

The Filking Times

March 1991

Issue 24

Reviews: Two Conventions and One ???

Mi Rivew of Con-Deago

by Jain Mylandur

I don't care how many typos the program book had, they cannot measure up to the best typo I've had all year--the March '90 Random Realities' daily schedule listed an "Origiami" panel hosted by "Jane Enlander." I like the sound of that--makes me sound like I live in Middle Earth...

Actually, I did like one typo in the ConDiego booklet--according to them, I am a member of the "Writers of the Furure."

When der Furure says,

"Write books about der schpace!"

Ve heil (THPFFFT!) heil (THPFFFT!)

Right in Der Furure's face...

Ah yes, Con Diego--the Con That Wasn't There.

I'd probably be angrier about the incompetence that went into making that convention--such as discovering at dinner Thursday night that I was supposed to have been on a filk panel 3 hours earlier, that no one had warned me about--if I'd paid for my membership. This was a relaxicon of the first order, not a WorldCon rival; certainly didn't deserve WorldCon price tags.

But as I said, I didn't pay for my membership. (Some nice perks about writing for Der Furure, not to mention knowing Origiami.)

I was sorry that I didn't feel that I was at a real-and-for-true Big Con (which that thing certainly was, come to think about it...). I kept waiting and waiting for the convention to really start... And I truly missed steady, reliable filk programming.

But David Gerrold once said something which I occasionally take to heart: "You have two choices when you fall out of a 100-story building--you can See NAFSIC on Page 10.

From the DAG BBS

Consonance '91 Memories

Consonance Survived

Posted by Nick Smith

Consonance was a lot of fun, but the Holiday Inn staff had the apparent mentality level of banana slugs. Example: a church group had been using the Memphis Room at the same time every Sunday for two years. The hotel sold that same room to Consonance, overlapping the church group, without mentioning it to either group, or apparently without even noticing the conflict. Another example: when several members of the L.A. Filkharmonics arrived to check in, after a plane flight delayed by 3 hours, they were given a room supposedly set up for three people. Two problems: the hotel only had one key to give them, and the room was already occupied . . . by Bob Laurent, the Consonance chairman, I was later informed. The follow-up room also only had one key initially, one which didn't actually WORK on the outside doors of the hotel (necessary if you want to get back from your room to the rest of the hotel). The coffee shop had great food, if and when you actually got it.

Hotel aside, the con was a LOT of fun. I came home tired but very happy, and with a bag full of new tape releases. Those of you who didn't go, or who were in the wrong room, missed a 22-minute version of "The Ninja and Samurai Sam" that was videotaped for posterity. And that was just one of the late-night random filk rooms!!! The good, planned stuff was even better. Kudos to Bob Laurent and his committee.

See Consonance on Page 8.

Treble:

The Third British Filk
Convention
Held February 1-3, 1991,
Eastbourne, England

by Valerie Housden

The flyers for *The Filking Times* for distribution at Treble arrived by special delivery half an hour before I left home to drive down to Eastbourne. As I was two hours behind schedule, that was pretty impressive timing!

The con started under a cloud. Philip Allcock (whose name should be familiar to those who have the Nolacon and Noreascon 3 tapes), had gone on the traditional skiing trip two weeks before the con. No, he had not broken a leg, nor an arm, nor even his guitar finger. He had contracted Meningitis. On Friday evening, Gytha North gave us the latest news: the Austrian doctors had at last allowed him to come home; he had been examined by a British specialist who had pronounced him clear; he would be coming to Treble, but would not be well enough to perform. So on Saturday morning, looking grey and haggard, the amazing Mr. Allcock sang two songs during the Rock Filk set and played electric guitar on three more. He went on to Philch yet another Mike Whitaker song during the concert that evening, and soon the usual insults began to fly. Yes, the Philker we love to lynch was back - not quite the same old Phil as he is now deaf in one ear - but back with us and up to his old tricks; and an event that could so easily have been a wake became a joyous celebration.

Apart from guests Bill and Brenda Sutton and daughter Kate, we welcomed Americans Jordin Kare and his lady, Mary Kay, Bob Laurent from Wail See Treble on Page 9.

Filksings

Conventions

Los Angeles Area:**LAFa Filksings**

- Mar 23: Prancing Skiltaire
Rod O'Riley & Mark Merlino,
hosts
Garden Grove, CA
- Apr 20: Brandyhall
Lee & Barry Gold, hosts
Los Angeles, CA
- May 18: R&D Laboratory
Rick & Deborah Weiss, hosts
- June 22: House of Perpetual
Commotion
John & Mary Creasey, hosts

For info/mailling list, contact Rick Weiss, 714/530-3546.

- May 11: Hypo-allergenic filk, Sylmar, CA. Mike Liebmann, host.

San Diego Area:

Usually held the first Saturday of each month at Barney Evans' house, 8150 Jefferson, Lemon Grove, CA 92045. Call Barney at 619/697-3844, Rilla Heslin at 619/469-4874 or Karen Rogers at 619/265-0069 for more info.

SF Bay Area:

For general info/mailling list, contact Bob Kanefsky, 415/324-2001, Kathy Mar, 415/481-5736, or Colleen Savitzky, 408/294-6492.

Phoenix, AZ:

Contact Charles Coons at P.O. Box 14245, Phoenix AZ 85063-4245 or on the DAG BBS for more info.

To have your filksing listed in this column, call or write Rick Weiss (see above).

THE FILKING TIMES Editorial Policy

Rick Weiss, Publisher Deborah Weiss, *Contributing Editor*

The Filking Times is a fanzine for the general filking community and will publish articles, commentaries, reviews, editorials, and letters on topics of interest to filkdom. Contents copyright 1990 Rick and Deborah Weiss. All rights reserved. All materials bearing notice of prior publication are reprinted here by permission of the authors. All works not originally copyrighted are to revert all rights to the authors upon publication. Permission to reprint is granted by *The Filking Times* provided the author's permission is also given and credit (author, *The Filking Times*, issue number) is given.

All items sent to us will be considered open for publication unless specifically requested otherwise. We reserve the right to refuse and/or to edit any item sent. All submissions must include your correct name and address - pen names will be used for publication on request.

ARTICLES, REVIEWS, COMMENTARIES, LETTERS: We are looking for items on topics of general interest to filkers, such as local news, pre-Convention filk plans and guests, filk reviews, tips on songwriting, post-Convention reports, filk history, local filk customs, comments on previous articles, or whatever else you can think of. Remember, we are only the Editors - YOU write this 'zine!

CONTRIBUTION POLICY: Contributors of items which generate 3-4 column inches of text (3.75-inch width and 10-point type) in one issue will receive that issue free; subscribers will extended one issue.

RATES: \$7 for 12 issues via 1st class mail. Single or sample copies are available for \$0.50 plus postage. Back issues are available as a set, inquire for current price. Send cash, check or money order payable to: Rick Weiss, 13261 Donegal Drive, Garden Grove, CA 92644-2304. We will also trade for other filkzines.

EVENT LISTINGS: We will publish information about upcoming filk events and conventions which feature filk artists or programming.

DISCLAIMER: The opinions expressed herein are those of the writers and are not necessarily those of the editors. Different viewpoints and responses on issues of interest are welcome.

SUBMISSIONS: Send your submissions to the above address in hardcopy OR 3.5" or 5.25" (IBM low density format) diskettes with ASCII files OR upload ASCII files to the DAG Electronic BBS (213/546-1861 at 300/2400 baud) via the Z: Upload to Sysop command. Direct modem transfer is also possible - call by voice telephone to arrange.

CLASSIFIEDS/ADVERTISING: Classifieds will be published on a space available basis. Subscribers: four free lines/issue. Additional lines and non-subscribers: \$0.15 per line. Other advertising--call or write for rate schedule.

TRIVIA: This 'zine was produced on an Atari 520ST upgraded to 1 MB using Timeworks *Word Writer ST* and *The Timeworks Desktop Publisher* and printed on a Citizen MSP-10 9-pin dot matrix printer.

FILKOntario, April 12-14, 1991. Info: Office of the Artistic Director, 1260 Marlborough Ct, Apt. 902, Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6H 3H5. Compuserve #75126,2744. Internet #75126.2744 @ compuserve.com. GoH: Bill & Brenda Sutton. Hotel: Holiday Inn, Mississauga, Ontario. Memberships: \$30.00 at the door. Hotel: Holiday Inn Mississauga, 2125 N. Sheridan Way, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5K 1A3. Phone: 416/855-2000. Rates: \$75.00 per night (please mention FILKOntario when you call). **Note:** all amounts listed are in Canadian dollars.

Concerto '91: Cancelled. Rich & Carol Kabakjian were unable to get the hotel contract signed, and decided to cancel rather than hold a second-rate event.

Westercon 44, July 4-7, 1991 (V-CON 19), Info: WesterCon 44/V-Con 19, P.O. Box 48478, Bentall Station, Vancouver, B.C. V7X 1A2, CANADA. Phone: (604) 433-8817 or (604) 420-3316. Hotel: Gage Residence & Student Union Bldg., University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Memberships: \$40 until 5/31/91, then \$50 at the door.

Chicon V, August 29-September 2, 1991. (49th World Con) Memberships: Attending, \$110 to March 31, \$125 to July 15, then \$150 at the door. Supporting, \$30. Hugo Nomination ballots must be postmarked by April 10. Hotels: Hyatt Regency Chicago, 312/565-1234; Swissotel Chicago, 312/565-0565; Fairmont Hotel, 312/565-8000. Info: Chicon V, Attn: [department], P.O. Box A3120, Chicago, IL 60690-3120.

Con-Chord 7, September 27-29, 1991. c/o DAG Productions, 1810 14th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404; 213/546-4935. GoH: Michael Longcor (a.k.a. Moonwulf). Toastmaster: Juanita Coulson. Totally Tasteless Concert, Kazoo Awards. Memberships: Attending: \$20 thru July 10, 1991. Supporting: \$8. Hotel: The Holiday Inn (LAX), 9901 La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90045, 213/649-5151. (At the corner of Century and La Cienega.) Room rates: \$59 Single, \$69 Double, \$79 Triple/Quad.

See Conventions on Page 8.

Quick News

☛ ConFrancisco (1993 World Con) has sent out the latest info, to wit: Dates: September 2-6, 1992 (expanded to five days!). HQ Hotel: Parc Fifty Five & Le Meridien (changed from the Marriott). Convention Area: Moscone Convention Center (increased space). Attending Memberships: \$50 to March 31, 1991, then \$70 to September 30, 1991. Info: ConFrancisco, P.O. Box 22097, San Francisco, CA 94122 (SASE Please!) Compuserve: id 72377,3623. *From the DAG BBS, posted by J.P. Van Gardon.*

☛ Filkers on the move - please note new addresses for:

Kathy Mar and household. 3634 Congress Court, Fremont, CA 94539. Telephone: 415/226-8129.

Sean and Linda Cleary. 310 E. Philadelphia St. #92, Ontario, CA 91761. Telephone: 714/986-1576.

☛ Our respects to March birthday boys, Eric Gerds and Paul Willett.

☛ Pegasus Award Nominations. Categories for 1991 are Best Filk Song, Best Writer/Composer, Best Performer, Best Love Song and Best War/Vengeance Song. Up to five nominations in any one category. Songs that have won Pegasus Awards before are not eligible. Performers/writers who won an award last year are not eligible this year in the same category. Mail nominating ballots to: OVFF 7, P.O. Box 211101, Columbus, OH 43221. You do not need to be a member of OVFF to nominate or vote on the Pegasus Awards.

JFF received nominating information after Issue 23 was mailed. The deadline given for nominations was March 15, 1991. Send your ballot in immediately, say where you heard it, and hope that the ConCom understands.

☛ Issue 58 of the Philk-Fee-Nom-Ee-Non was seen at Consonance, along with threats from Paul Willett to begin regular publication again. Contact Philk Press for info (see Filkzines column on Page 10).

☛ Congratulations to Valerie Voigt and Steve Lee on their marriage on Saturday, March 16, 1991. We wish their family the best.

Resources

Or: How To Not Filk Everything to "Greensleeves"

by Nick Smith

"I was proceeding in a southerly direction, milord, when my progress was impeded by a cluster of science fiction fans..."

"Science fiction fans, Constable?"

"Yes, milord, avid fanciers of H.G. Wells, Jules Verne, Dr. Who..."

"Doctor what?"

"No, milord, Who. He's on the BBC."

"Oh, well in that case... proceed with your testimony."

"Yes, milord. Well, these science fiction fans were sitting around one chap with a guitar, listening to what they called 'filk music'."

"And just what might that be, Constable?"

"Well, milord, it is my understanding that it's rather like some of the more amusing ditties from the music halls, but all somehow related to science fiction, and generally performed to the tune of 'Greensleeves'..."

We now interrupt the constable's testimony to present the actual column. You see, at NASFIC I finally realized why so many filksongs are written to so few tunes. It's because you can't write a good filk if you don't know the words of the original song. I listened to Roberta Rogow struggle through what would have been a very funny song about NASFIC, based on "Hotel California" by the Eagles. Only she didn't know the song well enough to write the parody with the verses in the right order, and with the bridge in the right place, and so on. So, instead of a very funny song, she had several very funny fragments of a song.

☛ This year is the tenth anniversary of FilkCon West, the granddaddy of them all. To mark the event, Con-Chord 7 is planning a ten-year retrospective exhibit on filk conventions. If you have program books, flyers, songbooks, photos, con badges, etc. that you are willing to loan for display, please contact Rick Weiss, #12 on the DAG BBS or at 714/530-3546. (All items loaned will be returned.)

As you may recall from your own early filking, a filker's first attempts are often to something very simple, something that has impressed itself into the neo-filker's memory, and is thus easy to work with. Something like "Greensleeves" or "Deck the Halls"... (I know, in an earlier column I said my first filk was an Elton John song, but it was one I played all the time, and I had the lyric sheet in front of me when I wrote it. Which is my point exactly.)

So, what's the problem with that? Well, even though filking things to easy, common tunes makes it very easy for people to sing along, it also makes it very easy for people to get bored with a tune, even if the filks are good. Also, some tunes lend themselves to such an obvious subject, the filks based on the tune tend to be similar (I've seen three different filks of "City of New Orleans" relating to James Blish's "Cities in Flight" series -- I even wrote one myself).

See Folk Music on Page 8.

From the DAG BBS

ConCerto '91 is Cancelled!

Posted by Rich Kabakjian

Due to circumstances beyond my control, ConCerto 1991 will not be occurring. The problems stem mainly from the hotel's inability to write an acceptable contract, constantly getting agreed-upon items WRONG. We feel it is much too late in the year to try to pull it off, so we are going to follow ConChord and Bayfilk tradition and go every other year, at least for now. Perhaps with 16 months to work with, we can get a REAL contract signed.

As was the case with ConCerto '90, ConCerto '92 will be officially launched at Worldcon, this year at ChiCon. Dates and guests to be announced when we have any idea what they'll be. Perhaps we might even get a token Midwestern filker to show up next time...

Letters to the *Times*

Dear Editors,

I thought it was about time to write, as I have been meaning to do for some time, and bring you up to date on OVFF 7. While you certainly had the date and place down correctly in Issue 23, Suzette Haden Elgin is not the GoH. She had originally believed she could make it, but a schedule conflict came up. Instead, here is our current roster of guests: Cynthia McQuillin, GoH; Robin Bailey, Toastmaster; Howard Scrimgeour, Listener GoH; and Tom Smith, special guest. Tom Smith gets to help judge the songwriting contest this year, as he has won every time he entered and we figured someone else should be given a chance! Anyway, I've also enclosed a nominating ballot which you can distribute, if you see fit. (We would love to get input!)

Also enclosed with this letter please find my check so that you'll continue my subscription. That's about all I can think of -- keep up the good work!

Sincerely,

Emily Vasquez,
Vice-Chair, OVFF 7

Thanks for writing, and thanks for the renewal! Our info source last month was an OVFF flyer Peter Thelsen had - obviously an old one. Pegasus Award nominating info is in Quicknews on Page 3. Please write more often - we'd much rather get the facts right the first time around! --R&D

Dear Rick & Deborah,

Thanks for the letter, copy of *JFT* and the flyers, which arrived an hour and a half after I should have left for Eastbourne - you do believe in cutting things fine! The flyers were on display on the Registration desk at Treble. However, I still have few left, which I will probably take with me to Speculation, the British National SF Convention, which will be held in Glasgow over the Easter weekend. I wasn't going to go to it, but various people have put some good reasons to me, such as spying out the facilities at the proposed location

for the 1995 Worldcon - (What do I mean "proposed"? Of course the '95 Worldcon will be in Glasgow!) - with a view to organising a filk programme within the main programme. Something tells me I've been volunteered for something.

I enclose a review of Treble. I enjoyed it, despite having lots to moan about as someone who had been on the Contabile and Con2bile committees. The person responsible for organising next year's filkcon said last weekend that Fourplay does not yet have a location, a committee or any guests, but it does have twenty attending members! I'll pass on further details when I hear them.

Would items of filkish interest include something on "Before the Dawn"? Any article I submitted would have to be cleared with the other plotters first, especially with Mike Whitaker who started the whole thing. Apart from that, news from over here, sorry, Over Here, is that Wail Songs should already have stocks of "Laughter and Laments" by Rhodri James, "Windsinger" by Pat Brown, and "Phil, Philk and Philched" by Philip Allcock; and also "The Filk of Human Kindness (Or Songs in a Skeleton Key)" by Zander Nyron should be out real soon now.

Yours sincerely,
Valerie Housden

Whew! Thank goodness for Airborne Express! And thanks for putting out the flyers at Treble and Speculation. And yes, we'd love to hear about "Before the Dawn," but could you first tell us what it's all about (plot line, characters, world description, etc.)? To my knowledge, we don't have anything like that Stateside. Also, Wail Songs did have those tapes available at Consonance and in fact, Bob auctioned off "Phil, Philk and Philched" for the Flying Fan Fund (got about \$40 US, I think). Final note, Valerie -- you have the honour of being our 2nd English subscriber (since we didn't get your letter till after Consonance where we'd signed up Gytha North).

However, your review of Treble is our very first contribution from Over There and we look forward to hearing from you again. --R&D

Dear Rick and Deborah,

Congratulations on your recent union. May you find in it the joy and support I have enjoyed for 36 years now with my own dearly beloved. Would have sent my best wishes before, but I have definitely "not been myself" lately.

I have many times thought it, but not at all sure I have said it: Thank you, and thank you again, for publishing *JFT*. In my geographically isolated location, and with my limited physical resources, you provide a necessary lifeline every month that allows me to feel I am a part of LAFA. You bring me the opinions (boy, are they opinionated!) of my friends and peers, and chronicle their adventures. Others might be able to do without you more easily than I -- but your service is as valuable to us as Charlie Brown's *Locus* is to the wider fields of SF and Fantasy.

Few know better that I that all things, and especially all human affairs, are transient. The very house where I was born, on the High Plains of Texas, is today a plowed field, with no trace that any home was ever there. The houses I grew up in have likewise disappeared under trackless furrows. The crops we used to grow are no longer grown. No part of the land that bore me remembers me or my ancestors, except for a few tombstones.

I know that publishing *JFT* must be a lot of work, and a time will come when you, too, will silently fold your tent and publish no more. May that day not be soon. When you do, I think you will leave behind you a lively record of "the way it was", and few, if any, will ever chronicle it better.

My, how I do run on. I am a wordsmith, and a poet, and I get mildly drunk on words and get carried away sometimes.

Enclosed herewith is a letter/article that I hope you can publish. It is, in See Letters on Page 7.

Filk Tape Review**Audiophilikia****"Keepers of the Flame" by Phoenix**

by Rod O'Riley

[By way of an introduction: My name is Rod O'Riley and I've been part of California filking for about five years now. Yes, here's yet another person who's going to have a go at music reviews, but from a little different angle maybe. One of my sideline interests is helping out my lifemate in a company that manufactures audiophile (hifi) speakers [the high-end, expensive kind - Ed.]. Hanging out with that crowd, one eventually begins to absorb an interest in the pure quality of the sound in recorded music. These days, studio filk tapes are getting more sophisticated, and even "home-brewed" and "live-at-con" filk tapes are benefitting as new technologies become cheaper and more readily available. So what I'm going to attempt here is a review column stressing not only how good the songs are, but how well they've been packaged for listening. Let me know what you think. What you'll get are simply the personal impressions of one person with a tape or CD put on a good deck, put through a good amp, and sent out through a good pair of speakers. I can't promise to always be "nice". But I will promise to always be honest.]

Phoenix is a new celtic-rock band from the San Francisco Bay Area, featuring familiar filker Heather Alexander (et. al.) on lead vocals, guitar and electric violin. The most obvious influence on this band's sound is from the British folk rock group Fairport Convention (whom they thank on the cassette sleeve), from the sounds of Cat Taylor's electric violin on "Lark in the Morning" to the way lead guitarist and singer Mark Ungar's voice on "King of Elfland's Daughter" so resembles that of Simon Nicol. Those familiar with Heather's filk work will be happy to find rocked-out versions of "Creature of the Wood" and "Black Unicorn", as well as a rave-up medley of sailor songs called "Yo Ho!".

Overall I was severely impressed with the sound mix of this tape, courtesy of Larry the O (mostly) who is

also the band's drummer. The balance between the instruments is quite good for the most part (back to that in a second), and the stereo "placement" of the instruments and voices in space comes through very well. If I have a general complaint about the whole tape, it is mainly that the overall recording level seemed to be a little low. I had my volume knobs up higher than would normally be a comfortable listening level, yet the sound felt right there. At my "normal" settings, much of the sound and lyrics were lost.

In any multi-part recording there is a trade-off between the danger of mixing similar-quality instruments with too similar volumes, which produces a muddy mess, or mixing some instruments and/or voices way out front and leaving the parts feeling naked and unsupported in space. Phoenix treads this line very well, but on many cuts I felt the drums and bass could have been a little more forward, and the whole bottom end of the sound spectrum could have been pushed a little more. This would likely have had the added effect of raising the overall volume. In general, there was an odd split on the lead voices: Some songs such as "March of Cambreadth" mask the voices a bit behind the instruments, whereas several others have Heather's voice way out in front with more reverb than seems necessary. (Always a danger of reverb. The voices and instruments shouldn't sound as if recorded in different rooms!)

But I'm picking too many nits. On the whole the songs with the best instrumental mix seemed to be "Storm-bringer", "Marley O'Reilly" and "Creature of the Wood"; I liked the voices best on "King of Elflands Daughter" and "Yo Ho!". If Phoenix can put out more pieces of that quality, I think they've really got something. I look forward to hearing their future efforts. You should hear this one.

"Keepers of the Flame" by Phoenix. Cassette from Sea Fire Productions, P.O. Box 875, Moss Beach, CA 94038

The Publisher's Page**TFT and LAFA Will Separate**

John & Mary Creasey
Take LAFA Flyer
TFT Will Expand Calendar
of Events Column

by Rick & Deborah Weiss

Starting with the June filksing, John and Mary Creasey will assume responsibility for the LAFA mailing list and Flyer. For Deborah, myself and TFT, this change will mean greater flexibility in publishing dates, and the gain of a page for other use.

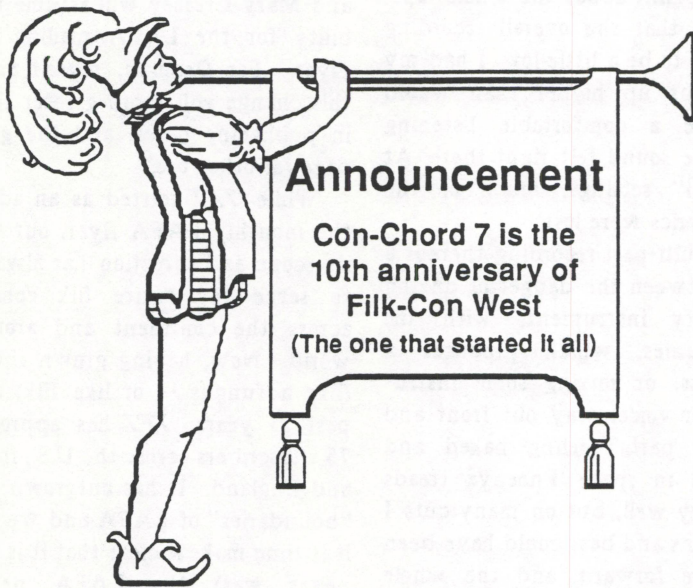
While TFT started as an adjunct to the monthly LAFA flyer, our vision of its scope and direction has always been to serve the entire filk community, across the continent and around the world. Now, having grown and spread (like a fungus -- or like filk) over the past 2+ years, TFT has approximately 75 subscribers across the U.S., in Canada and England. It has outgrown the local "boundaries" of LAFA and we feel that it is time make it clear that it is not (and never was) the LAFA newsletter, bound to the local L.A. area. As much as we love LAFA, we are also trying to push TFT out to the far horizons of filkdom.

The LAFA Flyer also deserves people who can give it more time and energy than we now have left after doing TFT. It will now be in the Creasey's capable hands and we wish them luck and success with it and with promoting LAFA. Distribution details will be announced as soon as they are available. We are sending them our files on past flyers - locations, directions, house rules, etc., as well as the Southern California portion of our address database. (John & Mary assure us that it will be maintained separately from their Random Factors business lists.) LAFA filks will continue to be listed in the Calendar of Events column on Page 2, which will expand to include the address and/or phone number of the filksite.

We're not leaving LAFA -- you'll still see us and *The Filking Times* at local filks for many years to come.

CON-CHORD 7

SEPTEMBER 27-29, 1991



GUEST OF HONOR
MICHAEL LONGCOR (Moonwulf)

TOASTMASTER
JUANITA COULSON

HOTEL
HOLIDAY INN - LAX
At 9901 La Cienega Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA. 90045 (213) 649-5151
(The same place we were last year.)

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

(In no particular order)

Concerts Both Saturday and Sunday • Performers' Circle • Music and Song workshops • Open Singing Room • The Totally Tasteless and Tacky Concert • Kazoo Awards • One-Shots (Where anyone can get up on stage and perform one song) • Dealers' room

FULL ATTENDING MEMBERSHIP

\$20.00 thru July 10, 1991 - \$25.00 July 11 thru September 14, 1991

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is only \$8.00 at anytime

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Or subscribe to THE FILKING TIMES, the official newsletter for Con-Chord. 12 issues (one year) for only \$7.00. Contact Rick Weiss at 13261 Donegal Dr, Garden Grove, CA. 92644.

For more information write to:
CON-CHORD 7 • 1810 14th St. #100 - Santa Monica, Ca. 90404. (213) 546-4935.

Letters to the *Times*

Continued from Page 4.

small part, a chronicle of my recent travail, and, in large part, an appreciation of the Filking community and my friends and peers in it. I think they will enjoy reading a few kind words about themselves.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to express ourselves. I have one or two more articles in mind. One, at least, will take the cudgel regarding "Bardic" vs. "Star" systems - the area recently plowed by Mike Liebmann. And the question of just how we do recruit new Filkers.

More information in the accompanying article. I hope to see you two at the ConSonance 1991 (just before my 60th birthday!).

TOLF (The OLdest Filker)
(a.k.a. Robert D. Coleman)

It was a pleasure to see you and your wife at Consonance, Bob. I'm only sorry that this didn't reach us in time to be pubbed in Issue 23 before Consonance. Your article will be published next issue. And we hope you had a very happy 60th birthday!
--R&D

Dear Filking Times,

Some thoughts on a couple of items:

I'm one of those people who at least likes to think of maybe attending a LAFA filk Real Soon Now, so I do consider the flyer an important feature. I do, however, think there are workable alternatives.

I notice you're currently running a mini-calendar of filks in both the L.A. area and elsewhere. If you expand its format slightly, you wouldn't need to devote a whole side of sheet to the flyer. Since I'm fairly good at finding places given the address and Thomas Bros. coordinates, I don't really need several paragraphs of detailed directions unless there are special circumstances such as weird intersections or errors in the TB maps. Just give me (chapter and verse) TB page and grid, and a phone number (including area code) in case I run into trouble, and I'm OK. And if there's some equivalent of TB in the other

cities you list filks in, you might consider including their coordinates also.

Much of the remaining space on the flyer is taken up with house rules and caveats such as "No Smoking Inside" and "There are Cats in Residence," along with an indication of the type of filk and food arrangements. Since there are usually semi-standard and also could apply to filks in other areas, why not make up a list of short codes for them? You'd need a key, but since most regular readers would gradually memorize the codes, you could print the key in the small type you use for the Editorial Policy statement. That way you could list detailed info on the next several LAFA filks in less than the space now taken for the flyer, thus eliminating the need to synchronize *TFT* with LAFA. And if people in other cities start giving you similar info, you could include it in their listings, too.

As for holding hypo-allergenic filks, should they be scheduled opposite the "official" filk or should they be held on some other night? I can see pros and cons either way.

Holding the alternate filk at the same time as the "official" one could give rise to a feeling of competition, of forcing those who are not allergic (and who thus in theory have the option of attending either event) to choose sides. My first thought would be to try to avoid this state of affairs, although it might be the only way to get people to take notice of the problem when choosing future hosts. And if the alternate filk site is small, scheduling opposite the "official" filk might be one way to keep attendance to a manageable level (keeping the alternate filk semi-invitational would be another). But even if the two filks were held on different nights, how many filkers would have the time and energy to go to both? If the answer to that is "very few," then making an extra effort to avoid conflict wouldn't be worth it, while holding them on the same night might be easier because there would be fewer dates to keep track of.

Tom Digby

A Filker is Born: The Sequel

by Mara Eve Brener

(If you can stand one more "How I Got Into Filking" story, here goes. This time it's my husband.)

Harry and I were living in Philadelphia, PA back in 1977 when a phenomenon called *STAR WARS* took the world by storm. Eventually we got past the bizarre radio commercials and went with another couple to see it. Well, we were so impressed that the other couple called their babysitter and we all stayed for the next showing. Then we sat up most of the night assigning all sorts of theological and sociological values to the movie.

Anyway, a week or so later, we and these same friends went out to dinner at a local seafood restaurant and we changed our usual behavior patterns so far as to order cocktails. And we concluded the meal with a few of those international spiked coffees. Then we were informed that, since we had all order the special, we were entitled to an after-dinner cordial. Well, as we asked that the door be held steady and attempted to stagger through it, Harry and the other guy, and I swear this is the truth, began to sing (you know the tune): "Somewhere--in a strange galaxy--there is a Death Star--waiting for you..." Of course, I "shushed" vehemently.

Is this uncanny? Seven years before LACon II and our first fateful confrontation with filking, here was Harry "inventing" filk. Um, anyone care for a little Tully in your coffee?

[Ed. Note: Just goes to show: Great minds think alike--in parallel, stereo, etc.!]

Our current plans for *TFT* and the Flyer are in The Publisher's Page on Page 5. We'll do our best to keep you informed of LAFA filks, and the full flyer will be available from the Creasey's if you need it. Mike Liebmann will be hosting the first hypo-allergenic filk in May (see the filk calendar on Page 2). --R&D

Consonance Memories

Continued from Page 1.

Thoughts on a Consonance

Posted by Michael Liebmann

I should've known there'd be problems with the hotel when, after arriving from Burbank, I had to wait almost 55 minutes for their shuttle bus to arrive to take me to the hotel (first time I had to wait for a shuttle bus, and first time flew to a con from Burbank). The rooms weren't the greatest, but considering I only got 9 hours of sleep (thanks, Ross [Sherwood], for letting me crash there), I'm not complaining too much.

Meeting Gytha North was a treat - I got to talk to her at about 3 A.M. on Sunday morning, about British filking and the 1995 bid (Glasgow in '95, kiddies). She is a very friendly person with ebullient enthusiasm. Highlights of the weekend? Dusti Wiebe's friend playing the guitar (turns out he's a Ba'hai member from El Salvador, and he's *fantastic* on the guitar *<sig>*); Windbourne, Joey, Nick and myself singing "Cranes Over Hiroshima"; Windbourne's set; Mara Brener asking me to accompany her on "The Chap Across the Street" (thanks, Mara); a dramatization of "Ninja and Samurai Sam" starring Harold Groot as the neo-ninja; discussing music with Leslie Fish over Dim Sum at 9 A.M. on Saturday morning (thanks for the invite, Lee [Gold], and thanks for the talking, Leslie).

Lowlights? The hotel (thank Ghu we're going to Radisson it next year); the airline, who said the guitar wouldn't fit in the plane when I tried to take it inside (which it did - *huzzah!*); the nearly-an-hour delay in returning to LA; the actual leaving of the con.

All in all, not a perfect con, but an enjoyable one. Looking forward to next Con-Chord and Consonance '92.

Consonance

Posted by John Creasey

We had a glorious time!!! Both singing and at our table . . . Thanks to all who bought our (Random Factors) wares.

Folk Music Source Books

Continued from Page 3.

Well, if you need to be familiar with the lyrics, and you only know a few popular songs by heart, what do you do? Try a lyric book.

Recently, various filk dealers have been carrying an excellent songbook called Rise Up Singing. This book has the lyrics and guitar chord patterns to about 1200 songs, over half of them 20th century popular songs. It's published by those wonderful people who publish Sing Out! magazine, an excellent resource in its own right. However, your local filk dealers have been letting you all down by stopping there.

I have found a few other books to be really helpful. Two are:

The Folksinger's Wordbook, a collection of lyrics and chords for around 1000 traditional songs and modern folk songs. This collection doesn't have Beatle tunes, but it does have some 20th century topical songs. If it has a serious flaw, it's that the authors didn't always print the name of a song's writer. I like to give credit to a song's author even if I don't have to pay him money, and if a song is going to be recorded, it means you have to look it up elsewhere. Edited by Fred and Irwin Silber, published by Oak Publications, \$24.95 spiral bound.

Folk Song Encyclopedia, a two-volume oversized paperback set edited by Jerry Silverman. This set has over 1,000 songs, but in addition to the lyric-and-chord arrangement of the other two resources, this one also has the music for the basic melody, an index by first line of the song (useful in folk music, where a single song may be known by several different titles), and a chart of guitar chords for those of you who can never remember what an F sharp minor sixth fingering looks like. The price is about \$40 for the set, square paperback bound.

Rise Up Singing, The Folksinger's Wordbook and Folk Song Encyclopedia all have the songs grouped by subject, and indexed by title. All of them can provide hours of filk writing fun, helping you find the lyrics to songs you've

heard, but simply don't know by heart. And if you sight-read music, the Folk-Song Encyclopedia set can increase your repertoire enormously. And, if you play guitar, all three can help you pick up chord patterns.

If you want regular fixes of folk-songs, and information about new music releases, song parodies and other related subjects, Sing Out! magazine might be for you. It's quarterly, and costs \$15 per year (\$25 for 2 years, \$35 for 3), from SING OUT!, P.O. Box 5253, Bethlehem, PA 18015-5253.

I actually *did* write a filk to the tune of "Greensleeves" once. It may turn up in Xenofilkia someday, along with the story of how it got written.

Oh, yes, the filkers who obstructed the constable were let off with a strong caution, and warned never to sing the tune of "Greensleeves" in a minor key again.

Convention Listings

Continued from Page 2.

Ohio Valley Filk Fest 7, November 1-3, 1991. P.O. Box 211101, Columbus, OH 43221. GoH: Cynthia McQuillin. TM: Robin Bailey. Listener GoH: Howard Scrimgeour. Special Guest: Tom Smith. Pegasus Awards. Memberships: \$15 to 4/15/91, \$18 to 9/30/91, then \$20 at the door. Children \$15, includes free babysitting for pre-reg attendees. Midnight Buffet *not* included in membership. Hotel: Hilton Inn North, 7007 N. High St., Worthington, OH 43085. Call 614/436-0700 for reservations.

Fourplay, January 31-February 2, 1992. The British filk Convention. Details TBD.

Consonance '92, March 6-8 1992. c/o Wail Songs, P.O. Box 29888, Oakland, CA 94604. GoH: Mark Bernstein. TM: Elizabeth Scarborough. Hotel: San Jose Radisson (site of Consonance '90).

Concerto '92. Details TBD. Info: Rich & Carol Kabakjian, 17 Lewis Ave. #3, East Lansdowne, PA 19050-2614.

Treble

Continued from Page 1.

Songs and our old friend Jennifer McGowan, who has been back in the States long enough to forget that British cons are fully programmed up till Sunday evening! Bill, Brenda and Jordan were ruthlessly exploited, especially by British FoN guest Zander Nyronnd, who had them play for him while he filked their songs mercilessly. We hope they all enjoyed themselves as much as we enjoyed having them.

The programme had finally been organised barely two weeks before the con, when certain prospective participants were on the ill-fated skiing trip and therefore unavailable for rehearsal, but despite this it was full and ran relatively smoothly - Eastbourne in February doesn't have quite the distractions of New Orleans in August - with the by now traditional film on Friday night followed by a golden oldies circle, joint songspots by various FoNs, sets of Medieval Filk and Rock Filk (10:30 A.M. is far too early for a Rock set!), numerous workshops, Desert Asteroid Filks with comics artist Fox as castaway, an auction which raised a substantial sum towards the cost of bringing an American guest to next year's filkcon, the Saturday night concert which degenerated into the usual silliness as the audience got more drunk, and Guest of Honour spots for Bill Sutton and Zander Nyronnd. And of course there were circles into the small hours and beyond.

Having been on the committee for both Contabile and Con2bile, I intended to relax at this con. In the event I spent as much time running around organising various things, such as rehearsals for my joint songspot with Talis Kimberley and Rhodri James (which seemed to go down very well), rehearsals for the Klingon Male Voice Choir, and helping to improvise a uniform for the same, as I had when actually running a con. But it was fun.

Memorable moments included Bill Sutton's reaction ("I love it!") to Zander's filk of "Star Song", Pat Brown and Talis Kimberley performing Talis'

gorgeous "Grief in Little Pieces", Tom Nansen's hilarious "Before the Dawn" song about the ghost of the Watcher on the Tower, and Brenda Sutton's tears during "Challenge of the Phoenix".

One of the criticisms voiced at Con2bile was that there had been too many "Before the Dawn" songs. At Treble I heard it said that there had been fewer "BtD" songs this time. In fact the same number of "BtD" songs were performed at both cons - I've counted them! Another complaint last year was of "technical overkill" which the tech crew unfortunately took seriously. Therefore the only reason we had enough microphones was because certain filkers brought their own. And the Americans expressed surprise that we allowed smoking at a filkcon. Well, we do have to humour our techies. . . .

In true fannish tradition the hotel was in the throes of refurbishment, but fortunately not during the weekend. The staff were friendly and helpful and even played our filk tapes over the p.a. system instead of their usual muzak.

For a con that had initially seemed a little short on organisation, everything went very well and I heard very few complaints. I had a great time, I think everyone else did, and the visiting American filkers were an added bonus. Next year's filkcon, Fourplay (don't blame me, I didn't choose the name), will be held somewhere in Northern England on the weekend, January 31 - February 2, guests and other details to be announced. Watch this space!

Glossary:

- "BtD" or "Before the Dawn": A shared world filk saga. We currently have approximately 60 songs, and most of the synopsis for the novel.
- FoN: Filker of Note. (We were NOT going to use the term BNF for Big Name Filkers!)
- Nyronnd: See explanation in "On Filkley Moor", the second British filk hymnal.
- Techies: Very Important People whom we have to be Very Nice to; i.e. the tech crew who record our songs on proper equipment.

Filk Sources And Resources

DAG Productions, 1810 14th Street #102, Santa Monica, California 90404. Telephone: 213/546-4935 or 213/546-1861 (BBS). Eric Gerds, owner, producer and publisher. Write or call for Free Catalog and Update Flyers.

Firebird Arts & Music, Inc., P.O. Box 14785, Portland, Oregon 97214-9998. Telephone: 800/752-0494. Andrea Mitchell, proprietor; Teri Lee, executive producer. Write for Free Catalog.

Pegasus Publishing, P.O. Box 150471, Arlington, Texas 76015-6471. Write for further information.

Random Factors, 3754 W. 170th St., Torrance, California 90504-1204. Telephone: 213/329-6772. John & Mary Creasey, proprietors; Retailers of Firebird filk tapes and other merchandise. Look for them at conventions and local filksings. "We sell filk, not politics."

Quicksilver Fantasies, P.O. Box 1660, Post Falls, Idaho 83854. Write for Free Catalog.

Space Opera House, 5271 Primrose Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46220. Barry and Sally Childs-Helton, filk tape publishers.

Thor Records, P.O. Box 40312, Downey, California 90241. Telephone: 213/862-1722. Chrys Thorsen and Ralph Mason, music producers. Write for information and flyer.

Unlikely Publications, 839 37th Street, Richmond, California 94805; 415/525-5534. Cynthia McQuillin, proprietor, producer and publisher of Folk and specialty tapes and songbooks.

Wail Songs, P.O. Box 29888, Oakland, California 94604. Telephone: 415/763-6415. Bob Laurent, proprietor, producer, and publisher. Write for Free Catalog.

NAFSIC

Continued from Page 1.

scream all the way down, or relax and enjoy the freefall."

I'm not Pollyanna--as Lee Gold could tell you, I can throw a bitch of a tantrum when the correct mood is set. But then I hadn't planned for much out of Con Diego, so I didn't feel as disappointed as others must have.

So I turned that lousy convention into a relaxing vacation.

The dealer's room was spectacular--one of the real crimes of this con was the lack of business they did all weekend, because there was lots of great stuff for sale. I got a nearly complete collection of Footrot Flats (a hard-to-get-here New Zealand comic strip), some classy T-shirts, and an April 1906 Strand Magazine (containing, among billions of ads, a Conan Doyle non-Sherlock story and a Kipling story). Good fanzine tables everywhere, along with book dealers, manga (Japanese comics) and Japanimation salesfolks, game stuff and jewelry.

Good art show, too. I managed to sell \$100 worth of drawings and origami mobiles. But I was angry that *eight* bids were required before the piece went to auction (real conventions don't go above five bids), which kept the single art auction to just over an hour; that's a plain disgrace for a WorldCon.

Splendid masquerade, from a layman's POV. Janet Wilson could provide a better coverage of the procedure. But the costumes were great, and it was blessedly edited; none of the "Cretin the Barbarian/Winged Thing from Planet Xorph" clones that clogged up LACon II's masquerade. Best of Show went, deservedly, to a unique interpretation of Phantom of the Opera -- Miss Piggy as the Diva to a half-masked Kermit the Frog -- that paid tribute both to the musical and to the late Jim Henson.

I saw a couple of theatrical treats. The pilot episode of Get Smart! in black and white, starring Michael Dunn as Mr. Big; Max meets 99 for the first time, and the historical first use of the Cone of Silence! Fire Maidens From Outer Space, a Planet of the Broads

flick from the '50s; we had fun adding dialogue to that one. (The film seemed sponsored by five or six companies constantly mentioned in dialogue--"Got your Longines space watches?" "Take a Polaroid picture?" So I added a line at a tender moment between Captain Whatshisface and Queen Bimbo--"Don't worry, honey, I've got my Trojan condoms.") The villain was some guy in a pimply gorilla mask and a black turtleneck--kept walking through his scenes like an outpatient. We figured he was Jason trying to find the right movie.

I was given space at the Autograph Table Sunday afternoon, where I spent my time folding dragons and autographing them for people (two short stories, one not out yet, doth not an autograph line make). I didn't care--I was sitting next to **Jane Yolen** the God-Queen of children's sf/fantasy literature! She writes the books that matter in a kid's life, the ones that change you inside. So far her most famous adult fantasy books are the White Jenna series. I had her autograph a few of her books for me when her line died down. We spent the rest of the session throwing a Frisbee around the foray with a writer's wife and children (McDonald, I think). I didn't autograph anything I wrote, but I had a good time.

And of course I attended the traditional San Diego midnight Penguin Conspiracy Panel.

Those were the highlights. The rest of the convention consisted of Panel Roulette--Who's on First, Where's the Panel Being Held This Hour, Why Wasn't I Told I Was On That Panel--and so forth. Indiana Jones couldn't have made his way through the ever-changing schedule. So I did my best on my own panels (the Origami ones were well attended; the kids got a kick out of sitting at the panelists' table to fold), and in theory screwed the rest. After all, I don't come to a con to go to panels--I go to socialize.

So I slept well at the Omin Hotel, had lovely meals at Marie Callendars, occasionally checked the convention area to see what was going on, renewed old acquaintances and made new ones. There are worse ways to spend a

vacation weekend, you know. And a con gives you a 5-day excuse not to do housework (which you know you'll wind up doing if you spend those days at home).

Not a real Worldcon by a long shot--not even a real Loscon. More like a Random Realities for the whole country.

But apparently it did the trick for me. Because when my alarm clock went off Tuesday morning to summon me back to the working world, I had forgotten what that noise was--and I'd forgotten how to turn the alarm clock off.

Now that's a successful vacation.

Filkzines Around The Country

APA-Filk: Collated and published quarterly by John Boardman, 234 E. 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302; 718/693-1579. Current copy count unknown. John will mimeo your 'zine for you if you send a him a cut stencil.

Harpings: Published by the Filk Foundation, edited by Margaret Middleton, 34 Barbara Drive, Little Rock, Arkansas 72204; 501/666-8466; CompuServe 71525,1372.

LOOSE NOTES: A Zine for Filky-Minded Fans. Published and edited by Susan Landerman, 3327 West Luke Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona 85017.

Na Mele O Na Hoku--Song of the Stars: Published and edited by Debra F. Sanders, 1415 Victoria Street #206, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

Philk-Fee-Non-Ee-Non: Published by Philk Press. Paul Willett, editor. P.O. Box 4128, Panorama City, CA 91412, 818/893-7397.

Philly Philk Phlash: Published and edited by Carol Kabakjian, 17 Lewis Avenue #3, East Lansdowne, Pennsylvania 19050-2614.

Xenofilkia: Published and edited by Lee Gold, 3965 Alla Road, Los Angeles, CA 90066, 213/306-7456.

LAF A Filksing

Saturday, March 23, 1991 at 7 PM

Pre-Filk Dinner at 5 PM

House of the Prancing Skiltaire

(a.k.a. Mark Merlino & Rod O'Riley)

13412 Gilbert, Garden Grove, CA 92644

714/539-6547

DIRECTIONS: see Thos. Bros. Orange Cty, page 15, grid E-5

FROM THE NORTH AND WEST: Take the 110, 710, 605 or other freeway to the San Diego Fwy (405) South. Exit to the Garden Grove Fwy (22) East. Take the Magnolia exit. Turn Left onto Magnolia at the end of the ramp, then turn Right immediately after the fwy overpass onto Trask. Pass the next signal, then take the second Left onto Gilbert. The filksite is on the right by the illuminated "Prancing Skiltaire" sign.

FROM THE SOUTH AND EAST: Take the 5, 55 or 57 freeway to the Garden Grove Fwy (22) West. Take the Magnolia exit. Turn Right onto Trask at the end of the ramp. Take the second Left onto Gilbert. The filksite is on the right at the illuminated "Prancing Skiltaire" sign.

FILK STYLE:

The filk will be a Moderated Chaos. Rod will moderate as needed.

PRE-FILK DINNER:

Starting at about 5 PM, a Burrito Bar will be provided. Bring a potluck dish (vegetarian will be appreciated) or \$\$\$. If you prefer, there is a burger joint and a 24-hour cafe within walking distance or lots of other places nearby.

NOTES

1. Some crash space available at the filksite - call in advance for arrangements.
2. There is a Feline Warning. The four-footed furry fiends will be banished from the area, but traces of their existence will remain.
3. **NO SMOKING -- PERIOD!!** (Except allowed outside.)
4. **NOTICE:** This household is NOT munchkin safe - smalls will require close supervision.
5. There are four (4) silicon life forms present.
6. Bring all of your usual filk stuff.

Next LAF A Filksing
Saturday, April 20, 1991
Brandyhall
Lee and Barry Gold, hosts

The Filking Times

13261 Donegal Drive

Garden Grove, CA 92644-2304

FIRST CLASS MAIL