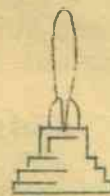


IT'S NEW YORK IN '56

Fifteenth Year Of Publication

Fantasy-Times

"The World Of Tomorrow Today!"



Hugo
1955

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First October 1955 Issue

Ten Cents

CLEVELAND CON SMALL, BUT "GOOD" SAY ALL;
PRO ATTENDANCE RUNS HIGH; CLIFTON & RILEY,
WALT MILLER, RUSSELL, "ASTOUNDING", (CLEAN
SWEEP BY CAMPBELL!), FREAS & "FANTASY-TIMES"

TAKE HUGOS; MOSKOWITZ MYSTERY GUEST

Cleveland, Ohio, 6 Sept., (CNS) - The 13th World S-F Convention ended here in the small hours of this morning, down in science-fiction history as one of the smallest, but also one of the most enjoyable, s-f cons ever held.

Attendance was approximately 375, membership was 600, but the hard work and ability of the Convention Committee composed of Nick and Noreen Falasca, Honey Wood, Ben Jason and Steve Schulteis, plus the happy selection of the Manger Hotel, whose hospitality proved to be outstanding, made this con one which will be fondly remembered by attendees for many years to come.

Many Notables Attend

Among the celebrities who attended were Willy Ley, Howard Browne, Bill Hamling, Anthony Boucher, Evelyn Gold, Larry Shaw, E. E. Smith, Isaac Asimov, Bob Tucker, P. Schuyler Miller, Sam

Moskowitz, Judy Merril, Mark Clifton, Frank Riley, James E. Gunn, Forrest J Ackerman, Robert A. Madle, Lloyd Ebbach, C. L. Barrett, Ozzie Train, Fritz Lieber, Jr., Dave Kyle, Wallace West, Robert Bloch, Randy Garrett, Frank Robinson, Robert Abernathy, Lou Tabakow, L. Sprague de Camp, Damon Knight, Harold Ellison, Ron and Cindy Smith, and from England as guests of the TransAtlantic Fan Fund (TAFF), Ken and Pamela Bulmer.

Fans from all over the U.S. were there, from the West Coast, the East Coast, from Georgia, from Chicago and all over the middle part of the country and a sizeable delegation from Canada.

Most, by far, of the program was above average, but some events to which attendees were treated stand out.

Perhaps most notable of these was the banquet, under the Toastmastership of Anthony Boucher, at which addresses by Forry Ackerman (Mr. Sci-Fi himself),

WORLD'S OLDEST SCIENCE-FICTION NEWSPAPER

by Bob Bloch (who was merely very good this time instead of brilliant), Robert Abernathy (in Russian!) and Guest-of-Honor Isaac Asimov (who tried his damndest to become serious for once, and almost succeeded) were received with long and loud applause.

Achievement Awards Presented

Feature of the banquet was the presentation of the Second Annual S-F Achievement Awards by Toastmaster Boucher.

Winners were: best novel: "They'd Rather Be Right" by Mark Clifton and Frank Riley, from ASF; novelette: "Darfsteller" by Walter M. Miller, from ASF; short story: "Alamagoosa" by Eric Frank Russell, from ASF; best pro-mag: "ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION", edited by John W. Campbell, Jr., and published by Street & Smith ---

--- at this point Tony Boucher remarked that if a special part of hell was earmarked for science-fiction editors, he could think of no more fitting bit of purgatory than for an editor to be obliged to present every single award to a rival magazine ---

--- the award to the best illustrator was presented to Frank Kelly Freas, the bulk of whose work has appeared in ASF!

We are pleased and proud to record that the award for the best amateur publication in the s-f field was presented to "Fantasy-Times".

Mystery Guest Of Honor

Of equal interest to attendees was the revelation of the Mystery Guest of Honor, who turned out to be none other than Sam Moskowitz, who was presented with a handsome plaque, suitably inscribed to commemorate the occasion.

Guest of Honor Isaac Asimov was also presented with a plaque.

Banquet attendance was 207, but the doors were thrown open at the end of the meal so that everyone who cared to could hear the addresses and presentations.

A miniature "Hugo" was presented to Lou Tabakow for the best unpublished story of the year ("Sven" - noted on the cover of "OTHER WORLDS" but never published!)

Other Program Highlights

Among the other outstanding program features were, an address by the Old Lensman, Dr. E. E. Smith, Ph.D., in which he showed mathematically the bias that some reviewers have toward certain authors, including himself! (He asserted that his investigation showed Tony Boucher to be the most biased reviewer, and P. Schuyler Miller the least); an unscheduled speech by Stephen J. Takacs, well-known book-dealer and fan, who stated that the Doubleday S-F Book Club's activities accounted for a good part of the troubles which the rest of the field was experiencing; a talk by Willy Loy on "Artificial Satellites", in which he stated that, on the basis of information of the forthcoming satellite shot which has been publicly announced, it is obvious to him that the rockets which will transport the satellite to its orbit are already in existence, and that it is his expectation that the satellite will maintain its orbit for a minimum of three weeks instead of the announced three or four days; a collectors' panel, consisting of Forry Ackerman, Sam Moskowitz, C. L. Barrett, Lloyd Eshbach, Ozzie Train, Bob Madle and Steve Schultheis, and featuring the use of a projectoscope, by means of which prize items from the collections of the panel members were shown on a large screen in full color; a skit written and presented by a number of professionals present which was a real show-stopper, being a take-off on Dickens' "Christmas Carol", presenting such stellar performers as Sam Moskowitz (as "Scroogeowitz"), Tony Boucher, Fritz Lieber, Jr. (as "Tiny Tim"; Fritz is about 6' 4" tall!), Bob Bloch (a natural as "The Ghost Of S-F Past", complete with ghastly green spotlight!), Judy Merrill, Margaret Clingerman, Randy Garrett and Forry Ackerman, aided by a trio of fans singing a song by Demon Knight entitled "Poor Stef Is Dead!"; and a talk by Wallace West, "Industry's Interest in S-F", which featured the showing of films made by industry using a s-f motif and the demonstration of a geiger counter, an air-vacuum-cleaner, and a "black light" tube which induces fluorescence in various substances, including detergent residue left in Mr. West's white shirt!

Auction Prices Modest

Always an eagerly-awaited event on convention programs is the auction, and among the mouth-watering items offered for sale to the highest bidders at this one were some fifty full-color astronomical paintings by Morris Dollens, arranged in the form of a huge mural in back of the speakers' platform; two original covers by Frank R. Paul from the old Gernsback days; hard-cover books donated by Don Grant, and cover paintings and original black-and-white interior illustrations by the dozens and scores. Prices were very modest. Due to the large amount of material, the auction was continued at various intervals during the program.

Then there were talks by James E. Gunn, Isaac Asimov, Forry Ackerman, Bob Tucker, P. Schuyler Miller, Mark Clifton, a professional editors' panel with Anthony Boucher ("MAG OF F & S-F"), Evelyn Gold ("GALAXY"), Howard Browne ("AMAZING" and "FANTASTIC"), Wm. F. Hamling ("IMAGINATION") and Larry Shaw (forthcoming "INFINITY S-F"), a fan editors' panel with Harlan Ellison, Ed Wood, Nick Falasca, Earl Kemp, Bob Tucker and Ray Van Houten, a skit by the Cleveland "Terrans" featuring Mary Lou Kerr, Kathleen Donohue and Gene Palment, an authors' panel with L. Sprague de Camp, Damon Knight, Frank Riley, Frank Robinson and Bob Abernathy, a special show at the Cleveland Planetarium, an autograph party sponsored by the University of Chicago S-F Society, two movies, "Man In The White Suit" and "Lost Horizon", color movies of past conventions, and, to wind up the four days' activities, a Masquerade Ball, with music by Marty Conn's Orchestra, at which prizes were awarded for costumes as follows: most beautiful, Honey Wood, most exotic, Olga Ley, most original, Mr. & Mrs. Howard Lyons, and funniest, Ralph Grant and Marie Uvey.

Business Session

Official business consummated at the 13th World S-F Convention consisted of the following: the permanent sponsoring body for World S-F Cons was named "World Science-Fiction Society"; the appreciation of the 13th Con was expressed to Cleveland's Manger Hotel for

their consideration and treatment, and it was suggested to future convention committees that they investigate Manger Hotels in their cities as possible convention sites; congratulations of the Convention were expressed to the Executive Committee for their system of afternoon, evening and late evening programming, instead of morning sessions—when everybody stays in bed anyway, and future convention committees were urged to consider similar programming; the following was added to the rotation plan for con bids: "Any country outside North America shall be permitted to bid at any convention for the following convention site, in place of the proper region in North America, except as provided further"; the further provision being: "At a convention held outside of North America, bids for the next convention site will be limited to that region of North America which was superseded by the then-current convention".

Bidding for the 1956 convention site ended in a "no vote" landslide for New York City. London, represented by Ken Bulmer, also bid, but withdrew in favor of the Empire City. Dave Kyle, prominent and popular Eastern fan and professional, made the successful bid.

Sidelites On The 13th Con

Early Sunday morning Cleveland police were summoned to the Manger Hotel, not as might be suspected to calm recalcitrant convention-goers, but to put the arm on a professional bandit who was plying his trade in their midst, using their all-night habits as camouflage.

Sometime between midnight and 1 a.m., "Fantasy-Times" editor Ray Van Houten was awakened by a loud thump and cries of "Help! Help!" Investigating, he found his next-door neighbor, a permanent resident of the hotel, standing in the hallway in a state of great agitation. It developed that he had awakened a few minutes before to find the figure of a man bent over his bed. This, he said, was the second time that night someone has been in his room.

The house detective was summoned, and with the aid of an elevator operator who recalled a passenger fitting the description given, a search of the hall

and the all-night convention rooms was made to see if the culprit could be located.

He was discovered taking part in an all-night poker game in the Chester Room, which the hotel kept open 24 hours a day for the convenience of convention attendees.

Without arousing his suspicions, various other groups of fans in the room were moved to one end, and groups of fans posted themselves at the exits in case the quarry became alarmed.

After what seemed hours, two of Cleveland's uniformed policemen arrived and the suspect was taken into custody.

The man arrested was not a fan -- he didn't even look like a fan -- and it developed that he had previously served three years in the San Quentin pen! The wallet stolen from the permanent resident's room was recovered, but not the money it contained.

Convention attendees were later congratulated by the house detective for their cooperation.

More Sidelights By Don Ford

Noreen Falasca had two impacted-wisdom teeth removed about a week before the con.....Tucker says he and Bob Bloch got paid for putting out "Science Fiction World", a puff-sheet for Gnome Press which was distributed at the con; figures they are the first ones ever to be paid for editing a fan mag.....Winners of cover originals in the TAFF raffle were Lee Hoffman and Dennis J. Campbell.....Lee Hoffman is returning to fandom.....Ken and Pamela Bulmer left Cleveland to go to Indian Lake to visit Doc Barrett; from there, they'll ride to Savannah, Ga., with him, leaving Indian Lake Sept 15th.....The Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund has set its goal as sending over a U.S. or Canadian fan to the 1956 Easter-time Con in London; nominations as to who should go should be filed with Don Ford, 129 Maple Ave., Sharonville, Ohio, before Sept 30th.... "Fantasy-Times" represented at con by Ray Van Houten, Forrest J Ackerman, Frank Prieto, Jr., Bill Blackbeard, Don Ford and Steve Takacs.....the convention programs ran later than any I have ever attended or heard of ---- I was up until 5 or 6 a.m. night after night; there was a general feeling of unreal-

ity about the whole thing by about the third day!.....The assistant hotel manager wanted to pull a gag on a wedding reception which was held at the hotel on Monday, so I and two Chicago fans put on rubber Frankenstein masks and invaded the party -- the crowd was stunned at first, but then photographers started shooting and they livened up a bit, until the children got scared and began to cry; we were quite effective, I understand..... the Labor Day parade which woke up many fans at the ungodly hour of 9:30 a.m. Monday, was for the National Assn of Letter Carriers Convention, in town at another hotel.

My personal opinion of the Con is that it was shown that you don't need a large attendance to achieve success. There wasn't near the usual amount of money available in the crowd this year, either, but I am told that the con came out in the black. There were four or five raffles going on, and in the auction cover paintings were going for \$5 and \$6. The Mel Hunters drew the top prices of \$15 to \$20, while the Dollens went for about \$7 to \$16. Harlan Ellison made an excellent assistant auctioneer to Sam Moskowitz.

The Con Committee carried things out very well, with signs of excellent planning ahead of time. Registration was the easiest of any con I've attended. The hotel was very cooperative, and didn't bother any party that I know of. All in all, I enjoyed myself better than at any other World Con.

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"WE'RE GOING BACK TO CONCRETE"

by Howard Browne

AS JUST about everybody who reads science-fiction knows by now, Amazing Stories returns to a monthly schedule with the January, 1956 issue.

IN A day of declining sales and suspended titles, any announcement of a reversal in the trend is news indeed. Reactions from readers, writers and fellow editors ran from "Are you guys nuts?" to "Are you guys crazy?"

THE STATE of our mental health had nothing to do with it. The move to monthly publication was not made on the spur of the moment nor as the result of a casual impulse. Distressed by the shaky state of the science-fiction field, we set out early in 1955 to attempt to learn the real reason for its decline, and the cures if any.

FROM THE first, a lot of false theories popped up to confuse us: "Everybody's watching TV." "People no longer get a bang out of science-fiction since science caught up with it." "Writers in the field aren't writers at all; just ex-fans who can't get honest

WITH AMAZING Stories about the only science-fiction magazine going monthly and whose circulation continues to go up, while most of the field's mags are losing circulation, cutting pages, or changing schedules, we were on the look-out for an article by Amazing's Captain, Howard Browne, as to why etc. This article gives us his ideas on the upswing of Amazing, and will be the editorial in the December 1955 issue of that magazine. Your comments will be appreciated. -the eds

JOBS. "People prefer reading fact articles instead of fiction." "Movies are better than ever."

SLOWLY, WHAT we believed was the real answer began to make itself visible. Very simple, it seemed that science-fiction was no longer fun to read. The ingredients which made for reading pleasure in the genre were missing. Take the pleasure out of what is supposed to give pleasure and there is

nothing left, You can hardly get more basic than that.

WHAT ARE those ingredients? We dug back into the stories of two decades ago and began to read all over again. What we got out of it were a pair of inflamed eyes and considerably more than a glimmering of what we firmly believe to be the truth.

IT SEEMS to us that fiction of the future no longer concerns heroes, but victims. The mighty men of valor who once strode the universe are gone, replaced by small, often unadmirable men who are barely more than the guy next door in a space suit. The John Carters have been supplanted by the Sam Joneses, the dignity and sterling character of Tarzan of the Apes discarded for the hobbledehoy antics of the town drunk.

YOU DON'T have your audience waiting at the newsstands to read about this present-day type of protagonist. No one wants to emulate Sam Jones, the astrophysicist of the good ship Falling Star. Sam's wife is a shrew, he suffers from dandruff, shingles, three neiroses and an Oedipus complex, and what he wants most from life is bourbon and benzadrino. Is this the kind of "hero" you want to spend an evening relaxing with? Hell, no! Too many of us are like him to want to read about him.

ALSO, THE strong love interest between a tremendous man and a fine woman, so often found in the memorable stories of twenty years ago, has been

replaced by a wise-cracking, double-entendre kind of relationship you run into down at the corner pub these days. The female spends half her time waving her glands at Sam, while he alternates between loering like a satyr and panting like a purple poodle. Entertainment -- phooey!

NOWADAYS IT'S all poppy dialogue and slick action and the searching of twisted souls. The warmth of honor and ideals in the classic sense is missing, the wealth of descriptive detail abandoned in the name of "pace", the unfettered imagination that builds unique adventure and stirring deeds discarded for the bon mot and the sly seduction of a mythopoeiac. No wonder Jules Verne and H. G. Wells are still read to this day -- read with all the avidity given when the ink was still fresh on the first editions of their works.

TODAY'S SCIENCE-fiction has substituted a gooey quicksand for the firm foundations of yesterday. We're going back to concrete.

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