowdale, Ontario.

It was interesting to read your account of the Seacon, which apparently took place in an alternate universe from the Seacon I attended, although our two universes must have intersected quite a bit, as I recall spending some time with you...or was that an alternate universe Eric Bentcliffe, and that it is only Waldo 5 which has leaped the gap? In my universe I did not meet John Foyster, much less have a meal with him. (( Ah, but that was Jim Cawthorn's universe, Boyd, and he is an inveterate fantasy fan...he's also an inveterate ERB lover, so I think, maybe, you should be glad you weren't riding a Thoat with John Foyster...))

I shared Terry's disappointment that ITV was off the air. We are both -

interested in British sitcoms, and were interested in seeing the latest offerings. We couldn't even discuss British sitcoms with British fans, for all those to whom we broached the subject resolutely declared that they didn't watch TV. I couldn't even find out what has been happening on Coronation Street! (( Ah, well, now...as I recall, Albert Fetlock had (at that time) just been chosen as the first British astronaut; Pat Phoenix had just been chosen as mission-badge, and the Government had under serious discussion the proposal that Ena Sharples should also go along on the mission in case hostile aliens were encountered...))

Robert Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, Ind.

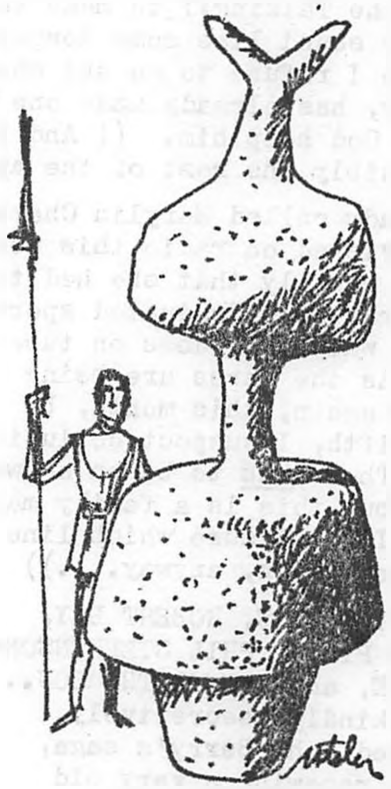
I'm becoming fascinated by all the different Seacons that are showing up in the con reports ( and Juanita's and mine will undoubtedly add to the lot ). Was it Bob Shaw who passed out the hats and made the allegedly funny remarks at the "Meet The Celebrities"Party ? I thought it was Brian Aldiss. I admit that you know your British authors better than I do ( and there wasn't enough light in the room to see anybody), but I hadn't thought Shaw could be that boring if he tried. I'm disappointed. (( It was Bob, but with constant interruptions and under the far from ideal circumstances, a rather less sparkling than usual Bob...understandably.))

Back to Waldo 4, and comments which also sort of bear on the number five lettercol. Interesting that you and I discovered SF in the same year, 1949. By totally different methods, of course. However, if you had spent 5 years in the services by then, that makes you a couple of years older than I am: I had to register for the draught. in 1946 but it was stopped before my turn came. And as for you not being that old; Harry Warner is only 5 years older than I am, and he's been that old for 10 years or more. So you are, too doddering; you just don't realise it yet. ((Old...what, me old.... I'd have you know I was a late starter!))

And at that age you should have known better than to like AMAZING STORIES, but I suppose it's fandoms gain that you didn't. I'd certainly have sent you the AMAZINGS I bought, but since after two issues (I bought the second one because I couldn't believe anything could be that awful twice in succession, and I was proved wrong) I never bought any more, I didn't see your letter.(( I didn't say I liked Amazing ...it was just that it was obvious from the one issue I had that it was going to be the easiest magazine to get a letter published in!))

Lynn Hickman, 413 Ottokee St,  
Wauseon, Ohio.

My first contact was not with a SF magazine, but was ARGOSY. After reading many of the "different" stories I found that there were magazines like Amazing Stories and Wonder Stories that were completely full of "different" stories and I was hooked. Of course, being an avid reader, I read all the other pulps also. I especially liked the air war magazines with G-8 and his Battle Aces being my favorite. I was also hooked on Doc Savage and



the SHADOW, followed closely by THE PHANTOM DETECTIVE and THE SPIDER. But I read almost everything. Westerns, Detectives...Adventure. I still read a lot, preferring my own mental images to those of someone else on tv. ((Despite what Buck Coulson may insinuate, these pulps were a little before my time! Interesting though, that you mention reading Westerns...most fans of my acquaintance enjoy thrillers, spy-stories, etc, but very few will care to admit reading Horse Opera's (with the exception of Lee Hoffman's) and, indeed, I suspect their stylised scenario's are anathema to most s-f fans.))

The convention suite you were refering to for the three parties was jointly held by Dave Kyle and the Roger Sims. I hosted the First Fandom party in the one room and when it was over, helped host the Detroit party at the other end of the suite. The middle party was the Aussiecon Party (of which I was a member also.). It probably was unwise, but each group needed a place for their party so we thought we would give it a try...and, actually, it worked pretty well until the lady you mentioned decided she would not let anyone else in. I finally had to go sit down so I could let some friends like Ted White, Ben Bova, etc, in. (( I think what really upset the 'lady' was the bathroom party which wouldn't let her in...you could say that's where she met her Waterloo!))

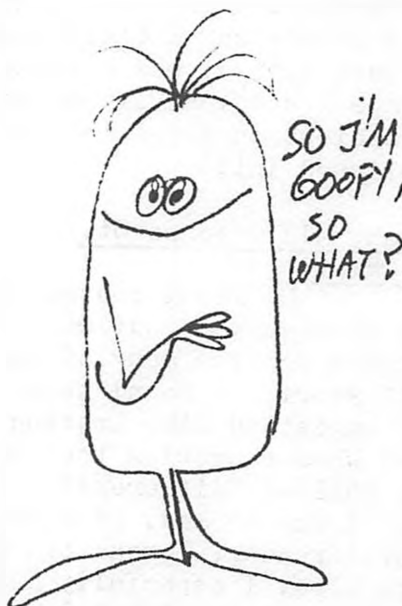
Jim Cawthorn, 106 Oxford Gardens, London, W.10.

I'd like to see John Berry tackle the cat which patrols past Hilary's garden. I've had a few clashes with it, when I've been looking after the flat while the family was on holiday. It is black and has a peculiarly sinister walk, due, I think, to its legs being about half as long again as those of the average moggie. And it cannot be Terrorized. It's finest hour was when it attempted to kill a pet rabbit, practically within arms reach of three people, including myself. I'm almost sorry we stopped it - I kept wondering if it would have eaten its prey there and then, or tried to leap over the wall with it.

Items keep turning up on radio or in print about a projected Tarzan epic featuring Bo Derek and a decathlon champion, but ERB inc. are still moving with glacial speed through their negotiations with Warner (Five Years in the Talking!) to make the definitive GREYSTOKE, so it makes the B.D. story sound like some desperate P.R.O. game. The decathlong lad, whose name I refuse to go and check, because the clipping is a full two yards away, has already made one film and is being billed as the new John Travolta, God help him. (( And I suppose Roddy McDowell will play Cheeta, and...possibly the rest of the apes as well, if its a low-budget movie!))

A lady called Marilyn Chambers was interviewed on radio this week, declaring huskily that she had taken up the formerly male-dominated sport of flashing, which she does on tube-trains. As the fares are being increased again, this month, by about a fifth, I suspect collusion here. (( There has to be an answer to that, but this is a family magazine and I'm not sure which line Cockfosters is on, anyway....))

IAHF TERRY JEEVES, ROBERT DAY,  
DAVE PIPER, PHIL STEPHENSON+  
PAYNE, and ARTHUR THOMSON...  
who kindly, secretively,  
illloed John Berry's saga,  
thus renewing a very old  
fannish partnership.





# Diane's



by  
John berry

Atom

" I want you to help me clear out the outhouse," ordered my wife recently.

" Certainly, dearheart," I smiled, knowing full well that once again I had triumphed in the never-ending battle between male and female. After thirty-one years of married life I had successfully learned to manipulate my wife in a shrewd psychological way, by making her think that she was making me do what she wanted me to...although I must confess I didn't really want to work in the outhouse. It was so pleasurable to relax in my chair on the lawn, eyes closed as the sun played over my noble features, tanning my skin to a light dun colour. The mating call of the Lesser Spotted Tit Warbler in the sycamore tree at the bottom of the garden was a pleasant soliloquy...my thoughts turned to the one major drawback to the current cosmological theories of the formation of the universe...if there was a Big Bang, and JK is the echo...where did the matter come from before the Big Bang ?

" I said come and help me," she shouted, waving a cobweb covered mop at me.

' I bet Einstein never had to clear out the outhouse,' I grumbled to myself as I entered the building.

The major problem confronting me was the removal of an ancient gas cooker to the garage, a journey of some twenty yards. This item belonged to the housing authority, and therefore could not be dumped or otherwise disposed of...it had to be retained on the premises so that the next tenant could use it. I seductively removed my shirt, and flexed my biceps in front of Diane, but it had no visible effect; she wasn't to be distracted from her course merely by the presentation display of a rampant homo sapien.

I reluctantly commenced to move the cooker away from the wall by moving it side to side, six-inches at a time, carefully, balanced to a nicety and eventually got it out of the outhouse onto the lawn. I noticed as I gingerly exited the outhouse a pile of debris stacked against the wall, and my wife said she had arranged for the dustman to take it away...I brooded over this as I six-inched my zig-zag way across the lawn; I'd had those boots for twenty years...assorted lengths of timber are never a liability...card-board boxes always come in useful.

The garage was next to our neighbours house, and prior to my transportation of the cooker, my neighbour had always boasted about the billiard table like surface of his lawn...but I just didn't have the strength to circumnavigate ( or even go round) it, so my course was direct, give or take a few degrees.

I eventually hefted the cooker to the rear of the garage. I was bathed in sweat but delighted that I hadn't given in and had successfully transported this piece of heavy equipment merely by use of my own muscle power. I closed the garage door and staggered across the lawns back to the outhouse. The pile awaiting removal looked even bigger, but I knew my wife did not share my squirrel-like attitude ( as she liked to call it...)whereby I didn't like to throw things away.

" Come and sit down in the garden, I've made coffee for us," she smiled...a kind smile...did I detect tears in her eyes...was she so impressed with my strength ?

I was surprised at this surge of consideration...we sat and sipped the coffee, my eyes half closed in concentration as I watched the straight white condensation tracks bisecting the blue sky.

" Have you solved the problem of the pre Big Bang state ?" she suddenly asked me. Crikey. This was unheard of...she was actually taking an interest in my hobbies, and had obviously read my notes whilst dusting the lounge.

" Weeell," I mused," in the fifties a theory was well supported for a time...Continuous Creation."

" Yes," she asked, eyes wide.

" So, if the process was reversed prior to the expanding Universe, only one atom was in existonce."

" Hmmm," she pondered. " But where did that atom come from ?"

" I'm working on it," I frowned. I felt that I had already strained my brain sufficiently by reducing the Universe to one atom.

" Suppose we go for a walk in the countryside to discuss it," she suggested. I say...this was incredible. I rushed upstairs, showered, and put on my new machismo outfit...red trousers, brown military shirt unbuttoned to the waist, and green sandals.

She was waiting downstairs, and opened the front door. As we walked down Garden Avenue towards the green fields she held my hand, and gently squeezed it. I started to get excited...all sorts of wild ideas flashed through my mind...I mean, I admit I am on iron tablets...but I began to feel sort of...optomistic.

In my bemused state I hardly noticed the passing of the refuse lorry, and it was only when my wife pointed in the opposite direction and shouted " Look at that young girl in the see-through blouse, isn't it disgusting ?" that I became suddenly suspicious.

I only heard the last words with difficulty because I was racing up the avenue to try and overtake the refuse lorry. When I got to my house he had already moved some of the rubbish, and was in the process of carrying away a rusting metal container with a black handle...my Gestetner.

" That's not rubbish," I hissed.

I took it from him. With beating heart I carried the treasured machine back into the outhouse, put it on the table and lifted off the bent cover, rust flaking off it. But underneath, the mechanism was oil-covered; and not a speck of rust was apparent. I hadn't touched it for some years, but my preservation of this important piece of equipment had been thorough.



With a nostalgic sigh I turned the handle...it smoothly turned the screen round the rollers...the gentle 'thrum' of the mechanics brought back memories of those many years in Belfast when I had cranked out almost one hundred fanzines and one-shots...I watched the two rubber paper-feeders fingering wildly for the non-existent duplicating paper...I turned the handle faster...the oil had percolated to every part of the Gestetner..... every screw, every particle of its mechanism pleaded for usage...the handle became warm in my grasp and I forgot where I was...time really did stand still...

The Gestetner seemed to cry out to me..." look how good I am, why have you forsaken me ?"

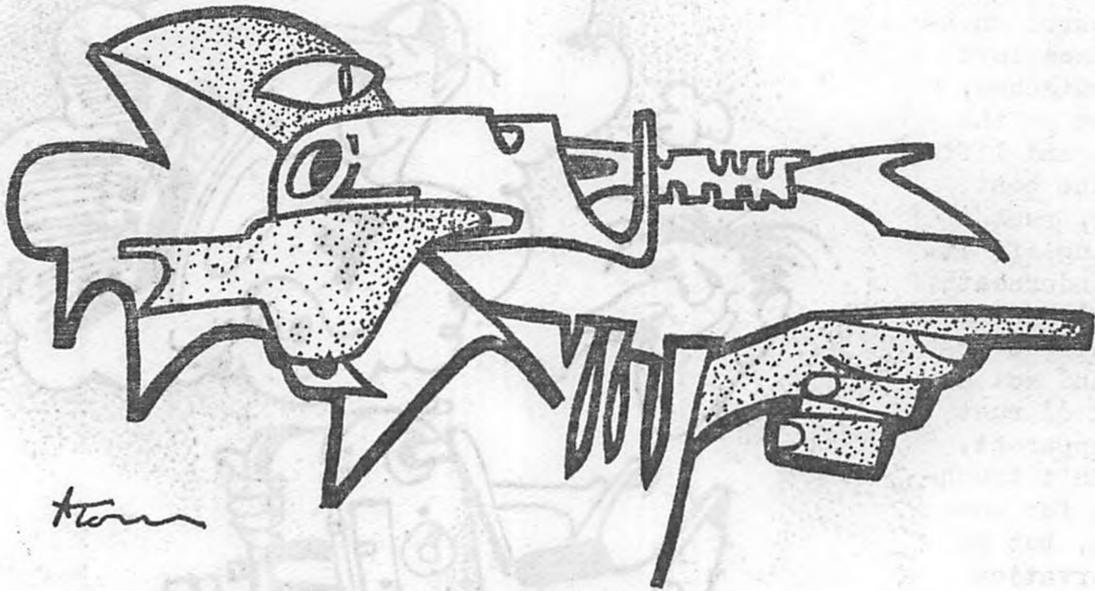
With great self-control I gradually forced the handle to slow down...I snapped it at right-angles against the side of the machine whilst it wasn't looking. Furtively I smothered the Gestetner with its case.

I levered it into a corner of the outhouse, away from the discomfort of the draught under the door...I knew it was only a temporary resting place.

First thing in the morning I would purchase a box of stencils and a jar of correcting fluid.....

JOHN BERRY.

// Those hoary aficionados amongst you will realise the sheer will power I had to exert not to re-title this (after the thought struck) piece ' Justifiable RETRIBUTION! ' Particularly since Atom kindly ( and secretly) illoed it unbeknownst to John...



WALDO 6. Winter 1980/81.

INLAND....SECOND CLASS MAIL

OVERSEAS..PRINTED MATTER  
(Reduced Rate).

TO.