

# H | R P I N | S

#25  
(Nov. 1990)

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If you want to send pasteup-ready copy, type it on a 10-pitch machine on a 43-character line. Dot-matrix print if done with a fresh ribbon is okay. Text will be reduced to 75% of original size during pasteup. Current availability is to Filk Foundation members, contributors-of-news, and on Editorial Whim.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR MAILING LABEL

Besides the basic address-lines, there are two code-marks; one alphabetic and the other numeric. The A, C or E indicates why you are getting this issue. A=active member, C=contributor, E=Extended. (If none of these appears, you may assume Editorial Whim). The numeric code is YY/MM for your expiration date. If YY/MM falls between 30 days before and 60 days after the postmark date on this issue, you need to renew NOW to be sure of getting the next issue. If your alphabetic code is E, you have credit for contributions of material and are getting one issue beyond your membership-expiration date for each issue you had contribs in.

Foundation membership remains \$15 per year.

As usual, interesting stuff started piling into the PO Box as soon as I got issue #24 mastered. I was able to include the additional info on OVFF without re-running the entire zine, and the rest of the new stuff I used to lead-off this issue.

## PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT from Buck & Juanita Coulson

We have been having trouble with kids calling us on the phone and then hanging up, so we don't bother to answer the phone until it has rung several times. Also, we have a 10-room house and 1.5 acres of land, and we can't always get to the phone immediately. We do have an answering machine, so if you don't connect to it, please let the phone ring for at least 7 or 8 times before giving up; if the answering machine isn't turned on, we'll answer eventually.

## MORE ON FILKINDEX

Roberta Rogow writes to say that editorial comments can also be directed to Carol Kabakjian, at 17 Lewis Ave. #3, East Lansdowne PA, 19050. Carol's computer is the repository for the working files, so she is the one who needs to know about updates and typos.

I talked to Carol, and she reports that Volume Two of the FilkIndex is well-underway, with printing scheduled for Spring 1991. It will cover the same publications as Vol. 1 (revised), alphabetizing the songs by source-tune and first line (and a key-line if there is one which might be better-known than the first line printed in the songbook. i.e., "Hope Eyrie" would be listed both under

"Worlds grow old and suns grow cold"  
and  
"The eagle has landed")

Carol says she began this incarnation of the filkindex project with her own personal collection, ((write what you know...)) which does not pretend to be the most complete in existence. Additional songbook listings she has received so-far include *Massterial!*

*Massterial! Strikes Back*  
*Hip Deep in Heroes*  
*Filksongs That Go Bump In the Night and Curses, Filked Again!* from the LA FilkHarmonics and associated people. She has also added *Soon To Be a Major Embarrassment* from Magic Granny, and has ordered backissues of *Kantele* from me to complete her collection to-date of that filkzine.

Issue-numbers of serial zines which were included in Vol. 1 are as-follows:  
*Anakreon* #6,8,10,12,16,20,24,28,32,36,40,44 (The ones with Old Time Religion verses).  
*Demented, Deranged, etc.* #1-3  
*ConChord Program Books* 1983 & 1988  
*Enterprise Sing-Songs* #1 & 2  
*Fan Tastic* #1 & 2  
*Filk: The Final Frontie* #1,2,3  
*Filker Up* #1,2  
*From the Cockpit* #1(1983), #2 (1987)  
*Kantele* #3-13  
*Loose Notes* #1,2,2.5  
*Philk Fee-Nom-ee-Non* #1-47, 52-57  
*Philly Philk Phlash* #1-8  
*RecRoom Rhymes* #3-7  
*Westerfilk* #1 & 2  
*Wurmwald Post-Revel Songbook* #1 & 2  
*Xenofilkia* #1-9

Updates on Vols.1 & 2 are planned, as time permits. Contributions of data will be appreciated, however I recommend you contact Carol before sending material, to make sure you are not duplicating something she just got in the mail.

Info about a given songbook needs to include:

A: The Book

Title (Issue numbers if applicable)  
Brief description of material covered and the nature of the publication  
Year(s) of publication  
Publisher, with last-known address, especially if the address in the publication is out-of-date.  
In or Out of Print

B: The Songs

Title  
Lyricist  
Tune original title (if borrowed)  
Composer  
First line of song as printed in the songbook  
Key-line (if the first printed line is not the most easily-remembered or commonly-remembered)

Their machine is an Apple II GF, which takes 3.5" diskettes, and she is not sure whether it can read ASCII files generated by an IBM-type machine. I am going to try sending her a Wordstar Nondocument file and see how it goes. They are also on some computer nets, but Carol was not sure which ones and Rich was not available to be asked at the time we talked. More on that later.

Vol. 3 is planned to start the discography ((tape-ography, actually)) of published recorded filk. It will list the same information as Vol. 1, plus performer(s). I don't know yet what-all tapes Carol already has, but if you think you have something she probably doesn't (she entered filking at the Baltimore Worldcon, by-way of a reference date), Xerox both sides of the insert card and send it to her. I will print a listing of material she already has when she provides it. Vol. 3 is tentatively scheduled for at least a year away, and maybe longer if something delays Vol. 2; so there is no immediate rush on material for this.

Other projects Carol has brewing include issue #9 of the Philly Philk Phlash (she needs cover art particularly), and theme collections of Christmas Filk, Children's Filk, and X-Rated Filk. She is soliciting material for all of the latter 3; both songs and artwork.

XENOFILKIA

In a related postcard, Lee Gold says that ALL issues of Xenofilkia are still in print, and will be kept in print, until filk freezes over. #13 just came out. Lee's address is 3965 Alla Rd., Los Angeles, CA 90066

NEW PRODUCTS

Firebird Arts & Music

LOOK WHAT FOLLOWED ME HOME

Subject: Critters  
Sticker Price: \$10

Includes "Woof", "Little Fuzzy Animals", "F.A.P.", and other such ditties.

Singers are Leslie Fish, Diana & Chelsea Gallagher, Meg Davis, Frank Hayes, Margie Butler, Cecilia Eng.

I asked at the time I ordered huckstock of these tapes, and Andy (whose last name I can never recall, but he is married to Cecilia Eng) tells me they contain some salvaged lead tracks from out-of-print tapes, some remastered backup tracks, and some totally re-recorded songs (occasionally with new tunes since the last time you heard them on tape).

The tape sounds quite good on the boombox in the truck. Very little of the backup music is washed out by the road noise and all the voices carry nicely.

BORDER PATROL

Subject: Star Trek  
Sticker price \$10

I recognize some of the titles here as going all the way back to "Solar Sailors", but there are about as many new ones also. Leslie Fish sings some, along with Juanita Coulson, Larry Warner, Heather Alexander, Bill Roper, Cecilia Eng, Frank Hayes, and Bill Boyd.

After ordering some for my huckstock and listening-through a copy, I recognize this as largely a reincarnation of "Where No Man Has Gone Before", a Trekkish tape which sank with Off-Centaur. I don't have a personal copy of that one to make a track-by-track comparison, but I know "Eternal Loser" was on "Where No Man..."

This one does not sound quite so good in the truck. Voices carry through the road noise, but quite a few of the backup tracks are drowned. Juanita on "Neutral Zone" sounds nearly a-capella, for instance.

COLD IRON

Subject: Kipling  
Sticker Price: \$11

This one had been taken back to the shop for some planned backup track remastering before Off-Centaur hit the fan. Since then, Teri & Co. have acquired a new toy: a Midi.

Andy characterized this redone tape as "Leslie vs The Midi", and unfortunately this is accurate. Leslie and Monster were old lovers on the original version; Leslie and the Midi are still somewhat of a shotgun marriage at-present. The tunes and words are the same, but every song has been

re-engineered, and quite a few were re-sung as well. I spoke with Teri about this, and she said Leslie had done every note of the new arrangements herself, getting acquainted with the Midi and getting the songs just the way she wants them.

The Midi was also used on the other two tapes, to some extent, with much more felicitous (to my ear at least) results.

I personally do not like the new *Cold Iron* as well as I liked the original. If you have never heard the songs, buy the tape. If you have heard someone else's copy of the original, ask for a listen before handing over money, to determine whether your taste matches mine. If you have a beloved copy of the original, buy a good blank C-60 and make a backup copy to listen to.

This tape flunked the truck test resoundingly. The Midi does not have Monster's punch to carry through the road noise, and Leslie's voice does require audible accompaniment. This is a great pity, because the original *Cold Iron* is one of my favorite driver-waker-uppers enroute home from a con at wierd o'clock in the morning.

My stock of all these was shipped with "generic insert" cards which included instructions to send a SASE for the full-color versions.

#### ANOTHER NEW PRODUCT

##### *TOMORROW MORNING*

featuring Orion's Belt

Available from

Francine Mullen Publications,  
1611 SW 120th Ave, Pembroke Pines  
FL 33025

Sticker price \$10

Orion's Belt is a trio of Florida filkers: Francine Mullen, Dena Pearlman, and Douglas Wu. *Tomorrow Morning* is their first tape, hopefully of many. They have a good sound.

The songs on the tape are a mix of originals and stuff by other filkers. Besides an artful blend of three somewhat-above-average voices, the arrangements include 12-string and 6-string guitar, autoharp, Omnichord (sort of a battery-powered autoharp synthesizer), keyboard synthesizer, and recorders. Hank Cee is also credited, with bass guitar, keyboard, and sound engineering.

This is a very good roll-yer-own tape, and most of the songs pass the truck test for on-the-road listening.

And the cover has a totally awesome graphic, done by Kathy Wu.

#### MORE NEW STUFF

from Roberta Rogow

News item: a new filk-tape from Other Worlds Books - "The Filker Strikes Back", which will have some of my "zingers": "That Star Trek Religion" takes on Star Trek V; "Shazzam!" is a tribute to superheroes. I've got tributes (?) to *Beauty and the Beast*, *Quantum Leap*, & *Blake's Seven*. The other side of the tape has comments on fandom, and ends with Claire Maier's "Zero-G Football Song". Instrumental additions by Dave Maskin. Cost to be \$9 by mail, \$8 by hand. Bob Laurent will be distributing it on the West Coast.

#### RELATED NEW PRODUCTS

from Gordy Dickson

((At SoonerCon I was faced with the dilemma of finding two new books by Gordon R. Dickson, both in hardback, and only being able to afford one of them. msm))

Gordy writes: *WOLF AND IRON* has been doing well in hardcover, and I just finished a tiny little revision for the paperback edition.

*THE DRAGON KNIGHT*, sequel to *THE DRAGON AND THE GEORGE*, will come out in hardcover at the end of this month ((the letter is dated 3 Oct.)). And *YOUNG BLEYS*, a *Childe Cycle* book, will be coming out in the spring.

((Oh, good: I guessed right on which one to wait for the paperback on. msm))

LoC: MIKE STEIN

((Ed.note: Mike sent this already-typeset, and I am pasting it in as-is. Any comments I have will be footnoted. msm))

I wish to comment on a number of points in the previous issue. First, on the matter of obligatory license, the section on music copyright law in my copy of *Songwriter's Market* seems to support Bob Laurent's position. Misty Lackey's OK is needed only for the first sound recording, which was granted to Technical Difficulties. After that point, while it might be impolite to ignore her wishes (more below), Misty has no legal power to prevent Alvin and the Chipmunks from making a tape provided they pay her statutory mechanical royalties. Despite her letter, there's no legal precedent for her to set. She has veto power over some other composer putting a different tune to her lyrics. If someone has checked with a lawyer and gotten other advice, I would like to know.

In her response, Misty neither confirms nor denies Bob's claim that he sent her permission forms and received no response. While she may believe she publicized her split with Mar at Nolacon, I was at that convention and never heard about it until I

read about it in Harplings. Unless she told Bob personally, she can't assume Bob should have known about the split, which he says he didn't. (If he did, I would agree that he should have ignored his legal rights and gone along with Misty's wishes, both for ethical and long-term business reasons.) A more reasonable position is Margaret's assertion that Bob should not have assumed that Misty's silence implied consent.

Complicating this position, however, is the idea that as agent for Lackey (for I am told that current contracts contain an agency clause), Firebird should have been aware of the split and mentioned that Lackey/Mar collaborations would not be licensed in the January note. Bob thus had a better basis for thinking he was OK. Margaret's implication that Bob waited until the tape was mastered and shipped to send in the license forms puzzles me. Bob received license forms from Firebird in January, shipment was in April. He did not return the forms to Firebird until mastering, but as someone who has contracts with Wall I know that Bob warns when he sends out forms that this is not a guarantee of recording. This may be why he waited to return forms until he knew which ones he wanted to use.

I agree partially with Margaret that if an artist withdraws permission after granting it initially that the publisher should agree, provided that the publisher has not made substantial expenditures based on the reasonable belief that permission has been given. My opinion is that Bob had sufficient reason to believe that there was no problem with his recording the song in question. This opinion is based solely on the handwritten note from Teri Lee in January stating that there was no intention to refuse any permissions, coupled with my understanding that Firebird's contracts with its artists include an agency clause. (What this means is that Firebird has full legal powers to act as Misty's agent for the licensed material; their signature is just as valid as hers.)

There is an ethical obligation on the part of the writers, too - having given permission, either directly or through an agent, once the publisher has spent several hundred dollars on duplication, they have no reasonable right to expect that the publisher will swallow that in order to be polite. Margaret says she returned material to Jane Mailender after she changed her mind on permission, but does not say if this was after money had been spent for printing of Kantele. I'd call it a supererogatory act on Margaret's part to foot the bill for a reprint under those circumstances.

On another matter, I do want to make it clear that the speculation on why Firebird moved to Oregon was someone else's and not mine. However, it does not change the central fact that it was improper of me to repeat unsubstantiated gossip even when noted as such, especially when it had no bearing on the subject of the piece. I have mailed a full apology to Firebird, and in fact I feel that I also owe the apology to everyone who read the original article.

#### AN APOLOGY

- Mike Stein

In Harplings #22 there appeared a con report on Con2bile which I submitted. Unfortunately, it was not the one I wished to appear. I sent a revised version by regular mail, but it did not arrive in time. I tried to call Margaret to warn her it was coming, but I could not find my copy of Harplings #21 with her phone number.

The problem concerns the discussion of the change of guests of honor, which included some speculation on the reason for Firebird's move to Oregon. While the change itself, along with its cause, is proper material for a con report, the snide speculation of those with axes to grind is not. It does not matter that I carefully labeled the source; it should have been left out altogether. I apologize to everyone for my poor judgement in the initial writing, and for failing to act swiftly enough to keep it from appearing.

- (1) The forms sent to Bob were blank.
- (2) Why not send the license fee right after the master is made, but before duplication is done?
- (3) Documented: Bob's check to Firebird is dated the same day as the invoice to Roper.
- (4) Not. This was material sent for an upcoming issue.)

LOC: Bob Laurent

((excerpts: some of Bob's letter requires public answering and some of it is between him and me personally as huckster and supplier msm))

Well, you've at least done a partial retraction. However, I still believe very firmly that you owe Kathy Mar an apology in print for your false claim that she had given me permission for Misty's half of "Arafel's Song"

(( Ref. is to paragraph 3 of the article in Harplings 23. You insist my informant was mistaken. Misty insists she wasn't. I'm tempted to say 'take it up

with Misty', but I don't think she'll answer mail from you.))

I also think that it is extremely tacky of you to have challenged me in print to "say that again after Consonance" but to not report the fact that I am still perfectly willing to state, quite emphatically, that California seems quite able to support 2 filkcons per year.

((ghod, that's an old one! I had to go back to #21 [Jan.'90] to find my quote, which was [ as identified in the next line] responding to a comment by WestCoast filker Gary Anderson that attendance at filkcons out there seemend to be sliding. I had also had a comment from Eric Gerds along about then that ConChord [at least up to that time] had never broken even on expenses. If ConSonance does not have that problem, consider yourself a very lucky con-chair.))

You state that Teri says that her signature is not "legal" without initialling on these forms. Fine. However, acceptance of payment creates a contract under California law (which was where she was doing business at the time). She cashed the check.

(( you would rather she had declined permission on all the songs that check paid for, by sending back the whole check?))

Also, precedent had been set. She had accepted several other license forms and had NEVER RETURNED initialled copies. Merely cashing the check was all the confirmation that she had ever sent.

The first time that Misty directly informed me of anything to do with Kathy Mar was at Noreascon, not Nolacon. I don't know where she "publicized" her disassociation from Kathy Mar. I never heard it.

((Ref. is to the 4th paragraph on page 2 of H.23. Lackey says "did so"; Laurent says "did not".))

As you say, the whole dispute seems to revolve around a matter of editorial ethics. I do not feel that it was ethical of you to make those claims without checking out your facts.

((I have to plead temporary insanity. Anyone who wants a chronology of what had happened on the mundane side of my life in the 2 months preceeding the publication of H.21 can send me a SASE. There's not enough space here to list it.))

I wish to see some evidence that you have that "at least some" of the songs were used without permission and that Kathy gave me permission for Misty's work.

((as the original story stated clearly, this was based on a phone call from Teri Lee. The allegation of Mar's involvement originates with Misty Lackey, who could be just as mistaken as any of the rest of us.))

Also, you commented in the last issue that you would consider passing on the editorship of *Harpings* to someone else. Might I suggest Mike Stein? He has been attending most of the filkcons and has been fairly active. He's also been writing material that you've considered usable in *Harpings*. You might want to consider seeing if he'd do alternate issues or something like that.

((Mike hasn't volunteered. Neither has anyone else. I am about ready decide to fold this zine and go get acquainted with my pagemaker program so I can do another issue of Kantele.))

I repeat my comments from #23:

Options I have considered for keeping *Harpings* in publication include

- a) Dropping official frequency to quarterly
- b) Slip publication deadlines a month so news from OVFF and ConSonance would have time to reach me and there would not be a deadline right on top of my local convention
- c) Provide mailing labels and publication/mailout expense reimbursement and let somebody else edit *Harpings*.
- d) Fold *Harpings* entirely and negotiate a bulk subscription to "The Filking Times" or "APA-Filk" or some other filkzine.

Vote early and often, as they say in Chicago.

#### CON REPORTS AND CON LISTINGS

Ace reporter Mike Stein has been going to cons practically nonstop it seems this Fall. He sent me conreports on ConFiction, ConChord, and OVFF. They follow this page, with Con Listings afterward.

Mike mentioned in a phone call that he had left some names out of the roster of folks singing at OVFF: Barry & Sally Childs-Helton, Mary Ellen Wessels, and Henry Robert were also there. He sent me a revised final paragraph for that report, remedying the omission, but we put it "somewhere safe" when we copied it off CompuServe, an you know where that leads.

Con Report: CONFICTION  
by Mike Stein

The Bel Air is a five-star hotel, which means it's about equal to a Holiday Inn, except in price. Someone will have to explain to these European hotels about convention room sharing. There was only one key per room, no matter how many people were sharing, and they expected you to leave the key at the desk when you went out. What they thought you should do when you were going to sleep and your roommate was out partying is a mystery to me.

Thursday I spent a few hours doing setup on the history of fanzines exhibit. The convention had not exactly got their logistics planning down; there were not enough pegboard hangers even for the art show, let alone the fanzine exhibit and the photo gallery. We eventually got some paper clips which I was able to engineer into something better than the "real" hangers (mine didn't leap out of the pegboard at the slightest excuse).

Opening ceremonies were marked by a rather strange, rambling speech by con chairman Kees Van Toorn, and the guests of honor rising up from underneath the stage. (They couldn't get the dry ice they needed, unfortunately.) There was someone from the Dutch government to welcome us as well.

I did not go to much of the programming. The Congressgebouw is not in a very interesting area, but I did make a few sightseeing excursions while in the Hague. One was to a large miniature city about a mile away called the Madurodam. I checked out the international fireworks competition which was going on at the same time, but unfortunately I think I saw the worst entry of the show. The last was a train ride to the cheese market at Alkmaar, northwest of Amsterdam. Unfortunately the cheese market was filled with tourists, and it was hard to see much.

The filking was a British affair; there were just five other American filkers besides myself. While there were a number of appreciative Germans in the audience, apparently filk has only recently reached the non-English-speaking world, and they haven't produced any of their own. To help introduce people to the concept, Roger Robinson of Becon Publications was the castaway on "Desert Island Filks" where he got a number of filkers (including me) to do a sampling which covered the different facets pretty well. The concom did not provide well for the filkers; only two nights were allotted in the Congress Center, and while the Bel Air function rooms were supposed to be available for the other nights, the hotel manager shut down the function space one night. Shades of Brighton!

As for the rest of Worldcon, there were only five hundred-odd Americans out of a total in the 2500-3000 range (including day memberships). I wasn't sure about why it was so low, though some people suggested that the weak dollar coupled with layoffs in the computer and defense industries had a lot to do with it. There was a fairly large eastern European contingent - many East Germans, a bunch of Poles, some Czechs, Russians, and Hungarians, and at least one Bulgarian. One Russian and one American couple were victimized by thieves (the Americans in Paris, the Russian I don't know where) and had to make an appeal to fandom at large for donations.

Overall, it was not as slickly run as Noreascon (but then, what else would be?), but there were some interesting things done there. One was the "Dutch Treat" - a small area where people could buy drinks or a meal (depending on the time slot) for various pros and talk to them. I sat in on the one with Chelsea Quinn Yarbro and found it fascinating. The masquerade was a real flop; there were only thirty-some entrants and they were really scraping the bottom of the barrel. I'm not too surprised; if I were spending the money to go to Europe,

I'd leave my costuming stuff behind in favor of what I'd be willing to carry when I started touring.

Food was not well provided for. There was a cafeteria in the Congressgebouw itself, and a few restaurants within a reasonable distance, but nothing like the cheap fast eats we're used to here. Actually, the best place for a nutritious and inexpensive meal in Holland is at a herring stand - I love the little fishies, and downed a fair number of them. You can get them smoked, but the purist's way is raw salted herring, called *nieuwe*. In the Hague, one vendor told me that I was the first American to sample his wares. I told him how to get the Yanks to buy - just tell them it's Dutch sushi.

San Francisco learned a valuable lesson from the failed DC in '92 bid - keep your hotel problems secret until after you win. Immediately after the results were announced, we learned that due to another convention they would not have all their function space until Friday. Had that been known beforehand, I think the Hawaii write-in (which finished second) would have won. Major shock: Zagreb finished third, ahead of Phoenix.

Con Report: CONCHORD  
by Mike Stein

A few months before the con, Tera Mitchel sent me a letter with the most generous offer I've ever had from a concom. Alas, when I arrived in Los Angeles, my promised concert slot was nowhere to be found, so I ended up singing instead.

The guest of honor was Julia Ecklar, with Joey Shoji as toastmaster. Wail Songs and Harpy Music (a/k/a Heather Rose Jones, who did the transcription) released "Dreamer", the Julia Ecklar songbook. They had a novel method of proofreading: the first printing was a limited edition, and there was a find-the-most-errors contest (which I won). Among the notables who came down from northern CA were Heather Rose Jones, Bob Kanefsky, Jordin Kare, Kathy Mar, Cynthia McQuillin, and Dr. Jane

Robinson. Mark Bernstein came from Michigan, but I had the distinction of being the most distant attendee. Southern CA was, of course, very much in evidence: Windbourne, the Golds, the Bremers, and the L. A. Filkharmonics were there, as well as a professional songwriter (yes, he's really sold songs) named Howard Harrison whom I'd never seen before.

Heather Rose Jones wrote a song called "Bird of Gold", with a rhyme and alliteration scheme so complex that she was daring Bob Kanefsky to filk it. During the Totally Tacky and Tasteless Review I premiered my own parody of the supposedly unfilkable song: "Arch of Gold". (Guess what it's about.) The look on Heather's face was priceless. Then, later that night, just when she thought it was safe to go back into the filk room, Kanef did his own parody, "Shirt of Gold" (yes, another Trek Classic shirt-color song, but brilliant). Heather went off into a corner muttering something about octuple rhymes and anapestic triskadekameter....

The convention was competently run - at least by the concom; the hotel was an hour late setting up. I was astonished to discover during the course of the con that not one but two people there know two cousins of mine who moved to LA a few years ago. I managed to meet my cousins for dinner after the convention.

I don't know if I'll get back there next year. My airline ticket was one of the last of the cheap seats, purchased back in June on one of those special buy-now-fly-later deals which I'm sure the airlines are now all regretting. I don't know when I'll be able to get a coast-to-coast roundtrip for \$298 again.

Con Report: OVFF  
by Mike Stein

I think I'm going to become known as the Mad Filker. I went to every filk con in the world this year (or at least every one I heard about), including the one in England. Fortunately, OVFF closes the season for this year.

The concom had trouble finding a hotel; the traditional weekend ran up against Ohio State's homecoming football game. The Hilton Inn in Worthington was not a great place for a filk con, to put it mildly. It had very long halls, one elevator at the end of the hall, and more fire doors than the containment lab in "The

Andromeda Strain". Since I had driven in from DC with all my instruments (a 'cello, a keyboard, two acoustic guitars, and a Unisynth guitar synthesizer) plus two belonging to Linda Melnick and Lucinda Brown, plus my suitcase and a humidifier for the instruments, I was not pleased. There were other problems as well, such as the fact that the closet had one (yes, one) hanger - and this problem was not just in my room.

Unfortunately, I got a late start and did not make it in time for the high tea held for the listener guest of honor, Mary Frost-Pierson. By the time I got down to the filk room, some people had already turned in.

Technical Difficulties were originally going to be the musical guests of honor, but between T. J. Burnside's new baby and Sheila Willis's broken ankle, that had to be changed. Instead, we were treated to Linda Melnick's new group, Musical Chairs, consisting of Linda, Lucinda Brown, and Jean Stevenson, who took one of the Saturday concert slots. Among the others performers were B. J. Willinger, Barb Riedel and Carol Poore Roper, and Peter Thiesen. \*

The one-shots were filled and then some - there were fifteen performers and several on a standby list who did not get to go. I didn't even bother signing up, I arrived so late on Friday. The song contest this year was on the theme of aliens, and there were fifteen entries there as well. I sang two of them - Philip Soehnlén had a cold and needed someone to do his. Fortunately, it was to a tune I knew. My own "Ballad of the Hubble," a fantasy about what happens when aliens take offense at those nosy earthlings peeking through their windows with a telescope, took third place. Renee Alper's "Alien Landing", a serious song, took second, while Tom Smith won for the third year in a row with "Facehugger, His Life and Untimely Demise", a nicely creepy number about the movie "Alien."

At the Saturday night filk, the midwestern chaos collision resolution algorithm had an unusual amount of trouble. The room mostly turned into a performers' circle. However, at Bob Laurent's suggestion, I set up well outside the circle to encourage others to feel free to join in. (I also needed a lot of space for my instruments.) Robin Nakkula set up next to me, as we planned to do a couple of duets.

Before the midnight brunch/awards banquet, things went relatively smoothly. However, afterwards, there was some problem coordinating things even within the circle, and it was very difficult for people outside the circle to get in. Robin tried several times to start a song, and was

repeatedly walked on. I know she was at the back of the room, but a Martin 12-string is rather hard to ignore. I got so disgusted that I was just about ready to match her tuning and back her with my own Martin 12-string, which can drown out anyone short of Juanita Coulson. It took the efforts of a couple of audience members to get the circle to let her in. When I tried to follow a song, announcing a "follower", someone in the circle pointed to Peter Thiesen. I acquiesced, as Peter's a pretty quiet guy, and if someone notices he's been waiting to play for a while, then he's really been waiting to play for a while. However, the person who asked me to defer then grabbed the next song, which did not follow the topic. There was one other person in the middle of the room who looked like he wanted to play, but was totally intimidated and did not go until the filk was pretty well dead. Pity; he was a fine classical guitarist. Perhaps part of the problem was the lack of an overflow room.

The Pegasus awards were a source of contention. This year one of the nominees for best filk song was Fred Small's "Cranes Over Hiroshima," and a number of people thought that it was not really a filk song even though some filkers perform it. However, T. J. Burnside-Clapp's "Lullaby" took the honors. The award was accepted by T. J. herself, who changed her mind and brought Mitch and the baby. T. J. took home the Best Fannish award as well for "Weekend-Only World." Julia Eckiar picked up Best Literature for "Daddy's Little Girl" as well as Best Writer. Best Performer was Mitchell Burnside-Clapp.

The attendance appeared to be well over a hundred; many of the people were just there to listen. Programming was very light; there were just a couple of workshops in addition to the concerts and contest. The convention closed with the traditional Sunday afternoon jam session. One especially nice thing about the convention was the well-stocked con suite, which had all sorts of goodies as well as real food.

#### FILK CONS AND OTHERS

CONSONANCE '91  
March 1-3, 1991  
Oakland Airport Holiday Inn  
Oakland, CA

Guests: Gytha North (GoH), Rilla Heslin (TM)  
Reg. \$20 thru ConChord'90, \$25 thru 2/1/91, \$30 at door, \$8 supporting. If children attend the programming they have to register. Otherwise free.  
Hotel \$60 single/dbl; \$70 tripl/quad.  
Reservations thru Holiday Inn 800 no. in your phone book or (415)763-6415.  
Info Wail Songs, PO Box 29888, Oakland CA 94604 Ph.(415)763-6415

FILKONTARIO  
April 12-14, 1991  
Holiday Inn, Missisauga, Ontario  
CANADA (Toronto area)

Guests Bill & Brenda Sutton  
Reg. \$25 Cdn thru 3/20/91; then \$30 Cdn.  
Hotel \$75/night (no mention of body-count limitations, if any) (416)855-2000 for reservations & mention the con. There is an airport shuttle available.  
Planned activities include workshops & panels, late-night breakfast banquet, dealers' tables, Consuite, sing-til-you-croak, and a songwriting competition for a theme song for FilkOntario. "Judging will be by the all: one person, one vote."  
info: 1260 Marlborough Ct., Oakville Ontario Canada L6H 3H5

OVFF 7  
Nov. 1-3, 1991  
Hotel TBA

Guests: Suzette Haden Elgin (musician)  
Robin Bailey (Toastmaster)

Reg. TBA

Songwriting contest topic is Heroes & Heroines. Pegasus Award categories: Best Filk Song, Best Writer/Composer, Best Performer, Best Love Song, Best War/Vengeance Song.  
Info PO Box 211101, Columbus OH 43220  
phone (614)2-MARCON or (614) 475-0158

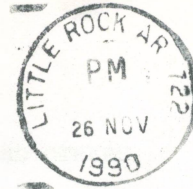
MUSICON  
Jan. 3-5, 1992  
Days Inn Briley Parkway, Nashville TN

GoH Naomi Pardue, TM Murray Porath

Reg. \$15 thru July 31,'91; \$18 to Nov. 1,'91; \$22 after & at door.  
Rooms \$42 single-quad. (615)885-2372 for reservations.  
Info PO Box 198121, Nashville, TN 37219-8121 or (615)889-5951 til 10 pm Central.



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