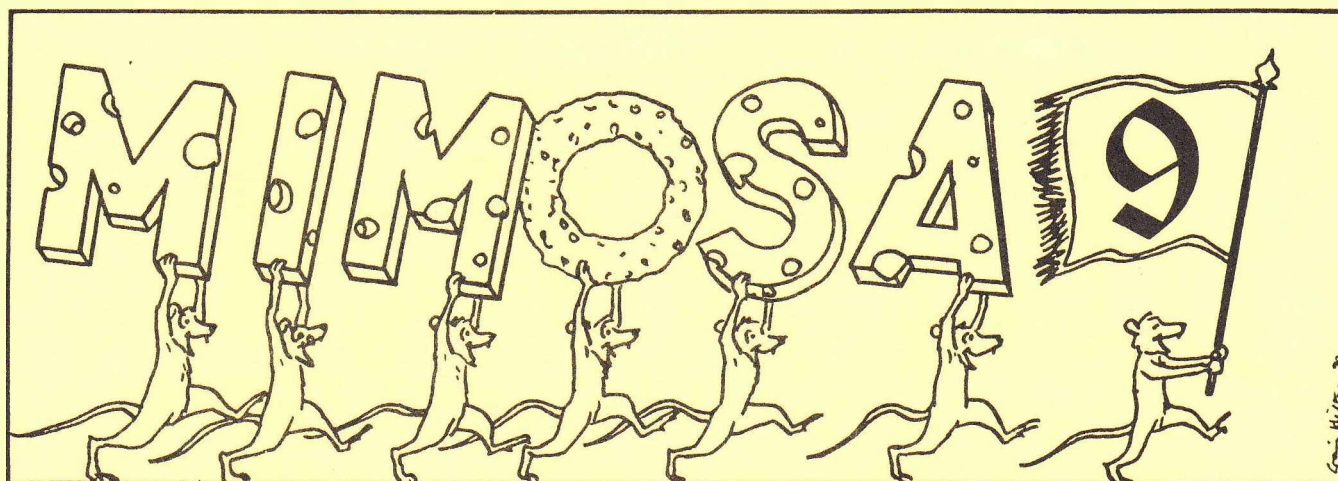


MIMOSA

9



Joseph
Meyhew
10-1-90

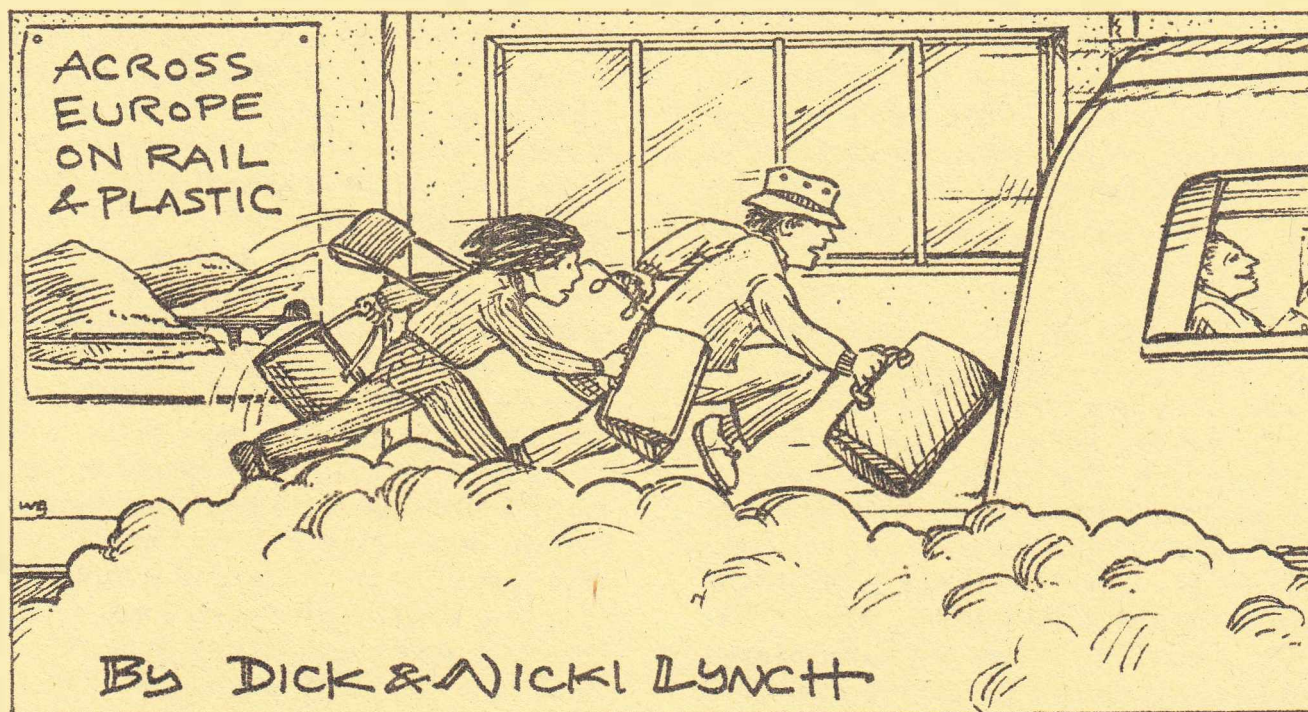


from Dick & Nicki Lynch, P.O. Box 1270, Germantown, Maryland 20875, U.S.A.

This issue of *Mimosa* was published in late December 1990, and is available for the really insignificant sum of two dollars (U.S. currency or equivalent). We really don't encourage this route, however; we'd much rather receive your fanzine in trade, or even better, a first-person article about fandom or things fans do (and we're especially interested in tales of fandom past). An article published here will keep you on our mailing list for as long as we publish. We also welcome Letters of Comment; a LoC from you on this issue will give us a warm and fuzzy feeling, and bring you a copy of *Mimosa* 10 next summer. Collation help this issue (and last) by the crack team of Vern Clark and Sheryl Birkhead; Australian distribution of this issue once again courtesy of once and future Down Under Fan Fund candidate Roger Weddall. And speaking of DUFF, we are considering standing for same in 1993, but more on that later. Meanwhile, please note that all opinions expressed by contributors are their own.

☐ If this box is checked, Dave Kyle says you have to send us a Letter of Comment to stay on our mailing list.

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Opening Comments: ACROSS EUROPE ON RAIL AND PLASTIC (Dick & Nicki)	3
2. DAVE KYLE SAYS YOU CAN'T (told by Himself)	10
3. PROSE IS THE WINE; POETRY THE WHINER (Dave Luckett)	14
4. CORN IS THE LOWEST FORM OF WHEAT (Bob Shaw)	17
5. Artist Credits	25
6. Mimosa Letters	26
7. Contributors	41



It was mid afternoon in Prague, and we were in the middle of a walking tour of the historic and wonderfully picturesque Prague Castle part of the city, accompanied by Dick's professor friend from the Czech Technological University. We had just finished trading twenty U.S. dollars for the equivalent in Czech crowns at the very advantageous rate of 1:24.6, and had enough money now to not only buy souvenirs and touristy things, but also to take our host and his son out to dinner that evening. Across the plaza from us, there was some kind of commotion going on near the entrance to one of the government buildings; people were gathering, and the noise from the crowd crescendoed. As the door to the building opened, three autos drove up (respectively painted red, white, and blue, corresponding to the colors of the Czechoslovak flag). The crowd separated and broke into applause as a figure strode through the door. He stopped, turned back toward the crowd and waved, then got into the middle auto and the three car procession drove away. We got a better look at him as the procession drove past us, not fifty feet away from where we were standing. It was Vaclav Havel, President of the Czech and Slovak Federated Republic.

In all, we spent two weeks travelling in Europe this past August. It was the first time we'd ever been there, or for that matter, anywhere outside the United States except for Canada. If we had to pick the absolute high moment of the entire trip, that afternoon in Prague might have been it. Bracketed around it, we managed to visit six different countries, pass through five national capitals, go to six art museums, endure two airline ocean crossings, ride on two different city subway and five different city surface train systems, communicate (or attempt to) in five different languages, make ten different international border crossings, and, oh yes, attend one Worldcon.

We also spent over 40 hours on intercity and international passenger trains, which was over ten percent of the duration of our entire stay in Europe. To say we took advantage of Europe's fine rail system is an understatement; we managed to eat, sleep, and be happy along the hundreds of miles we rode the rails. And we learned pretty quickly that you had to be, well, pretty quick to get to where you wanted to be: stopover times are usually quite short and you'd better be ready to either board or disembark, because the trains do run on time, and it's very easy to miss a connection.

It was in Amsterdam that this whole adventure started. We arrived there three days before Worldcon, after an uneventful overnight flight from Baltimore and a short train ride in from Schiphol airport. Amsterdam is truly an amazing city, probably the most international city we've ever visited. It's a place of multiple languages and multiple monetary currencies, sometimes coming into play all at once. At a souvenir shop not far from the Rijksmuseum we saw an example of this -- the shop proprietor in the span of five minutes made transactions with groups of Italian-, English-, and German-speaking tourists. It was a chaotic babel of exchange rates being figured, currencies being exchanged, and people attempting to make themselves understood. There was no common dialect except for the language of the pocket calculator.

4

along the streets. The riders seemed to be mostly younger people, with the occasional older businessman, and they didn't appear worried about cars that zipped past them, only a foot or so away. Every street in the city had designated bike paths between the sidewalks and the auto lanes, which seemed to give bicycle riders (in our opinion, at least) a false sense of security.

On the other hand, Amsterdam automobile traffic patterns took a bit more getting used to. Our taxi ride from the Central Train Station to our hotel proved to be quite an education. The taxi driver didn't know a lot of English, but he knew his roads. He wove through streets crowded with pedestrians (who do *not* have the right of way in Europe), bicycle riders and other cars, startling us by occasionally weaving into lanes on the opposite side of the street that were marked for buses. It scared the daylights out of us -- here we were, our first day in Europe, and we weren't sure we'd survive to see day two. The driver had occasional words with others on the streets, but none of them seemed very angry. It was almost as if they knew one another.

Our hotel was in the museum section of Amsterdam, a relatively quiet neighborhood filled with shops and restaurants. It was an older hotel, with a tiny lift (it didn't deserve to be called an elevator) that could maybe hold four people -- if they were good friends. There was also a very steep stairwell that more closely resembled a ladder.

Our room was on the top floor and was only slightly larger than the lift. When Dick entered it for the first time, he stopped dead still for a moment, then pronounced, "Garret, sweet garret." There were two single beds, a night stand and a small desk. The TV was on a shelf over one of the beds, and a small stand-alone closet huddled in a corner. The bathroom was small with a tiny, curtainless shower that one sat in. We also discovered that not all the hotels provide washcloths. (We bought some later on.) We thought it was a quiet hotel at first, but when the rooms around us filled up, we discovered that the

walls were made of cardboard -- we could hear alarm clocks in adjoining rooms each morning, and even the *clunk*clunk* of the TV sets as they changed channels.

This hotel, as many do in Europe, served a complementary continental breakfast every morning. We would go down to the small restaurant and have a choice of breads with jam, dry cereals with milk, cold cuts and cheeses, fruits, and beverages. However, there seemed to be only one harried waiter on duty, who appeared to be always rushing around but not getting much done. He was very slow to replace food and place settings. This didn't matter much except on the third morning when an Italian tour group staying at the hotel swept in ahead of us and ate everything but the tablecloths. We were left with a few scraps and whatever glasses and cups we could scrounge.

Actually, though, we really did like the continental breakfasts of Europe, which were much more substantial than the coffee-and-sweet-roll morning snack that hotels in North America offer as a free breakfast. And we enjoyed eating out in Europe, although we weren't too adventurous. The food, for the most part, is close to what you'd find in an American-style restaurant (meat, potatoes, and vegetables), with nothing more exotic than endive in Holland. We decided not to eat any American-style fast food (despite learning later than they were the only places with American-size drink servings; European liquid refreshments tend to be doled out in small sizes, by the tenths of a liter), instead opting for 'native' food places as much as possible. It also seemed a good way to get acquainted with local dining customs. Such as sharing your meal with the restaurant's cat. Cat?!

Yes, cat. At home we're used to having Mouse and Mimosa, our two cats, beg for food during mealtimes, but here it was unexpected. It was during dinner at the cafe on our first evening in Amsterdam while watching all those cyclists, that Nicki noticed a small face looking up at her from beside her chair. The cat had a flea collar and seemed clean; we

assumed it belonged to the restaurant. So she fed it some meat scraps.

Dick decided that it was just a quirk of that one restaurant to have a cat. But, the cafe we had lunch in the next day also had one -- a large orange cat that sat in a chair near the open door and watched the world go by. When dinnertime rolled around, we decided to take the recommendation of a guide book, and eat at a more upscale place that offered a fixed price meal comprised of traditional foods. When we sat down, Dick remarked that certainly, this place couldn't possibly have a cat. No way!

During the meal, we met two Canadian tourists who, on their last night in Europe, happened to dine at the same restaurant as us. As they sat down, one remarked, "Oh, what a nice cat" that the restaurant had. It was curled up sleeping in the chair right behind Dick!

After that, we looked for the cat in each restaurant we went to and usually found one. We also saw cats in most of the stores. Apparently, old-fashioned methods of pest control are still popular in Europe...



From Amsterdam it was on to Den Haag and Worldcon, but not before we visited the Rijksmuseum and Van Gogh Museum. The most popular artwork exhibit in all of Amsterdam is of course Rembrandt's famous painting "The Night Watch" (more properly known as "The Company of Captain Frans Banning Coq

and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenberg") at the Rijksmuseum. Dick, though, was more attracted to another Rembrandt work, "The Officials of the Drapers Guild." He thought it looked hauntingly familiar, but couldn't think of where he'd seen it before. Nicki pointed out that of course he had seen it lots of times before, but in much, much smaller reproductions under its better known alias -- "Dutch Masters."

We went to other art museums besides the ones in Amsterdam. All of them were wonderful, but a bit different from the ones in America. For one thing, the art was exhibited not at about eye level as it is in the U.S., but somewhat lower. There also wasn't any concern about sunlight on the art works, which can cause fading of colors. Museums were also the only places that seemed to be air conditioned in Europe. Most of them were comfortable, but the Beaux-Arts Museum in Brussels was downright chilly.

The modern art section of the Beaux-Arts Museum is sort of a reverse Guggenheim Museum, in that it was built as a spiral, but going down, rather than up, with the most treasured pieces at the bottom. The farther down we went, the colder it got. By the time we got to the bottom and a large exhibit of Magritte's paintings, it was like a meat locker. Somehow, a few sides of beef would have fit in well with his surreal paintings, and probably wouldn't have spoiled, either!

The Beaux-Arts Museum also had a strange schedule which called for the 'ancient' art section (containing works by the Old Masters) to be closed from 11 AM to noon and the modern art section to close between noon and 1 PM. Since we were on a tight schedule, we had to run quickly through the modern art section before it closed. When noon rolled around, several of the museum ushers came through, herding people to a huge elevator for a slow but majestic ride back upstairs. The elevator, complete with comfortable seating along the walls, resembled the interior of a shuttle craft from the Starship Enterprise. All that was lacking was Federation uniforms on the ushers. Beam us up, Scotty!

Den Haag also had an art museum we visited, conveniently within easy walking distance from our Worldcon hotel. It featured original woodcut prints by M.C. Escher, and perhaps the world's largest collection of paintings by Mondriaan. There was also an international exposition of *fuurwerks*, er, fireworks, being held in Den Haag during Worldcon weekend, just a couple of miles north of the convention center at the beach on the North Sea. Each evening, there were two or three twenty-minute displays sponsored by different countries, with an international champion selected at the exposition's conclusion. Many convention attendees, ourselves included, made an evening of it some of the nights we were there, with dinner at a restaurant on the beach followed by fireworks.

Confiction itself didn't have any organizational fireworks, we're happy to say. It was competently run and enjoyable, and we wouldn't mind coming back for an encore some year. The international flavor of the convention made it different from any other science fiction convention we've ever been to, and we were finally able to attach faces to many fans we heretofore had only corresponded with through the mail. Our memories of the convention remain somewhat jumbled; time seemed to compress that weekend and everything went by in a blur. The days and evenings sped by all too fast, and soon it was time to move on.

We had decided to leave Worldcon on Monday morning, even though that meant missing seeing Holland sink beneath the waves, or whatever it was that Confiction Chairman Kees Van Toorn hinted would happen to close the convention. Brussels was our next stop. We were looking forward to going there, and we wanted to get there in time to see some of the city before evening.

The most picturesque part of the city is old Grand Place square with its wonderfully ornate architecture and large number of affordable good restaurants. As you'd expect, it's a tourist haven, as is a street corner a few blocks away where there's a famous statue / fountain called Le Mannekin Pis, depicting a

naked cherub urinating into a pool of water. We had, of course, heard of the statue, but hadn't realized it was in Brussels until we saw the street sign pointing the way toward it. One of the photographs we took during our trip shows Dick standing in front of the fountain, with the statue in the background. While waiting for Nicki to line up the shot, he grew suspicious when she had trouble keeping a straight face while preparing to press the shutter release. Sure enough, Dick and the statue were lined up just right so that it looked like Le Mannekin Pis was Pis-ing right on Dick's head.



Brussels was also the single most expensive hotel night we had during the trip. Since it was our first trip overseas, we took the precaution of booking all of our hotels in advance through the Holland Approach travel agent; we knew it would be more expensive that way, but it would also prevent us from having to spend valuable vacation time looking for places to stay the night. The place in Brussels came to over 6,000 Belgian francs for our night's stay plus breakfast. When we got there, we were tired from toting luggage through the Brussels subway system, and fran(c)ly, didn't much care what the cost would be when we checked in. We had no

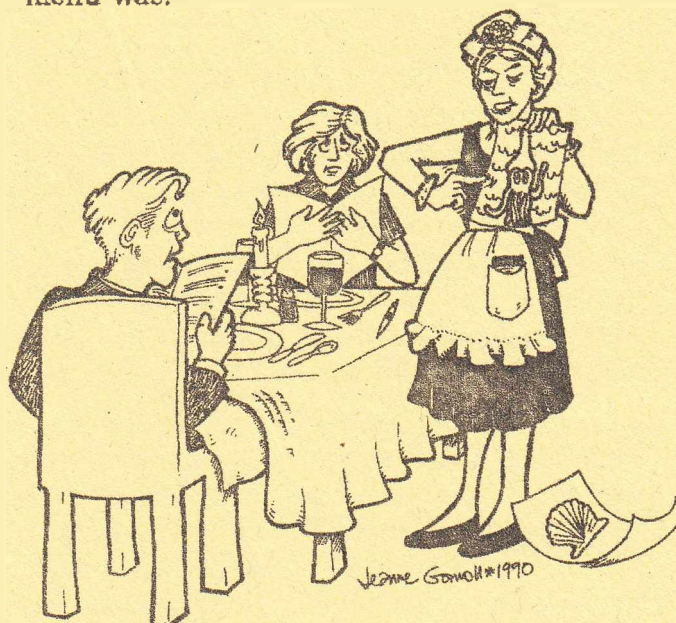
idea what the conversion rate was, anyway, so Dick just plunked down his Visa card (something he got a lot of practice at as the days progressed), and said he'd figure it all out later. It wasn't until we changed some money at American Express that it all became clear -- that one hotel night would set us back over t-w-o h-u-n-d-r-e-d d-o-l-l-a-r-s!! It turned out that the exchange rate between the American dollar and various western European currencies had gotten progressively worse during the month between our booking the room and staying there.

Not all places were like that, though. Prague, for example, was maybe the least expensive city we have ever visited. Consider: a full meal for four at a moderately upscale restaurant there, with soup as appetizer, entree, dessert, and drink came to about 350 Czech crowns, which translates to under fifteen U.S. dollars. And that's total, not apiece. Two first class train fares from Prague to Berlin (a six-hour trip) came to just under 25 U.S. dollars total. This is all fine and well if you're a Westerner touring in Prague. If you're a Czech (or a Pole, or Russian, or other eastern-bloc country citizen suffering under artificial exchange rate) though, it becomes prohibitively expensive to travel to the West -- a hamburger costs a week's wages, and one night's hotel more money than is even imaginable. At Confiction, there were Czech, Polish, and Russian fans attending in spite of what must have been tremendous financial hardship. We heard that some fans groups were so determined to attend that they chartered buses from within their country, loaded up bedding and a supply of food, and actually lived out of the bus the duration of their stay in the West. It seems clear now that currency rates were probably a much stronger shackle to keep Czechs confined to their homeland during the Cold War than any fence or iron curtain ever could.

And speaking of the iron curtain, there was no trace of it to be seen when we crossed from East Berlin to the West. Dick was watching out the window of the S-Bahn train that took us from Friedrichstrasse train

station into West Berlin to see if he could see it, but there was no wall, no barbed wire, no border guards... nothing at all. It was as if the Wall had never existed. In fact, border crossings were never a problem during the entire trip. The most that ever seemed to happen was that uniformed customs officers would board the train at the border, and check passports. The longest wait we had, at the crossing from Austria to Czechoslovakia, took about 20 minutes. We were told by our Czech host that if we'd made the trip one year earlier, we'd have been held up at the border for four hours minimum while various military types went through everybody's luggage, looked under seats, and generally made a nuisance of themselves. As well as asking prying questions in a language we couldn't understand.

Actually, though, we didn't have too much difficulty communicating with people during our travels, since almost everywhere we went we found that English was a second or at worst, a third language. In the Netherlands in particular, it seemed that just about everybody was reasonably fluent in English. The one exception was dinner at a canalside restaurant in Utrecht, the last night before our trip home, when the waitress had to resort to sketching pictographs of squid and scallops, to describe what each entree on the menu was.





And we tried, we really tried to at least attempt to communicate in whatever the native language was whenever possible, if only to say "danke" in Berlin to someone pointing the way to the right train platform, or "merci" to the sandwich shop waitress in Brussels for helping us figure the correct payment in Belgian francs. Dick claims that his first ever (and so far only) business transaction totally in a foreign language was when he bought subway tickets in Brussels. It went something like this:

Dick (holding up two fingers): "Deux."

Whereupon the ticket vendor gave him two subway passes and change for his 100 franc note. Nicki also had an amusing experience with foreign language transactions, during the train ride from Prague to Berlin. She went to purchase a bottle of mineral water in the dining car, and returned with a bemused expression on her face. She had learned from a fellow traveller the correct Czech phrase, and had used it on the dining car attendant: *Chci voda mineralna, prosim.* ("I would like mineral water, please.") But after setting the bottle on the counter and taking payment the attendant said, "Would you like me to open it for you?"

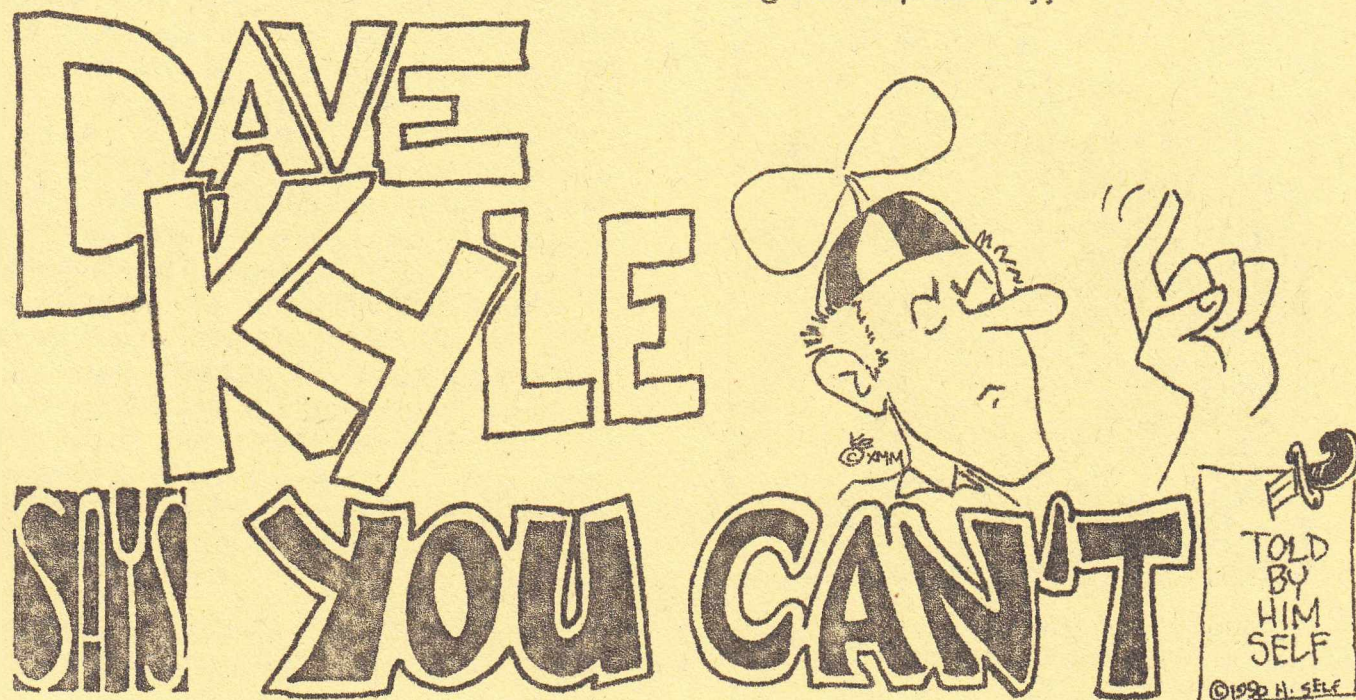
The dozen or so Soviet fans that attended Worldcon must have had similar experiences to ours in attempting to overcome language barriers. We first saw them in the basement of the Congressgebauw convention center, where each eastern European fan group was given a table in the area adjoining the huckster room for display and sales. We gave them a copy of *Mimosa 8* to take back with them; in return, we received a nicely produced Russian-language SF fanzine that we unfortunately can't read a word of. They didn't know very many English words, but at the Atlanta-in-95 bid party the next night we discovered that there *were* two English words that they all knew. We had been drafted by our friend Penny Frierson into helping tend bar at the bid party. One by one, Soviet fans would come to the bar, point to a black-labelled bottle, and say, "Jack Daniels." There must be certain words are universal to every language.

At the end of the two weeks, we guess we were ready to come home. We had blazed a trail through the heartland of continental Europe, leaving in our wake about a thousand dollars in Visa card charges but bringing back with us a wealth of memories of magical, wondrous things we had experienced and of the people we had met along the way. This report is dedicated to those people, who will never, can never read this essay. We appreciate their warmth, their humor, their patience, and above all their understanding that they showed to two naive American tourists that all too often needed their help.

One person in particular stands out in our memory; she was a sweet little old lady who came up to us at the Vienna train station, who personally assisted and escorted us to the tramline that would take us to another train station cross-town. We couldn't speak to her in German, but she was able to communicate with us in broken English. We were with her for only half an hour, but as we boarded the tram, she waved and called to us, "I will miss you." Five days later, as we were boarding the MartinAir flight home, similar thoughts crossed our minds: Europe, we will miss you. And someday, soon perhaps, we *will* be back. ☺

{{ Even though Confiction is easily the most distant convention we've ever attended, there were lots of familiar faces there. One of them was First Fandom member Dave Kyle, who it

turns out has been to more Worldcons than anybody except Forry Ackerman. Here is Dave's remembrance of some of people and events from those conventions, including the origin of the phrase... }}



The year is 1990. And even as I write this, we are slipping, or should I say falling, into 1991. When you read this a new decade has begun. The twenty-first century, a mind-boggling event for all First Fandomites of the dinosaur era, is around the corner.

Here I am looking back at fannish history and remembering so many little events like scenes frozen by lightning flashes. Like the moment in the 1930's when I and Dirk Wylie (nee J. Harry Dockweiler, a.k.a. Martindale according to ancient fanzines) stole an elevator. It was one of those old, open cage, grill-work things with a back-and-forth lever one expects to find on the bridge of a ship. This way forward, up, this way backward, down. The occasion was a fan gathering in Philadelphia. New Yorkers (that's us) and Philadelphians and residents in between were having a weekend confab. "Confab," I say, because "convention" was not yet the accepted term for one of our traditional fannish meetings. "Weekend" is a misleading description, too, because in these glorious days those get-togethers were one day affairs, making unneces-

sary such unaffordable items as hotel rooms and genuine meals in respectable sit-down restaurants.

I remember Dirk very well. We met in the autumn of 1936 after I was graduated from Monticello (N.Y.) High School and went to New York City to enter an art career school. As an active fan (Gernsback's letter columns and the SFL -- the historic Science Fiction League) I naturally fell in with the metropolitan fans who met under the banner of the ISA -- the legendary International Scientific Association -- an "experimental science" club dominated by science fiction fans. Dirk became my favorite friend, much more glamorous than my other favorite friend, Dick Wilson, who was as close to me as a brother right up until his untimely death in 1987. Dirk thought he was a sort of teen-age Ernest Hemingway in tastes, dress, and mannerisms. He favored a discreetly soiled trench coat, tightly belted, with huge epaulet tabs, plus the inevitable fedora which younger generations identify with Indiana Jones. His style was Humphrey Bogart's style. As for his name,



DIRK WYLIE IN THE GREEN
ROOM AT NYLON II

Dirk considered J. Harry Dockweiler as unsuitable for his persona. Obviously "Dirk Wylie" was derived from "Dockweiler" nudged by a determination not to be called "Doc" (as he was) and thus have his "handle" diluted by another "Doc", Robert W. "Doc" Lowndes (contemporary fan and future SF mag editor and writer). Dirk was fascinated with guns, the big high-powered ones for elephants and other exotic game, which led him to join the National Guard at the earliest age. He was also fascinated with cigarettes and liquor. He carried a silver cigarette case and a silver hip flask. He affectedly wore a cigarette perpetually dangling from his lips, a cynical smile giving a certain lilt, a savior-faire, to his Clark Gable moustache. Dirk was one of a kind. I have missed him for nearly a half of a century. He died after World War II from some strange ailment which I believe was appropriately contracted when he was an MP (A spine-jarring bump and lurch in a speeding jeep?) My image of him is not of a wasted invalid in a hospital bed. My image is that of a vigorous glamorous figure I could have idolized who raided his mother's pantry and ice box to feed

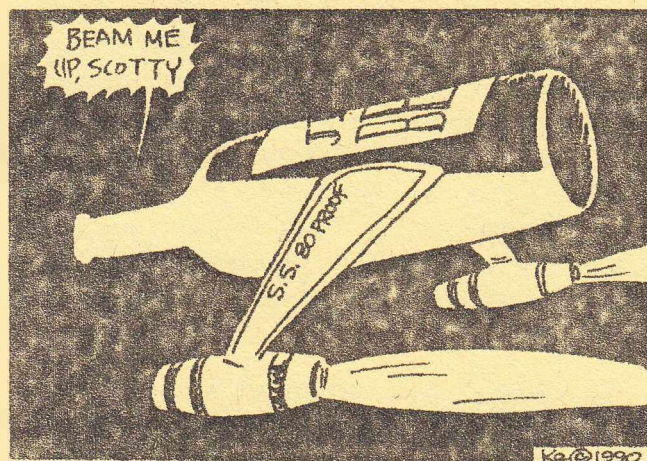
Dick and me when we were starving artists in NYC in 1940-41 -- the swashbuckler who purloined an elevator.

We did not fly the elevator to some remote spot, of course, and there abandon it. We clanged the foldaway steel gate, crawled up a floor, reversed course, reversed course again, and again, and ditched our craft where we had found it. Actually, I confess, it was Dirk who initiated the action and I was a rather timid follower. He was the romantic man of action and I was still very young (even if we were both about the same age). And I also must admit, guilt-ridden, I got off the vehicle at the first stop; then Dirk slammed the gate to block me from further mundane madness and fiddled some more movement down and up and down. The half-pint bottle of whiskey was in his hand and he pretended to guzzle it as I frantically clomped up and down the encircling open stairwell suggesting we both flee the scene. It was all very thrilling for us, even though no one saw our daring feat.

Alcohol was very much part of the scene in those days. The drinking only took place when an impression was to be made. I don't believe any of us really enjoyed it, but it was commonplace at early "cons." At first the drinking was minimal, and hardly abused. But by the fifties it had gotten out of hand and drunken fans often littered the hotel hallways. The zenith -- or nadir, as the case may be -- was reached at the SFCon of 1954 when the Sir Francis Drake Hotel was shutting down parties at night and screening non-residents from entering the lobby from the street. The situation was bad enough that a "vigilante" committee was formed by concerned fans to roam the halls and deal out warnings and firm measures ('Dave Kyle Says You Can't Drink Here' and more about that later).

So back in the late thirties and early forties, not many years away from the repeal of prohibition, young and usually immature fans were expressing their individuality by using the hard stuff. Dirk, representing a decided minority, was the personification of

the Roaring Twenties carried into the thirties. His pretenses -- and most of all those other pretenses we young fans had at the time -- slowly evaporated with maturity. I can't recall a single instance of drinking -- even in moderation -- at the first Worldcon in 1939. Which brings me through the 1980s and into 1990 and the Confiction at The Hague in Holland. In a European culture where alcohol is widely used and not abused, Confiction was not 1939 again, but the event was nowhere near the beer bash so many conventions in recent memory had become, hijinks seemed non-existent, respectability (what with subsidization by the Dutch government) ruled.



So here I am with a 1990 perspective thinking about how the memories of some fannish occurrences have faded away to dim shadows or have vanished completely. And how some events, lightning flashes in the night, have become legendary and have been scorched permanently into fannish history or gently woven into the fabric of fandom. What I have specifically in mind is what *Mimosa* reader Mark Manning said in issue number 8 dated last August 1990: "Since entering fandom in a big way a couple of years ago, I haven't seen him [Dave Kyle] write an account of the Worldcon (Nycon II, wasn't it?) where the immortal phrase, 'Dave Kyle says you can't sit here' came into the microcosm. Perhaps in an upcoming *Mimosa*..." Dick Lynch noted that "the hint [is] passed along."

Coincidentally, I was at the time doing that very thing for the Program Book for Noreascon Three (1990), which had a chronologi-

cal account by various writers of all the Worldcons to date. Has Mark read it in the Worldcon program book? Is the story worth repeating for *Mimosa*? Is that infamous phrase still being bandied about? Does anyone but Mark Manning and me really care?

So what happened at The Hague? There were a half-dozen unsolicited uses of the phrase in one form or another, such as 'Dave Kyle says you can't stand here' (in the doorway, blocking passage). I think such references are done only when I'm known to be within earshot. Most amusing of all was the use in the auditorium for the Hugo ceremony. But first --

Go back with me to Confederation in Atlanta on Thursday, August 28, 1986 at 10:20 in the morning. The first person I met when I walked into the Hilton was Steve Whitmore of Delaware who greeted me with, "Dave, you have four front row seats to everything." Steve was House Manager. "Great!" says I, "But how come?" He explained that this was to atone for his oversight when he was House Manager at ConStellation in Baltimore in 1983 when I was Fan Guest of Honor. Ruth and I came into the hall for the Hugo Awards Ceremonies -- and had no seats reserved among the BNFs and BNPs. Ruth not being with me that morning in Atlanta, I suggested that, well, a seat or two would be enough. So at the Hugo Ceremonies, dragging along my friend Paul Cordsmeyer of Florida, I found two seats in the front row with signs labeled 'Dave Kyle Says You Can't Sit Here' (or did they read 'Dave Kyle Can Sit Here' or some such variation on the theme?).

How did that ultimatum come about? I'll briefly paraphrase what I wrote for the Noreascon book: The Newyorcon (Nycon II, to many) banquet was the traditional time for awarding the Hugos. As was customary, those who didn't pay to eat could come into the room to hear the speeches at the proper time. That 1956 banquet was set up in the Grand Ballroom of the Biltmore, which had a three-sided balcony. I was Chairman and at the head table. One of the go-fers told me the Fire Marshal was complaining that the stairs

to the balcony were blocked by those non-eaters sitting there, waiting to take positions for the after-dinner ceremonies. "What do we do?" "Tell them," I said, "that they can't sit there." So he did. "Dave Kyle," not the Fire Marshal, became the grouch who issued the command.

With history on my mind at Confiction, I asked Rusty Hevelin, veteran of those balcony stairs, for his recollection. We were amidst a mob waiting to enter the auditorium for the Hugo event -- award banquets have long since disappeared under the population explosion. Remember the fuss in 1956, Rusty? Yup, he said, the inimitable Bob Tucker mostly beat the anguished drums -- and Lee Hoffman helped. The fannish sniping, at first indignant and bad-humored, evolved over the years into some kind of pointless comical witicism, a legendary expression of a forgotten incident.

(Come to think about it, it was at Atlanta that I promised Dick Lynch to "do something" for his fanzine. Four of us were having dinner that first evening -- Dick and Nicki Lynch and, to give this story a perfect proportion, Bob Tucker, of all people.)

Innumerable instances of 'Dave Kyle Says You Can't Sit Here,' sometimes written, sometimes voiced, fill the years. Often the verb changed to express a thought that 'Dave Kyle You Can't [fill in the blank] Here.' Once in a while, letter-sized sheets, reproduced with the message, have appeared for some special purpose. The variations have been legion. One particular one I'll always remember: at a con some dozen years ago, I went into a Mens Room; when I closed the cubicle door and sat down, I was startled, really startled, to read, inches from my eyes, 'Dave Kyle Says You Can't Sit Here.' No vulgar variation in the wording, tempting as it might have been. No suggestion of a snigger. So straightforward, so matter of fact, that I burst out laughing. I wish I knew who did it.

Thereafter, minutes later in that Hague convention center, in that big, luxurious auditorium, I was thrilled to see the huge -- 10 x

6 feet? 12 x 8? -- banner of white block letters on a navy blue field spelling out WORLD SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY dominating the right side of the proscenium arch. The banner was the same I had caused to be made in 1956 and used as the backdrop of that banquet for the 14th Worldcon, Newyorcon ("Wow!"). It had been missing for many years until ex-humed by Howard DeVore and returned to service. How appropriate that that "immortal phrase" should now appear again. In the third row center, I had a seat, fourth from the aisle. The first three seats were reserved "For the editor of Bantam Books and his guests," I was told. I suggested that the "reserved" signs taped to the upfolded cushions needed revision. The cardboards were flipped and two signs became 'Dave Kyle Says You Can't Sit Here.' The third seat sign was more personal: 'Dave Kyle Says Lou Aronica CAN Sit Here.'



(Had I known David Brin would be "a guest," he would have had equal recognition.) Lou sat next to me. (Bantam Books was the publisher of my three Lensman books.) The signs bewildered him. He hadn't come up out of the hardcore fannish ranks, and he didn't know the legend. I told him I'd write about it and, with his interest in fannish folklore, I would send him a copy. This is it. He'll get a copy. And Mark Manning will know, too.

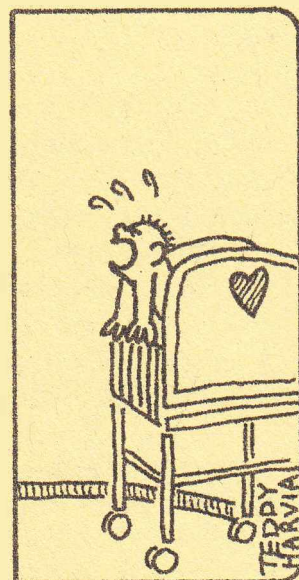
{{ There were a number of Australian fans at Confiction, but unfortunately, the author of the following (which we received it in the mail shortly before we left for Europe) wasn't among them. When people ask us 'What kind of arti-

cle do we run in *Mimosa*?' we've always said first-person articles about Things Fans Do. And while we think *Mimosa* is a pretty good fannish production, the following essay is about an even better fannish production... }}



Prose Is the Wine; Poetry the Whiner

by Dave Lockett



What a hospitable soul a baby is! Always happy to see you, always sorry when you go, even to the extent of loud lamentations. Very loud lamentations. Even at four in the morning. Especially at four in the morning, dammit.

The long watches of the night are said to be ideal for composing the soul to philosophical contemplation, or to poetry. Certainly the current circumstances make it unlikely that the soul can be composed to sleep. Why, he's only just getting into his full stride now, and hardly rattling the windows at all yet. I suppose, though, that I could have a go at some poetry. Philosophy is a little beyond me, I'm afraid, as well as being out of my line. And beyond philosophy (some would say, within it) lies madness. Though madness, to be sure, begins to look deuced attractive, some of these nights.

Verses, now. I should start with something simple. A clerihew, perhaps:

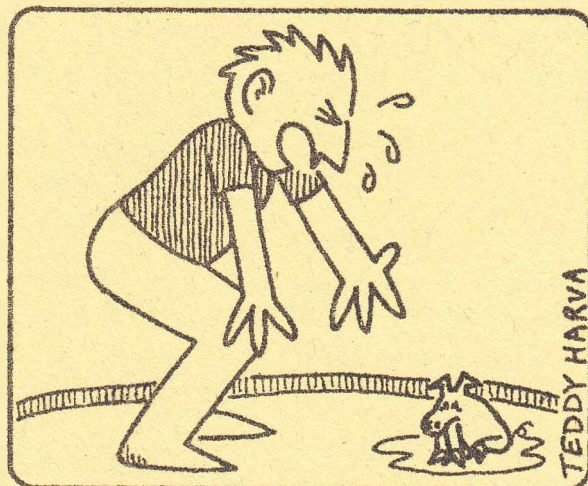
Evan John Lockett Beasley
As I'll admit, uneasy,
Is plagued with looseness of the bowels.
He also Howels.

or a limerick:

The soldiers were greatly admirin'
Evan's voice, though it drowned out the firin'
"Just imagine!" they said.
"He could waken the dead
"From an air-raid, and act as the siren!"

Um. Not quite what I had in mind. Perhaps something subtle and oriental, like a haiku:

Evan sits, grunting.
Does he regress to piglet,
Or fertilise floor?



About as subtle as a brick enema, as my old mate Ian Nichols says. Well, a villanelle is supposed to be delicate and frenchified:

Just when you'd think he'd have to quit -
Your wise precautions seem quite sound -

He thinks of ways to manage it,
To fit where nothing else could fit
And pull the curtains to the ground,

Just when you'd think he'd have to quit.
You put him on the ground to sit
A moment - then he can't be found.

He thinks of ways to manage it.
The crash of glass! Another's hit!
He's teleporting, I'll be bound.

Just when you'd think he'd have to quit,
Could never reach the notes you've writ
You'll find them shredded, wadded, ground -

He thinks of ways to manage it.
And when you think, "That must be it;
"The day's foul nappies form a mound!"

Just when you'd think he'd have to quit,
He thinks of ways to manage it.

Hmm. I'd say that that particular piece
is to delicacy as Attila the Hun is to court
etiquette.

Have you ever noticed that the things
you write seem to take on a disgusting life of
their own, a Frankenstein's creation starting
up from the table, to the horror of the help-
less progenitor? I really didn't mean to allude
to the more revolting aspects of infant care in
that one, but it somehow slipped out, like (as
my old mate Nichols says, again) a - no, I
don't think I'd better say what my old mate
Nichols says it slipped out like. You get the
general idea. But what observation applies
most especially to the stricter form verse that
I prefer to write - which I write only, I hasten
to add, out of sheer perversity and a mulish
intolerance of what everyone else has been
doing for the last century or so.

Nevertheless, I'll stick with it, but try
for something a little more stately. Formal.
Like a ballade:

The Ballade of Infant Moisture

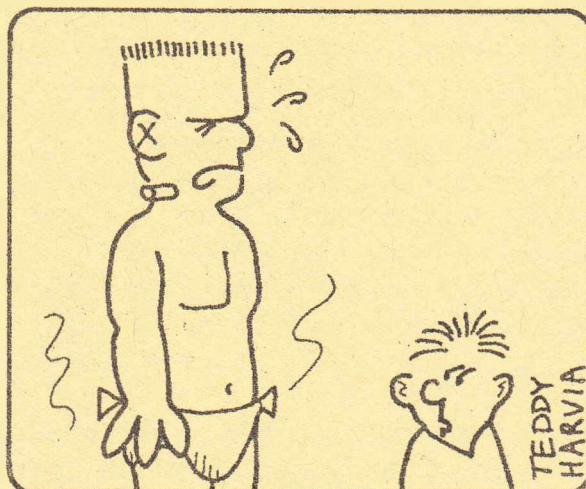
In changing of his nappy, yesterday,
I mustn't have been watching what I'd done,
Or, more specifically, observed the way
His little pistol pointed. I'd have run,
But had no time or hope. I had but one
Swift, frozen moment, standing with teeth clenched
While staring down the barrel of the gun -
That was the way we both were slightly
drenched.

And later, on my knees he liked to play
And bounce about, and writhe and bend. At one,
Just after he had had his *dejeuner*
(And half my modest meal of tea and bun)
Right in the middle of a bounce, my son
A tribute from his inmost corpus wrenched.
'Twas warm, from near the heart (a dreadful pun).
That was the way we both were slightly
drenched.

His bathtime - happy closure of the day
A time of joy, and merriment, and fun.
It's not surprising that he'd wish to stay,
And make that time continue, once begun.
I sympathise with his desire to shun
The biting air, when warmly, well-entrenched -
But still, I wish he hadn't kicked and spun,
That was the way we both were slightly
drenched.

Envoi

Prince, when holding him, as you do now, there's
none
So eager that their ardour is not quenched
By varied means. Oh, dear! What has he done?
That was the way we both were slightly
drenched.



I have to confess that I did that deliberately. It was mainly an experiment, to see if I could emulate one of the most remarkable feats of Hillaire Belloc (a poet I greatly admire, though much neglected now), and write light verse in so strict a form as that. But for my next trick, I'll try a rondeau:

He will not stop. He has two speeds, flat out
And sleeping, moving even then, to flout
The laws of physics, for he should not be
Perpetually moving. Verily
He will not stop.

He eats just like a little bird - about
Three times his weight, in food a day. No doubt
His intake slows, at times, but normally
He will not stop.

He's growing, too, in every way, without
A pause. Stronger, surer, up and out,
Forever further on. A day there'll be
When, joyful, he will run ahead, with me
Behind, and labouring. Then, "Stop!" I'll shout.
He will not stop.


Oh well, if you're going to go all serious
on me, have a sonnet instead:

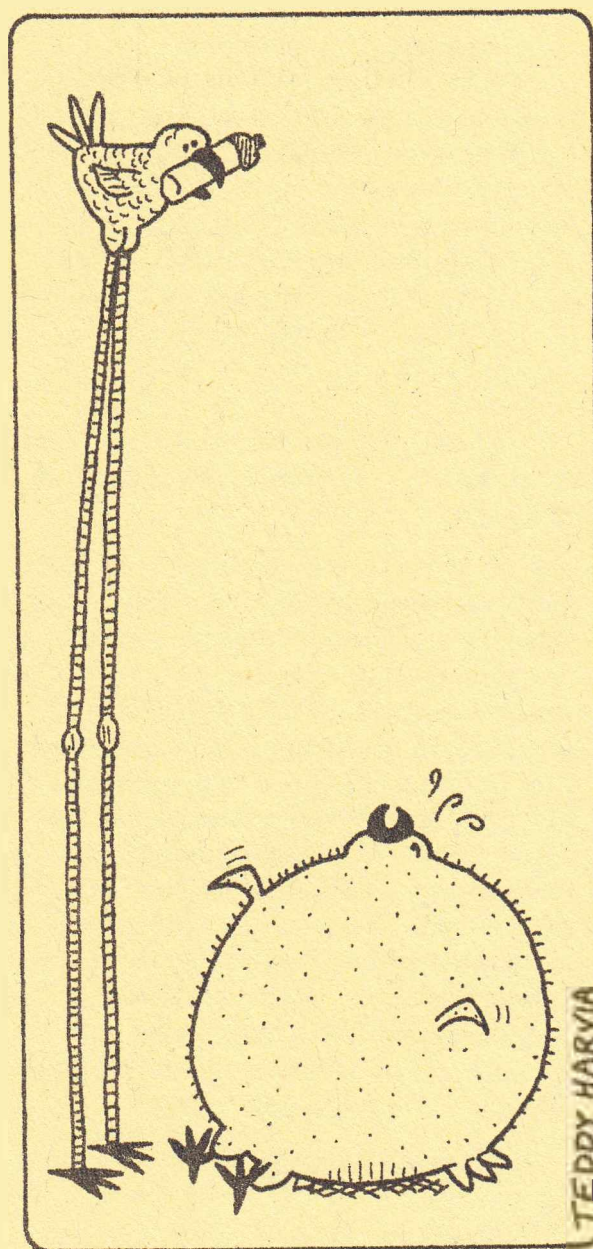
There's nothing reasonable about this fate:
A dancing bear attending on this - what?
This scrap of self-directed flesh, this clot
Of raw desire and shapeless will in spate.
How can I know what processes dictate
The things he wants, the things that he does not,
When he himself knows less, nor cares a jot
Who lives in that eternal-present state?

A section through eternity, indeed -
The ardent moment's set and frozen, still
As time is, in the mind of God. The need
Of that unending now, is law until
The galaxies are burned away and dead -
Or one hair turns upon his haloed head.

or, if the insanity of writing this strict-form
verse has finally burst all bounds, there re-
mains the nastiest one of all, the triolet:

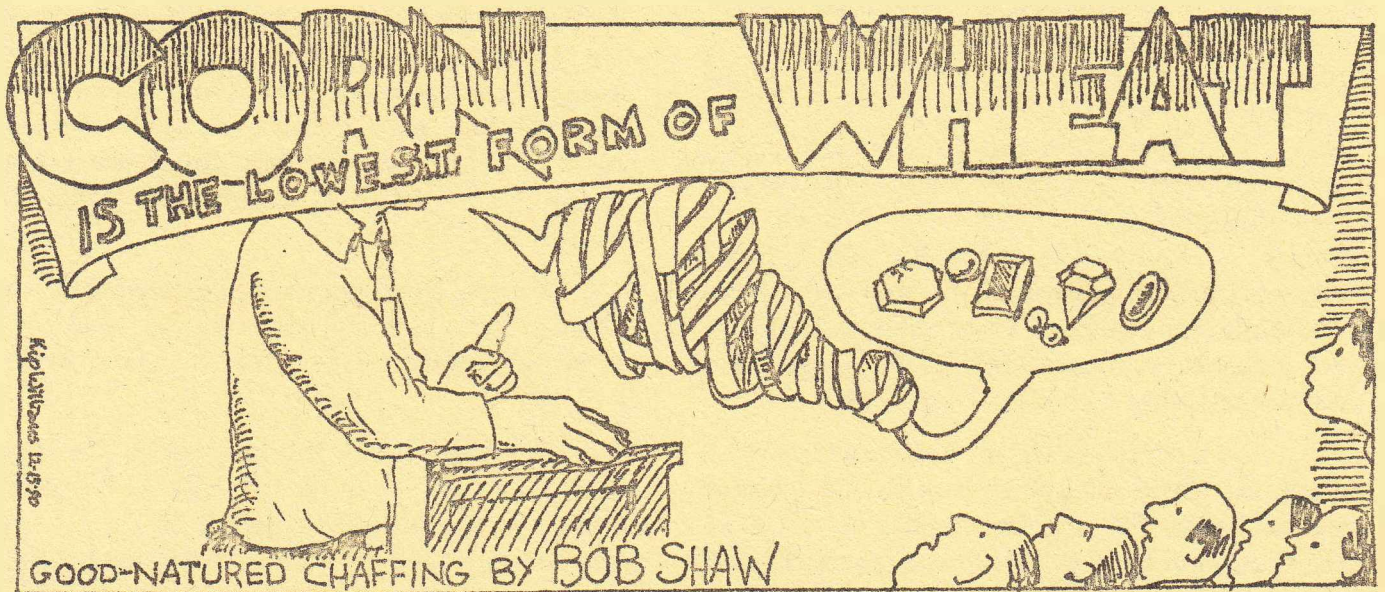
Imperative, that music in the bone
A life to life must call. Unending
Sounds the call, the echoes blending.
Imperative, that music. In the bone,
The deepest core, that need is sending
Summonses to me that I must own
Imperative. That music in the bone
A life to life must call, unending.

Nope. It's no good. He's awake again.
So, for that matter, am I. And the dawn, if
not coming out of China, looks a lot like
thunder. So, for that matter, do I. 



{{ Another person we seemed to run across frequently at Confiction was Bob Shaw. Dick had brought a book by Bob with him to Confiction in hopes of getting it signed, but it always seemed to work out that whenever he ran into Bob, the book was back in the hotel room, and whenever he had the book, Bob was nowhere to be found. Bob later said that this was a

demonstration of that heretofore little-known Law of the Universe, the Shaw Exclusion Principle -- when a fan wants a book autographed, it is impossible for the book and the author to be in the same place at the same time. There were a few other little-known Scientific Principles brought to light by Bob at Confiction, in his latest Serious Scientific Speech... }}

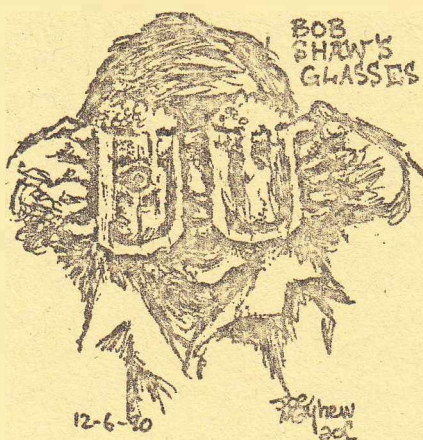


Hello, ladies and gentlemen! I am deeply gratified at having such a large audience for my latest Serious Scientific Talk. [Pardon me for fiddling with my glasses. I'm trying to focus properly on the page. This is odd. I didn't expect to have any trouble with these lenses, because I paid a lot of money for them... to a highly respected man in the optics field. I only went to him because he said he had done a lot of work on something called the Hubble telescope.]

You should know that I do not delude myself about why my Serious Scientific Talks have become so popular. Even though I have extended the frontiers of scientific knowledge in many directions... some of these directions quite unexpected... some of them very unexpected...

There was, for example, my defence of the idea that the Loch Ness monster really exists. Loch Ness is very long, but it is also very narrow, which means that it does not contain a huge amount of water and biological resources. Some so-called experts, intent on proving there can be no monsters, have done field surveys in the Loch, have estimated the number of fish present... and have announced that no monsters can exist... because there aren't enough fish in the Loch for them to feed on.

The fools! The incompetent bumbler! What they failed to realize was that they were counting the number of fish left after the monsters had eaten their fill!



This shows you the dangers of trying to apply scientific methods when one has not had the necessary rigorous training in logic. I have had that kind of training, which is what enabled me to invent -- among many other ingenious gadgets -- a device which I have called the truth machine.

You have all heard of the ordinary lie detector. Its operating principle is that when a person tells a lie he begins to perspire... thus increasing the electrical conductivity of his skin... and the effect can be measured. My invention, like most great scientific advances, was devastatingly simple. As I have said before, it was not a huge IQ which made Einstein a great scientist... it was his simple and childlike approach to problems... and, for all I know, my mind might be even more simple and childlike than Einstein's!

Anyway, to create my truth machine, all I did was stand the principle of the lie detector on its head. If it is impossible to tell a lie without sweating, it stands to reason that if one cannot sweat it is impossible to tell a lie! My truth machine simply squirts a highly effective anti-perspirant all over the subject... thus depriving him of the ability to be untruthful!



All that apart, as I was saying, I am fully aware that -- as well as seeking scientific enlightenment -- people come to my talks because I throw in the occasional little joke. Actually, there has been some dispute over that point. A few years ago I did one of the talks at a convention in up-state New York. It was very well received... people laughing all the way through... most gratifying... But a man came to me as soon as it was over, looking highly annoyed, and said, "I was listening to your talk very carefully and realized you were cheating. Most of the things you said up there weren't funny at all -- you only made people think they were funny!"

I think there's a neat philosophical point there. He either insulted me, or paid me a great compliment -- but I have never figured out which.

Anyway, I was talking about the jokes. This may come as a big surprise to everybody here. It may come as a terrible shock. In fact, most of you may be outraged on my behalf -- but the sad fact is that there are some people in the science fiction world who are going around saying that I use the same jokes over and over again!

Honestly!

The injustice of that lie is made all the more poignant because I am constitutionally incapable of repeating my own jokes. For example: when I go on a trip and am sending postcards back to a dozen or so friends -- yes, I do have that many -- I always like to put one of my little witticisms on each card. Now, these people aren't going to compare notes. There is no reason at all why I shouldn't put the same joke on each card -- but somehow I just can't bring myself to do that. Each one has to have a different joke, and that can lead to problems, because the brain is not always functioning at its best after a breakfast of half-a-dozen Guinness Sunrises. Once, many years ago, I had written practically my whole batch of cards when I remembered I hadn't sent one to my long-time and very dear friends -- Walt and Madeleine Willis.

I had just about exhausted the joke-making centers of my brain, but -- after a moment's thought -- I wrote on the card: "The crisis is over -- please ignore my telegram." And I mailed it off. Well, I thought it was funny. Looking back, I can't quite say why I thought it was funny. When I got back home to Belfast I discovered that Walt and Madeleine also hadn't appreciated the subtle undertones of wry satire, the Kafkaesque surrealism, the Brechtian irony, and the Leacockian sense of the ridiculous.

Perhaps I was being over optimistic in trying to cram that much into eight words. Anyway, Walt and Madeleine has wasted some of their times -- and a lot of other people's time -- giving the Post Office hell over the non-delivery of my nonexistent telegram. When I explained the joke to Walt, he -- in spite of his superb sense of humour -- did not seem quite as much amused as he might have been.

One aspect of humour on which we were always in harmony, though, was our appreciation of the Canadian humourist I mentioned a moment ago, Stephen Leacock, who sadly is now almost forgotten. Leacock is probably more famous for the immortal line the a satire on Victorian melodramas: "Lord Ronald flung himself upon his horse and rode off madly off in all directions." But my favourite was a piece he did about the world's greatest international smuggler -- who owed most of his success to the fact that he only smuggled stuff upon which there was no duty!

"The authorities," Leacock wrote, "are helpless against a criminal mastermind like that!"

What was I talking about? Oh, yes! Some malicious people are going around saying that I keep repeating my old jokes. Do not believe them! Only if somebody put me in a torture chamber and threatened to apply red hot irons to my feet would I agree to go back over some of my material. I might, for instance, hark back to a couple of favourite puns that I used on my fellow scientist -- Von Donegan.

There was the time he and I were climbing a mountain in Pakistan, and he was proud of being able to address the bearers in their native language, and he said to me, "What do you think of my Urdu?" and I replied, "Very nice -- I think that style suits you." Or the time he was wondering how he could obtain a couple of those big knives for slashing through jungle, and I said, "I've got a catalogue of them -- I keep it on a shelf in the kitchen beside all my other kukri books."

But, as I said, I'm not going to repeat any jokes. What I'm going to do instead is to tackle one of the major economic problems facing the world today -- i.e., the great cost of traveling to science fiction conventions.

A couple of months ago I was sitting quietly in my office-cum-laboratory, writing an article for the *Scientific American* about my new navigational system for the ordinary motorist, which enables him to find out where he is with pinpoint accuracy, day or night. In fact, it seems to work better at night. I think all motorists have been in the same terrible situation... you are heading for some destination out in the country... you make a wrong turn... suddenly it is past midnight... perhaps two or three in the morning... you have no idea where you are... the narrow road stretches ahead into infinite darkness... there is no glimmer of light to indicate a dwelling where you might obtain information... ghouls might be abroad... werewolves might be abroad... little men from flying saucers might be abroad... and -- worse still! -- Whitley Streiber might be abroad!

One wrong move and you could be sued!

I know what you are thinking at this stage! You are thinking that with Shaw's new system you simply call up a satellite in the Clarke orbit and it indicates your position on an electronic map. That is a very good system, but it has a major drawback in that it costs a lot of money. By contrast, my system costs nothing at all!

All you have to do in this situation... where you are stuck out in the middle of no-

where in the middle of the night... and you desperately need guidance... and there is nobody within a hundred miles to help... well, nobody but Whitley Streiber, that is... and he isn't going to be much help... and you think you may never make contact with humanity again...

All you have to do is say to yourself, "Okay, it looks like I'm going in the wrong direction -- SO I WILL DO A THREE-POINT TURN!"

As soon as you swing your car into a position... in the middle of the night... in which it blocks this minor country road... which was last travelled by Joseph of Arimathea... and you are in the act of performing a perfectly legitimate three-point turn... the whole place will fill up with angry, impatient, local motorists who hate you for increasing their journey time by three seconds...

And all you have to do is ask them for directions!

I have high hopes that this new invention of mine will make my name a household word. One of the things which inspires that ambition is that I had an uncle whose name became a household word. His name was Jimmy Dishwasher.

Anyway, there I was sitting quietly in my office, when suddenly there was a tap at my door. I stared at it for a moment, and thought, "That's funny -- there was no tap there a minute ago." There came the sound of somebody pushing forcibly at the door, and it swung open to reveal none other than Von Donegan!

"There's a tap on your door," he said, breathing heavily. "If it hadn't been there I mightn't have been able to get a good enough grip to open the door."

"Do you mean," I said, "That you had to faucet open?"

A stricken look appeared on Von Donegan's face. "Not the plumbing puns," he pleaded. He immediately brought up a chair... which surprised me a little... because I hadn't even realized he had swallowed one. "I'm here

on serious business, Shaw. It has recently come to my attention that crossing from Britain to continental Europe is one of the shortest but most expensive journeys in the world. The Worldcon in The Hague will be coming up soon, and I regard it as my sacred duty to support the con by finding a way to enable fans from this country to cross the Channel with the least possible expense."

"A noble sentiment," I said. "You know, of course, that a man called Webb once crossed the Channel for absolutely nothing?"

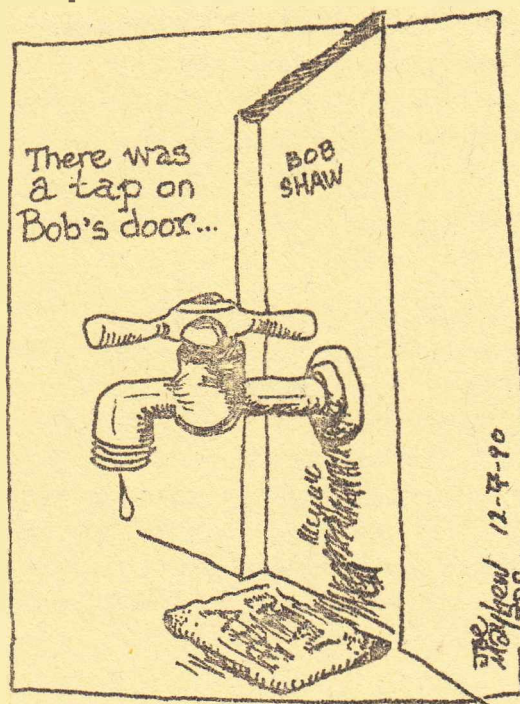
Von Donegan nodded. "You're talking about the first Channel swimmer -- Captain Webb."

I snook my head. "No, I'm talking about Gerry Webb, the well-known British SF fan and expert on astronautics. He got himself fired across to Europe on a rocket which went right outside the Earth's atmosphere."

Von Donegan looked impressed. "Did he have any reentry problems?"

"Yes," I said. "The authorities won't let him back into England."

"That's not what I meant," Von Donegan snapped. "It's obvious to me that you don't know the first thing about the exploration of space."



"I beg your pardon," I said huffily. "Only this morning I received a telegram direct from NASA headquarters -- saying that the latest Mars lander has found definite proof of the existence of Ray Bradbury."

Von Donegan threw up his hands... which surprised me a little... because I hadn't even realized that he had swallowed them. Somebody in the audience has just accused me of using one of my old jokes! All right, it may seem that I used one of my old jokes, but the difference is that, this time, it wasn't a joke. Von Donegan has a habit of gnawing at his fingernails when he is agitated. On this occasion he gnawed and sucked so hard that he actually did swallow his hands!

There he was...sitting there...with both forearms terminating at his mouth.. not a pretty sight... and only his violent reaction to my words enabled him to puke his hands back up again. That wasn't a pretty sight either. He had had spaghetti hoops for lunch... and there they were... neatly fitted onto his fingers!

"Thank you, Bob," Von Donegan said. He nibbled experimentally at a couple of the spaghetti hoops, and said, "Hey! These are even better second time around! Do you want to try a few?"

"Thank you -- but no," I said. "I don't like tomato sauce."

How, you must be wondering, does a sensitive and subtle SF writer, such as me, survive such experiences without his thought processes becoming coarsened and degraded? It's a mystery to me, as well. I guess my mind must be essentially pure and ethereal...

"Let's get down to serious business," Von Donegan said. "I have invented no less than three completely separate ways of getting British fans across to Europe without them having to pay exorbitant prices. And each will be a lot safer than that outfit I used to fly with -- Celebrity Airlines."

"Why were they called Celebrity Airlines?" I said.

"Because of all the celebrities they had flown."

"Name a few."

"Well," Von Donegan said, "there was Glenn Miller... Buddy Holly... Jim Reeves..."

Actually, you shouldn't make jokes about disasters, thought I must say I was recently forced to do it in self defence. Earlier in the year I was on a convention panel with Larry Niven... and we were asked about the state of modern SF... and Larry said, "Modern SF must be doing very well -- because I'm making shiploads of money."

Not to be outdone, I said, "I also am making shiploads of money. And I will tell you the names of some of the ships! The Titanic... the Lusitania... the Amoco Cadiz... the Mary Celeste..."

Anyway, seeing that Von Donegan was serious, I invited him to sit down and talk. He nodded and brought up a chair... which surprised me a little... because I hadn't even realized he'd swallowed one.

No! That isn't one of my old jokes, either. As it transpired, Von Donegan actually had eaten a chair! It turned out that he had been having intestinal problems, and his doctor had advised him... each time he went to the toilet... to examine his stools.

"Stools?" Von Donegan said. (His grip of English is not as good as mine.)

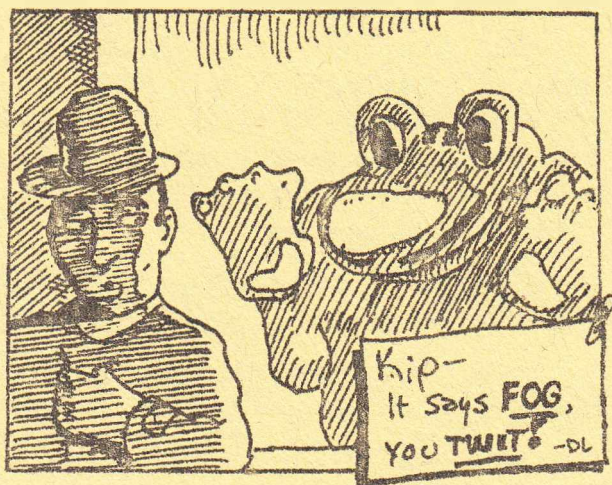
"Yes," the doctor said, "the remnants of what you ate on the previous day. Stools!"

Von Donegan wasn't able to find any stools, so he had eaten a chair. It's all perfectly logical, you see. I confess that I had hoped, at this stage, to concoct a few puns about the best kinds of chair to eat... but I had very little success... "Dining chairs" is too obvious and easy. I invite all here to make suggestions which I can use in future presentations of this talk, and the winner will receive a free seat on the first commercial flight to Mars... or a copy of *Last Dangerous Visions*... whichever comes first...

"Okay," I said to Von Donegan, "tell me all your ways of getting fans across to Europe with minimum expense."

"Better than that," he replied, "I'll demonstrate them for you. Come to my secret laboratory in Eton this evening at eight." With those words he sprang to his feet... which surprised me a little... because I hadn't noticed his feet sneaking away by themselves. He expertly re-attached his feet to his skin bones... he's a man of many parts... and left my office.

That evening I drove to Eton. I was quickly able to locate Von Donegan's secret laboratory because it has a huge neon sign which said: VON DONEGAN'S SECRET LABORATORY. As I walked up to the sinister looking edifice there was a thick greasy fog pressing against the windows. That made me feel rather uneasy -- because it was a fine and clear evening outside the building. I knocked on the door, gently at first, but when there was no reply I gave the door several pounds. It slipped the pounds into its wallet and obligingly swung open.



I went inside, into a large workshop, and found Von Donegan working on a car.

"I've been modifying this car," he said. "And now it's just like the one on *Back to the Future*."

"But the one in the movie was a DeLorean," I said. "This is a Robin Reliant."

"It was all I could afford," he muttered. "I still haven't received my cheque for coming

in third in the *Interzone* prize crossword. The point is that in this vehicle we are free to roam in time and space... and anywhere else we want to go... Hop in and I'll show you!"

I got into the car with Von Donegan and saw at once that he had an extra panel on the dashboard, a panel made of the timer controls he had stolen from my video recorder a couple of years earlier. On that occasion he had used them in a time machine, which had behaved very erratically. I felt uneasy, and said so.

"Relax," he said. "Just sit back and enjoy the sensations." Automatic doors slid open ahead of us, the car's engine roared, we moved forward and in a few minutes had built up to a speed of about 20mph.

"This is all very exciting," I said, "but what is it all about?"

"Haven't you noticed we're headed due east, toward the Essex coast?" Von Donegan replied. "I'm going to drive you straight to Holland!"

"Unless this car is amphibious," I smirked, "you're going to have trouble with the North Sea."

Von Donegan chortled and shook his head. "That's where you're wrong. Just before we reach the Essex coast I will operate the Temporal Displacement Unit in this car -- the time machine, in other words. We will be transported a million or so years back into the past... to a time when Britain was still connected to continental Europe. All we will have to do then is keep driving for an hour or so... switch off the Temporal Displacement Unit... and -- bingo! -- we'll be in present-day Holland!"

I have to admit I was impressed. I knew that in the past old Von Donegan had put up a few schemes which were quite impracticable. There was, for instance, his plan to surface all the roads in the country with a compound of Alka-Seltzers and Andrew's Liver Salts... so that we could all travel about in little hovercraft powered by nothing more than internal water sprays.

There was also his plan for the salt-powered sled. It involved using massive refrigeration plants to freeze solid all the canals in the country. Von Donegan's idea was that each sled should have a big salt shaker mounted on the front end... when the driver pressed the accelerator some salt would be sprinkled on the ice directly in front of the sled... some of the ice would then melt... the sled would slide forwards into it and the whole process would be repeated over and over again.

It took a cool analytical mind such as mine to point out the basic flaw in the scheme -- that a sled wouldn't be able to carry enough salt to travel any distance.

But this new idea of Von Donegan's was eminently sensible! I looked forward to seeing it in action. It was getting dark by the time we neared the coast. The lower reaches of the North Sea glimmered ahead of us... Von Donegan fingered the time machine controls... and suddenly it was broad daylight!

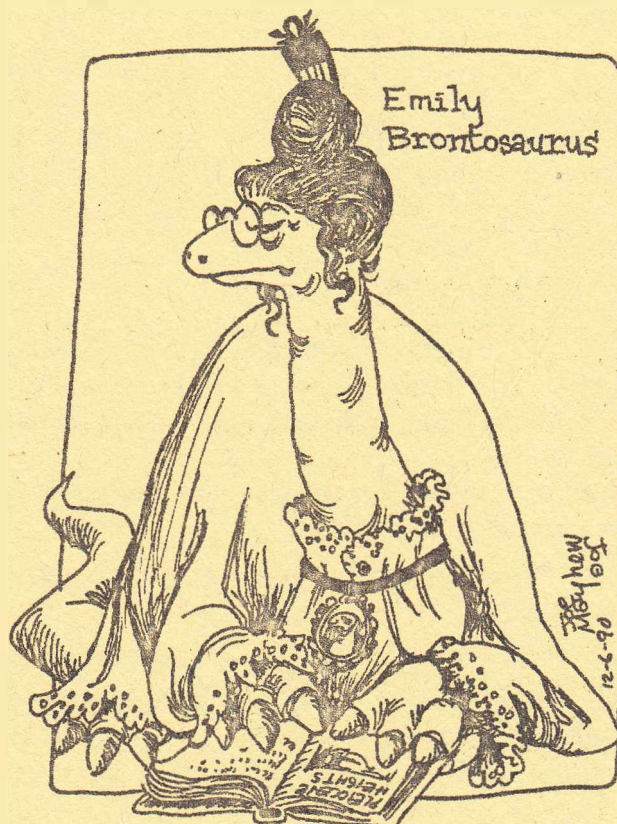
We had shot back a million years... give or take a few hours... and ahead of us lay a verdant plain stretching all the way to the Continent. Using this system, science fiction fans from all over Britain would be able to drive, cycle or even walk to The Hague... with virtually no expense!

The only problem, however, was that the flat land ahead of us was swarming with dinosaurs! There were millions of them -- presenting a completely impassable barrier. There they were... the Stegosaurus... the Triceratops... the Tyrannosaurus Rex... every prehistoric name I could have dug out of the Children's Britannica if I had had more time to prepare this talk...

"This is terrible," Von Donegan quavered, slamming on the brakes. "There are types here I've never even heard of. What is that monster called?" he said as a huge beast with only one rather myopic-looking eye reared up ahead.

"It's a Do-you-think-he-saurus," I quipped maliciously, realising that yet another of Von Donegan's schemes had come to naught.

"You're enjoying this," he accused. "Next thing you'll be coming out with the old Jim White pun about the Yorkshire dinosaur -- the Emily Brontosaurus."



"I'd never sink so low," I assured him, "but I will say that you should have expected all these prehistoric monsters when you set out from Eton and travelled directly towards the Continent."

"What do you mean?"

"You must have read the Harry Harrison book -- *East of Eton*."

Von Donegan gave a cry of anguish, turned the car around and drove back to safety, meanwhile operating the controls which brought us back into our own time. It will give you some idea of how much peril we had felt ourselves to be in when I tell you that we were relieved to find ourselves on the M25!

When we eventually got back to Von Donegan's secret laboratory we were in need of a drink. He set out a couple of glasses, produced a large whisky bottle and poured me out two fingers. I complained about them... stick-

ing out of the glass like that... with the nails not even properly manicured... so he fished them out and dropped them into a bowl he kept nearby... (I'm not even going to say that one.)

"I guess I'll have to forget about the land bridge method of getting to Holland," Von Donegan said. "While we're sitting here I'll check up on the progress of my second method -- the one I'm handling by remote control because it's slightly dangerous."

"What method is that?"

"The black hole method," Von Donegan said. "You know... like in *2001*... where you dive into a black hole and emerge somewhere else in the universe. I created a very small black hole by compressing some material which was already very dense..."

"You mean," I interrupted, "something like lead?"

"No, I mean Ken Slater's and Rog Peyton's catalogues. There are so many words squeezed on to each page that, because of the mass of the ink, each one is like a little neutron star. It didn't take too many of them to make a black hole, so I produced one on the cliffs of Dover. If everything has gone well, fans heading for the convention in The Hague will only have to drive straight at it. They will disappear and rematerialise in normal space just outside the Bel Air Hotel... if that can be considered as normal space..."

Von Donegan went to a computer terminal, did a lot of key tapping, then looked at me in utter panic.

"Bob," he said, "I'm in deep trouble! My black hole has rolled over the edge of the cliffs of Dover and has come to rest a few miles out in the English channel!"

"Don't worry about it," I said. "Nobody will notice."

"They're bound to," he replied. "It has stopped right beside the Channel Tunnel diggings... the British and French halves are warped into a circle around it... the whole project is now locked on the event horizon..."

which means that no progress will ever be made with the tunnel... it will never be finished..."

"Is that supposed to be news?" I quipped.

"I'll just have to fall back on my third method," Von Donegan said gloomily. He did some more key tapping, then went to a cupboard and brought out some cans of beer and glasses, to complement our whisky. We drank in silence for a while, then I became impatient and asked him what his third method for crossing to Holland actually was.

"I have to admit, I borrowed the idea from one your books," he said. "Do you remember the bit in *Ship of Strangers* where the ship is translated into a different dimension? The ship itself becomes as big as the universe and when the crew are sitting in the control room they can see galaxies all around them in the room, little drifting motes of light..."

"Of course I remember that bit," I said. "It has been described by perceptive reviewers as one of the truly great scenes in modern SF. One of them quoted part of it. 'A continuous rain of galaxies was spraying up through the floor, passing through the table and chairs and human beings, and out through the ceiling into the vessel's upper levels. The galaxies looked like slightly fuzzy stars to the naked eye, but when examined with a magnifying glass they were seen to be perfect little lens-shapes or spirals, miniature jewels being squandered into space by an inane creator.'"

"That's great stuff," I went on. "And the book -- *Ship of Strangers* -- available from all leading book sellers..."

"Never mind the commercial," Von Donegan snarled. "What I'm trying to tell you is that I borrowed the idea and used it as a means of getting science fiction fans across the sea to The Hague. I built a dimensional diffuser... which can expand the fans to thousands of times their natural size..."

"Some of them have learned to do that already -- by consuming great quantities of beer and beefburgers."

"Stop trying to be funny," Von Donegan said, his eyebrows knitting so furiously that a little pullover fell down over his nose. "This is very serious. My plan is to use the dimensional diffuser to turn worldcon attendees into giants who will be able to cross the channel in just a few strides. As soon as they are over there I will switch the machine off and they will return to their original size. Ingenious, isn't it?"

"No," I said. "I can't believe such a system could ever come into existence."

"That's where you're wrong," he exclaimed, "because I have already switched the machine on! At this very moment you and I are vast diffused beings. Just look at you!"

I looked around me and, sure enough, I was able to see -- mingled with the squalid furnishings of Von Donegan's room -- ghostly representation of the whole of the south of England. The surface of his table roughly corresponded to the general lie of the country.

"This is terrible," I said. "Because of what you are doing, great forces are being brought to bear on our countryside! Even our whisky glasses and beer glasses -- which to us merely seem to be sitting on this table -- will make their impression on the landscape."

"There is no need to worry about that," Von Donegan said. "I only set them down in rural areas -- where nobody will ever notice the

appearance of a few large circles flattened into the cornfields."


"You fool," I said. "What do you mean nobody will notice? Those corn circles are the talk of the land, of the world! Every science journal and newspaper you pick up has articles about them. Some journalists are making a fortune out of this thing!"

"What?" Von Donegan croaked. "You mean people are making money out of my invention! And I'm not in on it! Get out of here, Shaw -- I've got some writing to do."

"But what about your mission to get fans to the Worldcon cheaply?"

"Stuff the fans," he snarled. "Science is more important." He went to his word processor and hunched over it. "I've got a floppy disk somewhere."

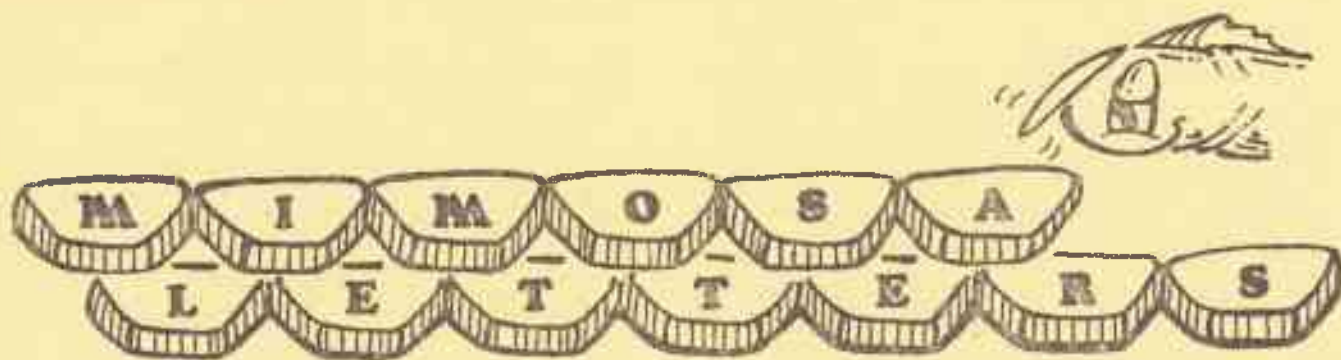
"I can tell that by the way you're hunched over your word processor," I said. "I've had back trouble myself."

He screamed for me to get out of his laboratory, so I left without further ado and came straight here to The Hague -- even though it was an expensive trip. Now, I'm wondering if I could invent a cheap way of getting here. Some method that involves drinking a lot of beer. A belch powered sailing ship, perhaps... No, that sounds too much like something I've already done -- my beer-powered space ship. I can't allow beer to make me repeat... 

Artist Credits

Sheryl Birkhead - pages 26 (top); 40
Kurt Erichsen - pages 10; 11; 12; 13
Brad W. Foster - page 29
Wade Gilbreath - page 3
Jeanne Gomoll - page 8
Alexis Gilliland - pages 31; 33; 34
Teddy Harvia - pages 14 (both); 15; 16
David Haugh - page 38
Craig Hilton - page 2
Alan Hutchinson - page 4

Terry Jeeves - page 26 (bottom)
Joe Mayhew - Front & Back Covers;
pages 17 (bottom); 20; 23
William Rotsler - page 32
Julie Morgan Scott - page 9
Diana Stein - page 28
Phil Tortorici - page 36
Charlie Williams - page 6; 41 (*Mimosa*
1 cover)
Kip Williams - pages 7; 17 (top); 18; 22



{{ Well, maybe our mailbox didn't *quite* overflow from all the responses to *Mimosa* 8, but it sure came close a time or two! The increased size of the Letters column this time is one result. Thanks once again to everybody who sent a letter, postcard, and/or Canadian and Australian stamps. Postal workers in Germantown are starting to recognize Nicki whenever she has to go to the service desk to claim mail that won't fit in the mailbox. Anyway and perhaps not unexpectedly, Nicki's Opening Comments for *Mimosa* 8, "The Fannish Life", about the changes in fanzines and science fiction fandom over the past twenty years prompted quite a bit of comment from readers. First up are a selection of comments about it... }}

Roger Waddington, 4 Commercial Street, Norton, Malton, North Yorkshire YO17 9ES, England

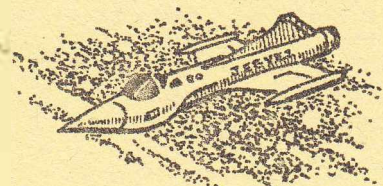
Many thanks for *Mimosa* 8; I've taken notice of the red-inked Last Chance reminder. The funny thing is, I don't remember ever seeing that previous issue, and browsing through the lettercol for the topics then, doesn't ring any bells. So either there's a black hole lurking behind my letterbox, slurping up everything in sight, or else it's transferred its location to that empty space between my ears.

{{ We wish there was a good way of telling if each issue will safely arrive at its intended destination. We've thought of including a request in the masthead like: "If you don't get this fanzine, let us know," but somehow, we don't think it'll work. }}

But for one, if I had seen Skel in full throttle on fanzines, fandom and their respec-

tive fates {{ ed. note: Skel's article "No Way to Stand Kansas" in *Mimosa* 7 and his letter that same issue served as partial inspiration of our Opening and Closing Comments in *Mimosa* 8 }}. I'd certainly have added my penn'orth of comment. Mainly to the effect that with the spread of hi-tech, home computers and the rise of desk-top publishing, it seems like the greatest opportunity for fanzine fans since the invention of the mimeo. But so far, fandom seems to be turning more in the direction of bulletin boards and electronic mailboxes, where the only paper and ink you need is downloading to your own printer. Me, I'm still traditional enough for honest-to-goodness fanzines; but then maybe I haven't grown up any, the fan I was back in the sixties is still the fan I am today. Where everything else has changed, I can still view fandom in the same light, read fanzines with the same zest; and I wouldn't want that to change.

{{ We can't help but agree; we also prefer the 'traditional' fanzine. We enjoy being able to think about our words and hone their meaning (or even wipe them out entirely) before they get blasted to the universe. And, for the most part, we like knowing who our audience is, rather than always wondering who is 'listening in'. We also don't think much of the ephemeral nature of electronic fanzines and bulletin boards. Somehow, we doubt that years later a fan will say, "Oh, I ran across your old upload and enjoyed reading it." This is a common occurrence when new people pick up old fanzines. }}



rich brown, 508 N. Highland #B4,
Arlington, Virginia 22201

I've always had a problem responding to good, well-written but essentially non-controversial fanzines. *Mimosa* usually falls into that category, I'm afraid. I read it. I enjoy it immensely. I'm entertained. I, sometimes, try to write LoCs -- but after saying I like this, really like that, really really like the other, am Immensely Impressed by the next... well, I begin to wonder first whether I'll be believed and second whether this rather simple-minded list of "likes" is the kind of response you and your contributors deserve. And what I think, usually, is that you deserve better -- so I give up.

Or... when you do have something that strikes a responsive chord, something I could go on at length about, it turns out to be something I've already gone on at length about elsewhere -- and, depending on whether it's something that's due to come out or something that's already come out, I'm reluctant to either telegraph what I'm going to be saying elsewhere in your fanzine or present it to you second hand, on account of this Thing I have against redundancy.

There's an example of both of these things in "The Fannish Life," your opening comments, Nicki. You list some of the problems you see in the Worldcon and major regionals, as opposed to how things used to be, and add "But, no one seems to mind." Well, actually, while I grant you it's been a few years, I did have a piece in *Defenestration* called "What's Wrong With The Worldcon" in which I at least tried to make it clear that I minded -- because so much of the additional costs go to pay for whole tracks of programming which are of little or no interest to a reading SF fan. I "minded" even though, I said, it had been some years since I'd actually had to pay the exorbitant membership fees of the Worldcons and major regionals -- because, on those occasions when I wasn't a guest of the convention, I "ghosted" them. I "justified" this, I said, by virtue of the fact that I scrupulously refused to try to get in to see any pro-

gram items, even those that might be of interest to me; I just hung out with friends at parties. In the letters column of the following issue, Mike Glicksohn opined that, even under those circumstances, I still shouldn't attend -- that I was, in fact, a "deadbeat," the last thing any of those conventions needed. My immediate response was one of anger, but before I could formulate a reply which might have Plunged All Fandom Into War, I realized -- with something of a shock -- that Mike was perfectly correct. I mean, the folks who come to conventions for those program items of little or no interest to reading SF fans have to pay the exorbitant membership fees, even though those fees also pay for the program items which are of interest to reading SF fans, so if the convention has anything to attract me -- even if it's just a bunch of my friends to hang out with -- I should pay (and grumble) just like everyone else. So: If I can't afford to pay the membership fees, I don't go.

It was right around that time that I started swearing off Worldcons in favor of conventions like Corflu; at the former, you spend at least a full day pushing through kids wearing Spock ears just trying to find out who's in attendance, and count yourself lucky if you can (before the convention is over) get together with more than a dozen fans you want to talk to. At Corflu, you get a more-than-decent banquet and spend most of your time in pleasant converse with twice, triple, quadruple that many who fall into that category. So *Hell no*, I thought, *I won't go*.

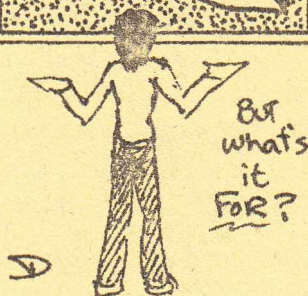
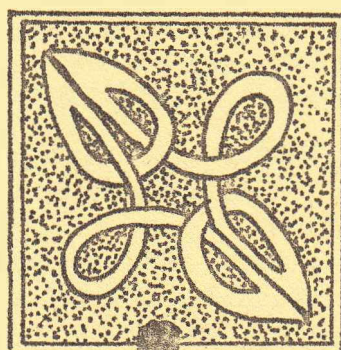
However, just about the time I started to feel superior to the poor schlubs who were still hung up on attending world conventions, those devious and manipulative "convention fans" come out of their smoke-filled rooms with something really low and underhanded -- like making Walt and Madelaine Willis fan guests of honor -- so as to make fans like myself *want* to attend their Worldcons and swear off swearing off same. Boy. Those con fans. They'll get you every time. Take my word on it.

{{ At least something got you to come back! Actually, we don't see 'problems' with conven-

tions (including the Worldcon) as much as changes that have happened since we first started attending them. We're not really sure that increased attendance, by itself, is actually a problem at all, but as attendances have risen, a lot of older fans have quit going. Unfortunately, though, they are the only ones who can pass on fandom's traditions to the next generation. And so, new and completely different 'traditions' (like all-night dances) seem to have begun. We're glad there still are conventions like Mid-WestCon, where you can relive what conventions were like decades ago, and Corflu & Ditto, which are doing a good job of getting lapsed fanzine fans to 'pub their ish'. }}

One thing that strikes me, though, with respect to the on-going discussion of Skel's article in *Mimosa 7* is that you have fans on three continents (Australia, North America, Europe) involved in expressing views on what "fandom" is, without any apparent acknowledgement that it is in many important respects a substantially different thing on each continent. I for one would like to know what Judith Hanna might have to say with regard to the differences between Australian and British fanzine fandom, or what Avedon Carol sees as the difference between U.S. and British fanzine fandom.

{{ Well, all we can do is ask! How about it, gang? }}



Gary Brown, 1320 65th Street NW,
Bradenton, Florida 34209

I enjoyed Nicki's opening comments on "The Fannish Life." How true, how true. Fandom and fanzines have grown and changed. After my five-year sabbatical from comics fandom, I was overwhelmed by the changes there. Instead of three or four comic book publishers, there are now dozens. Fanzines have virtually disappeared from comics fandom. Most of them are now slick magazines or newspapers. The only holdouts are apazines in comics-oriented apas.

A lot of the fans from the 60s and 70s have gone on to publish their own comic books in the way they want to see them. That's great.

But I've also seen "fandoms" grow up in other hobbies. I currently get a pro wrestling fanzine (there are a number of them and they resemble the "old style" fanzines of the 60s). Baseball and other sports cards are big business now, but there are many fanzines in that genre.

And to top it off, I was watching *Good Morning America* on ABC last week and there was a feature on monster movies. The reporter talked about the "fanzines" being produced by monster hobbists. He didn't even define what a fanzine was, and assumed everyone knew.

As a comics fan, I'm much more comfortable buying comics in public and talking about my hobby with friends than I was 10-15 years ago. But I haven't decided if I've changed with age or the hobby of comic book collecting has gotten some respectability now and it's easier to admit. Maybe I'll never know.

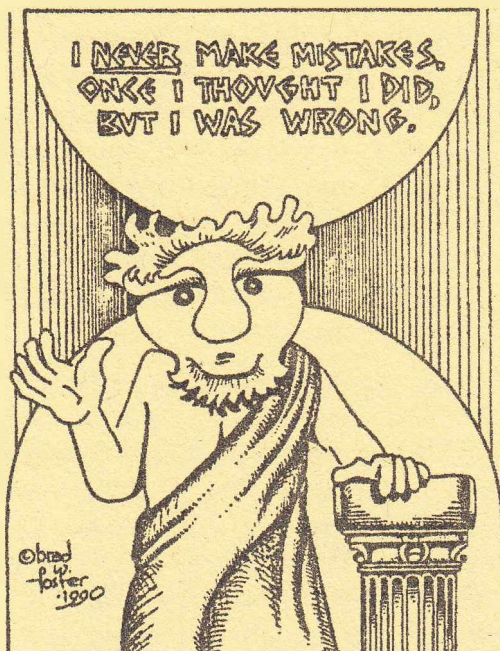
Harry Bond, 6 Wolsey Avenue, London
E17 6RE, Great Britain

Your editorial, Nicki, is yet another fanzine piece that makes me wonder what I'm doing in 1990 fandom, when my place is so obviously in 1975. I'm in my twenties and in col-

lege; I can't hardly afford to go to no conventions (and to purchase good grammar is far beyond my means); the last time I saw a good restaurant from the inside was when my parents took pity on my starvation-racked body and bought me a meal... you get the picture. In fannish fandom I get the impression that I'm looked on as a kind of aberration. As a student of fanhistory and its ups and downs, I know that the wheel will turn once more... but waiting for it to do so can be all too tedious.

{{ Nicki responds: I guess I'm amazed how many people misunderstood my essay about fannish life and how 'we' grew up. I wasn't talking about fandom as a whole -- just about the group of fans who started in fandom when we did. We matured and are now (mostly) successful adults with families. We're still in fandom, and often now running the conventions. And now it's us that are making the traditions! }}

Dave Kyle's piece {{ "Chicon Ho!" }} vies for the title of best in the issue, which, seeing that Harry Warner is a contributor, is quite an odd thing to say. Perhaps most amazing, though, was to discover at the close of the article that Dave professes to have written it from memory, and wonders whether any vintage fmz might carry more details!



Dave Gorecki, 9129 W. 167th Street, Orland Hills, Illinois 60477

CHICON HO! reminded me of a visit I paid a couple of years back to Cliff Kornoelje, known to First Fandom as Jack Darrow. First active as a letterhack to magazines in the Gernsback era, he attended the First Worldcon in New York, came back to Chicago, and totally disappeared from fandom within a year. He's mentioned early on in the Moskowitz and Warner histories, as one of the most prominent fans, and then vanishes in both cases without a trace.

I was curious how someone as absorbed as he was could gafiate so thoroughly. I found the name Kornoelje listed in the Chicago phone book, so I decided to plunge ahead and give him a call. To my surprise, he was pleased to hear from me and asked me to drop over for a visit.

I found out that although he stopped being an active fan about the time he went into the service, he still reads SF extensively and even maintained his collection of prozines going back to the first *Amazing*. He recounted visits he made to Robert Bloch in Wisconsin, and a brief meeting with Stanley Weinbaum at a Chicago layover. He talked about going to the '33 World's Fair with Jack Williamson, and visits to the staff of *Weird Tales* then headquartered in Chicago. I came to realize that his lack of activity was basically due to his rather shy nature; he was always pleasant and recalled those early days with fondness. After his active days, he stayed in touch with other fan friends of the era, some of whom became pros such as the Binder brothers.

All too often, some fans turn against fandom with an unwarranted bitterness, especially when turning pro. I was glad to find that here was someone whose memories were pleasant, and was willing to share them with someone who wasn't even born until a generation after his fan activity.

Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Ave.,
Toronto, Ontario M6S 3L6, Canada

I guess I'm not a typical fan, at least according to Nicki's description. I don't have kids, I do continue to read science fiction, and lately I've found my finances have regressed to my earlier student days necessitating finding roommates at conventions and even skipping meals and surviving on consuite munchies on occasions. All necessitated, of course, by being owned by a mortgage. I suspect that in the next two years I'll attend fewer conventions than in any two year period since I discovered fandom in the middle 60s. But I should have a hell of a lot of equity when the time has elapsed.

Dave's fanhistorical piece was fascinating. I imagine most fans have experienced a less severe situation similar to the one Dave describes (I know I've written at least two articles about breakdowns on the way to cons although I've got no real idea where they were actually published) but his must certainly rate as archetypal and has the additional attraction of dealing with a time and culture most of us have no personal experience with. No interstates? Tires for \$3? What is this, some sort of science fiction? This sort of material doesn't appear in many places and is just the sort of thing *Mimosa* will end up being famous for because it fills in background of fan history.

{{ Thanks. Our breakdown-on-the-way-to-a-convention story was published way back in the very first *Mimosa* ("Half the Fun Is Getting There"). Dick says he still has nightmares about it. }}

Mark Manning, 1400 East Mercer #19,
Seattle, Washington 98112

Dave Kyle's "Chicon Ho!" brings to mind that Art Widner's tribute to the Skylark of FooFoo, which took Art and friends to Chicon, was reprinted in the most recent Westercon program book. Perhaps the fannish trip report won't do anymore; now we need reports featur-

ing the crummy-but-named cars of fandom's Oldovician Age.

{{ What age was that again? Anyway, one of the many prerequisites to Trufandom seems to be having once owned a miserable beat-up old car that kept breaking down at inopportune times, than speaking or writing nostalgically about it years later. }}

Pat Molloy, P.O. Box 9135, Huntsville,
Alabama 35812-0135

All of the articles in *Mimosa* 8 were fun reading, but I most enjoyed Dave Kyle's "Chicon Ho!". This may be at least in part due to the fact that this was the only article that came close to covering a fannish topic -- a road trip to and from the Worldcon. All the other stories, while thoroughly enjoyable, were basically on non-fannish topics, although written with a distinctively fannish twist (especially Harry Warner Jr.'s "Now You See Them...").

{{ Our somewhat broader view of the definition of "fannish" is: "anything that fans do." Don't forget, we're interested in preserving bits of fan history; we think that activities of fans who may (or may not) someday become latter-day Bob Tuckers (or Claude Deglers, for that matter) is worth chronicling. }}

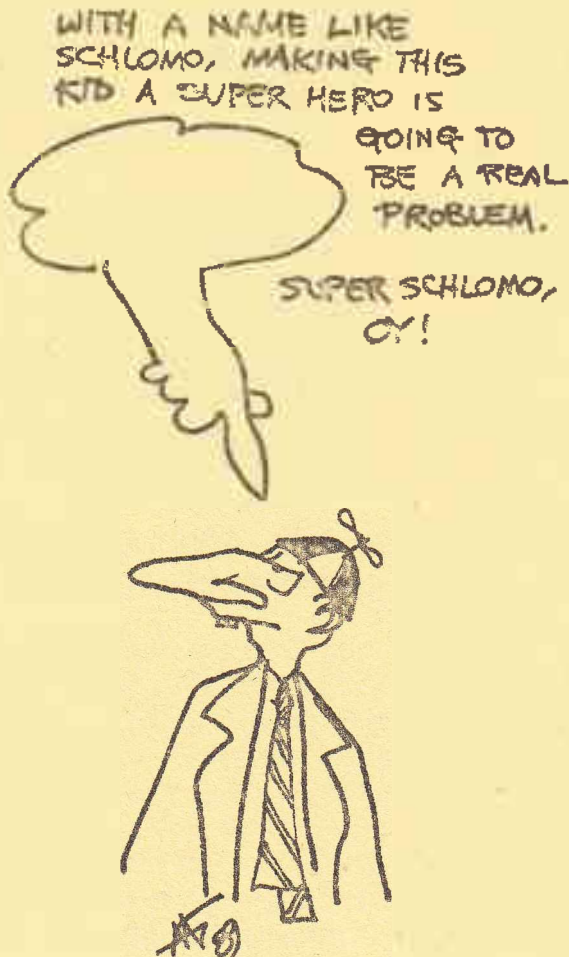
"Chicon Ho!" made me wonder if there are any good first-hand accounts of train trips to conventions in times past. I would imagine a lot more fans travelled by train in those days than they do now. I have even heard mention of fans hopping freight trains to get to cons in days past. Being an active member of rail fandom as well, this aspect of fannish history would really interest me.

{{ Us too; maybe your letter will prod somebody into sending us one to publish (seems to us Bob Tucker was derailed on his way to a Kubla Khan once, wasn't he?). Dick just recently rode Amtrak seventeen hours one-way to Chicago to go to Ditto, the fanzine fans' convention; he says the trip wasn't all that epic, but on the other hand, maybe that's not such a bad thing. }}

Pamela Boal, 4 Westfield Way, Charlton Heights, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7EW, Great Britain

I really enjoyed Harry Warner's everyday observations carried humourously into the realm of fantastic speculation, "Now You See Them..." Even though Harry is an active contributor to many of the zines I receive (at least in the letter columns), I seldom see such fun pieces from him, or anyone else. Those I do see are from older fans such as Skel, Kench, and Jeeves. Are the majority of those capable of writing such items too busy with professional writing? Does younger fandom lack a sense of fun?

{{ [a] We Hope Not, and [b] Your Guess Is As Good As Ours. And since we're always in need of good first-person anecdotal articles for *Mimosa*, we hope to hear from some of the Older Fans you refer to (and, for that matter, from younger fans too). }}



Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, N. Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, England

I must say it's a long time since I read so much sense in an opening editorial. I first got into fandom way back in 1948 (having been an avid reader and collector since the early thirties), and I agree that fandom has changed from its magazine oriented format -- heck, that's all there was in the early days. We needed to widen our horizons -- but sadly it has brought in this bickering between the fringes as to 'the true way.' I agree with you that 'the hard SF is difficult to find' and also suspect you're right in saying the glut of fantasy is mainly read by teens and twenties. Any competent writer can churn out a saga of Dark Lords against beautiful princesses with strange talents -- it needs a bit more to write true hardcore SF.

{{ There certainly is a lot of bickering about 'the true way' in fandom. In a recent media letterzine Nicki is involved in, the editor was wondering if the history of fandom (in this case media fandom and its history of published fan fiction) would ever be written. Nicki is debating if she should point out that a history of at least one fandom, SF fandom, has been and is continuing to be written. }}

Nice to see the Harry Warner reprint. If anyone ever deserved to enter the Fannish Hall of Fame, 'tis he. I also enjoyed the John Berry item {{ "The Amazing Centrifugal Motion of Spinning Molybdenum Disulphide During the Summer Solstice" }}. The idea of a fingerprint expert in aqua gear taking fingerprints off a submerged vehicle boggles the imagination. Each piece in the issue was highly readable without stirring me to praise or howl in horror at any specific parts.

{{ A lot of readers have commented that *Mimosa*, while enjoyable, is difficult to comment on. We're not sure what, if anything, to do about it. We do pass on all comments (whether or not they are used in the letters column) to our contributors, so we appreciate and look forward to hearing from everybody who receives this fanzine -- even if it's just a 20-word postcard. }}

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Ave.,
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740-6229

I appreciated very much the place of honor you gave my article reprint and Steve Styles's appropriate illustrations for it. Despite all the stuff I've had published in fanzines down through the years, comparatively few items have had artwork commissioned for them like this one. And I thought Sheryl Birkhead's covers were splendid, more massive than most of her artwork and a promise of even better things to come from her.

The Irish John Berry's contribution is the closest he has come in recent years to recapturing the exact flavor of the fanzine material he was writing back in the 1950s and 1960s. Most of his recent fanzine material has been just as well done as ever, but it has been a little different somehow from that of Goon Berry. He is back in the old groove now, whether by accident or intention.

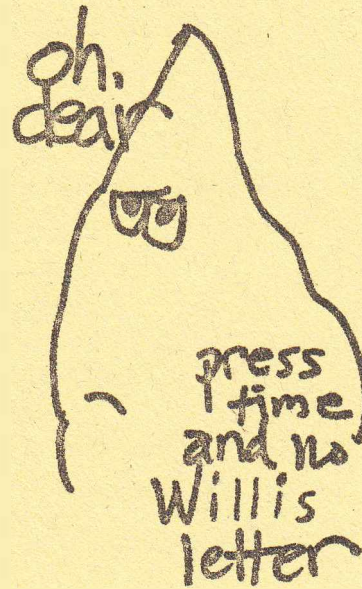
Buck Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford
City, Indiana 47348

I dunno, Nicki; you must know a higher class of fan than I do. My friends don't wear designer clothes or "dine out at good restaurants." Ethnic restaurants, yes, but not necessarily what is considered "good" by the general public. They also still read science fiction, but then of course a lot of our friends are under 35. (That's a change; our fan friends used to be our age. Now most of them are younger...) There is somewhat of a gender gap, though. At Rivercon, Leah Smith was talking about getting the younger group into "real fandom" as opposed to the kids who watch the movies and sit in on the gaming. "We're here in a room party, and I'm the youngest person in the room and I'm 31!" You don't see many teenagers or people in their twenties at room parties these days, though I hadn't noticed it until Leah mentioned it. Probably because from the viewpoint of age 62, age 31 seems pretty young, and one doesn't notice that the fans one became acquainted with while they

were in high school are fully adult now, and complaining about the younger generation.

Good humorous article by Sharon Farber {{ "Tales of Adventure and Medical Life, Part IV" }}. Our friend Kay Anderson, who worked for a west coast physician for a time, said that initially she wondered what "GOK" on the medical records meant. Eventually she discovered that it was short for "God Only Knows," which seemed to be one of the more common afflictions.

{{ What's this about ethnic restaurants not being good?! Anyway, we have Part 5 of Sharon's "Medical Life" series in hand, but unfortunately due to space and time considerations it won't appear until our next issue. We continue to be amazed by the number of humorous and surrealistic episodes that a medical career produces. }}



Craig Hilton, P.O. Box 430, Collie,
Western Australia 6225, Australia

I always enjoy Sharon Farber's articles on her hospital internship. Having been through the system myself (Royal Perth Hospital, 1983), I find it interesting to note that the same things, the same slang, the same values, attitudes, and aspirations hold true here in Australia as in the USA, Great Britain, in fact I suspect anywhere in the world which has big, busy hospitals. Maybe it's like the army,

where the poor foot soldier always has and always will be at the bottom of the big heap -- "(s)He's the Universal Intern, and (s)he really is to blame."

When I went through, we had turkeys (gomers) to slough (turf) on to other teams in just the same way as she describes. Samuel Shem's *The House of God* was unofficial required reading. Of course, we didn't have the shootings, stabbings, and drug addicts that I guess you see in a big U.S. hospital, but still the day contained only 24 hours like any other country's, and we were just as mortal in our needs for food and sleep as any human being the world over.

Abbreviations in the case notes had always been a glaring fact of life to which the Powers That Be turned a blind eye. As a result, doctors all had to pick up their peculiar meanings on the "black market" (so to speak), which led to its own problems. For example, common convention stated that "spleen" meant "no spleen felt." It was two years before I realized that on writing "HS" I had not been indicating "normal heart sounds" but "no heart sounds".

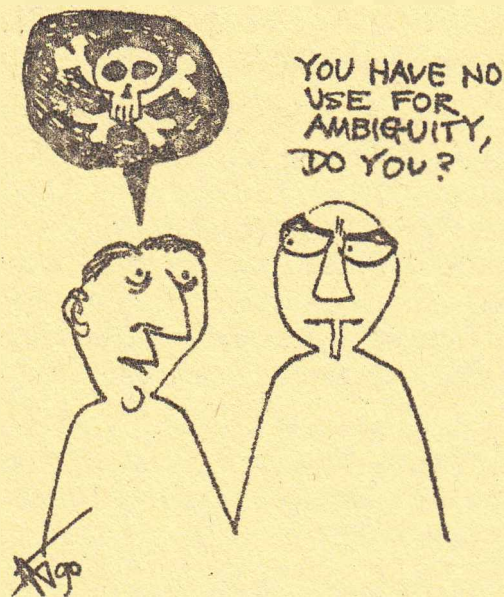
I could have written "HS NAD", where "NAD" means "normal". "NAD" is a time-honoured universal abbreviation that is interesting for two reasons -- firstly it's employed verbally even though it actually takes longer to say than "normal", and secondly, no one can agree on what it stands for. "No Abnormality Detected" is one version; "No Apparent Disorder" is another. Rumour has it that it really stands for "Not Actually Done", although perhaps it should be "Need Another Doctor".

Similarly, in the masses of blood tests ordered to catch diagnoses like a drift net catches tuna, common ones were urea and electrolytes (U+E) and liver function tests (LFT). But when in the notes a doctor requested "LFT U+E" I fancied that (s)he was in fact asking for "Life, The Universe, and Everything".

Slang and abbreviations are things the public can appreciate, even if they're not con-

versant with their meanings. What they can't understand but which Samuel Shem depicted uniquely is that within the four walls of the hospital, the laws of reality cease to function. So, when as a medical student I asked the intern who was taking a sample, "Shouldn't you be using a charcoal swab for that, otherwise you won't grow anything on it?" and he replied, "It doesn't matter, I probably won't pick up anything anyway," I thought his reasoning showed faulty logic, but later as an intern myself it made perfect sense. Likewise, "Shouldn't you give that local anaesthetic time to work first?" "No. It never makes any difference anyway." Before and even after my years in hospital, such reasoning seemed nonsensical, except when I remind myself in hindsight that hospitals are officially designated Non-Socratic Zones.

The only reason I stuck with the horrors of internship was that it was the sole gateway into a monopoly profession, as crass as that may seem. What worries me is that normal people go into hospitals fully expecting that they're there for the good of their health, when in truth they've entered another dimension of reality in which they exist only as hurdles in an obstacle course whose purpose is to train young doctors in the art of staying alive and sane whilst learning how not to kill and maim along the way.



Marty Helgesen, 11 Lawrence Avenue,
Malverne, New York 11565-1406

I have a medical question for you that has bothered me from time to time. In the August 1990 *Smithsonian* magazine, an article about Hugo Gernsback says that when Hugo was a boy, he read a book by Percival Lowell suggesting that alien worlds might support intelligent life: "The notion had a profound effect on the 10-year old Hugo: he promptly fell into a delirium. For two days he thrashed about in the throes of a brain fever ... All the while, he babbled wildly about Martians and their weird inventions." I had previously encountered the term 'brain fever' only in 19th century fiction, where it seemed to have whatever symptoms the author found convenient, especially when a character had to die tragically and nobly. I wonder if there was a real disease known as brain fever back then, and if so, what it was. Can Sharon Farber, or anyone else, enlighten me before unsatisfied curiosity drives me into the throes of a brain fever and I waste away, tragically but nobly?

{{ We've heard that Brain Fever is a disease that causes people to spend hundreds of dollars each year publishing and mailing their fanzine. }}

Leland Sapiro, 807 Walters #107, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70605

By contrast with issue #6, your current number emphasizes terror instead of horror -- what with Sharon Farber on the interns' box-coffin humor (as opposed to their previously recorded behavior with corpses) and Harry Warner on the malicious convergence of things from *Outside* (contrasted to his earlier account of bodies transported from next door).

As to which is which, to quote Pat Hodgell's "Gothic Novel in Transition" {{ ed. note: from the current issue of Leland's fanzine *River-side Quarterly* }}

The difference between terror and horror, as Devendra Varma puts it, is "the differ-

ence between awful apprehension and sickening realization: between the smell of death and stumbling against a corpse." Terror creates "an intangible atmosphere of spiritual psychic dread"; horror occurs when the source of terror reveals itself in all its uncompromising hideousness...

Always we keep in mind Coleridge's lines (I have to quote from memory):

like one who on a lonesome road doth
walk in fear and dread; And having once
looked back, walks on and turns no more
his head; Because he knows a frightful
fiend doth close behind him tread.

It's terror if you don't look back and horror if you do. In any case, *Mimosa* is fright magazine number one.

{{ Thanks, we think... }}

On "Chicon Ho!", I can't sympathize with those four Chicon fans after learning how they took advantage of poor Elmer Perdue. "Poor" is meant in both figurative and literal senses, since I'm sure Elmer's income was no greater than that of his travelling companions, and I'm equally sure they never paid him back. Fer shame, fellers!

IT'S A THREE
POINT AIR
BALL AT THE
BUZZER...
AND GOD
TRAILS
42 TO 39
AT HALF
TIME!



Alexis Gilliland, 4030 8th Street South,
Arlington, Virginia 22204

The main comment hook for *Mimosa* #8 is in Dick's closing comments {{ "A Tennessee Yankee in Prince George's County" }}. where he talks about the "classic" *WSFA Journals* of the '60s and how *WSFA* now seems to be more convention oriented than it was in those days (when it was supposedly more fanzine oriented because an impressive fanzine was coming out in the club's name). Well, actually, *The WSFA Journal* of that period started up after the club had recovered from Discon I, which fans who were also *WSFAns* (including Evans and Pavlat, who compiled a fanzine index) got to put on after several failed bids. It might also be noted that Disclave started running on a regular basis in 1958, so the club's being convention oriented is nothing new.

Back to *TWJ*, as it was known then; the first issue is dated March 1965, with Don Miller as editor and Dick Eney as publisher. Maybe it was Eney's fault, but he dropped out by the third issue, so the classical *TWJ* was mainly a product of the late Don Miller, and a source of considerable aggravation to the club. At one point, we had to double the dues (from \$4/year to \$8/year) to support Don's publishing habit. At another, Vaughn Bodé offered us "Sunspot" if we would publish it, and the club debated the issue and refused to authorize the extra money (not all that much) which would have been required.

This is not to say that they didn't really like Bodé's story, but under Miller, *The WSFA Journal* had ceased to be a clubzine and had become (one is almost tempted to say "metastasized") a genzine funded by the club and driven by Don Miller's considerable energy. Was there other support from the club? Well, yes, but as individuals. Eventually Dolly and I became coeditors of sorts, writing reviews, soliciting material, cutting art on stencils, and so forth, but Don held on to the publishing end (publishing was what he liked to do) and in the end he had the last word, Dolly's advice on layout to the contrary, notwithstanding.

What eventually stopped him was an anal retentive desire to publish everything he received (well, not everything; everything good, of which he eventually had a surfeit) which led to larger and larger issues, published at longer and longer intervals, until eventually he collated and put out the 134-page '71 Disclave issue at the '72 Disclave. The cover says it was #76, and it was bound with blue tape because no staple gun could be found that would handle it, but it was the last. *TWJ* #78 had come out for August-September '71, and while there was subsequently a scattering of *Sons of TWJ*, gamezines, and little miscellaneous pamphlets, Don was having health problems and the club was tired of pubbing his ish.

Besides, energy was flowing to conventions with the failed bid for '71 and the successful bid for '74. Jay Haldeman, who was then *WSFA*'s President and Chair of Discon II, moved to Florida in late '73, so as Vice President I stepped up, and the first question from the floor was: "Are we going to have a Disclave this year?" Not being heavily committed to Discon (or the now moribund *WSFA Journal*), my answer was yes.

The point is not that the club wasn't willing to go on with *The WSFA Journal*, which in its present incarnation is pretty similar to what Miller and Eney started out with, but that you need a very special sort of person for the job. Other *WSFAns* who put out fanzines that come easily to mind include Avedon Carol with *Blatant*, Dan Joy and Somtow Sucharitkul with *Fanny Hill*, and Jack Chalker's *Mirage*, none of which could be considered clubzines. Currently, the *WSFA Press* operates in conjunction with Disclave, publishing a small book from the current year's Guest of Honor, so the publishing impulse is not dead, only diverted (or maybe perverted) to making a small profit for the club.

What sort of special person? Well, in many ways Don Miller was a nerd. His idea of the perfect fanzine was no typos and no white spaces, and he was the first person to make me aware that faneds might not always be brilliant, scintillating people. Don married an Englishwoman, and used to spend his summer vacations in England, visiting in-laws, I would

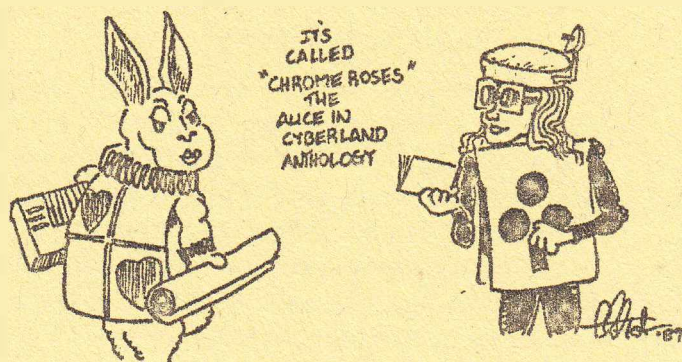
imagine. What did Mrs. Miller think of his hobby, which she had to regard as an obsessive-compulsive waste of time? When we visited their home, she was always very gracious, but after Don died, she sold his collections of books, magazines, and fanzines (which was enormous) for scrap paper and went back to England. This (selling the collection), in spite of offers from Bob Madle and others which must have amounted to a considerable piece of change.

That should do for now; as the poet says: "Ask not for whom the club zines, it zines for thee." The rest of your issue is splendid, and you are encouraged to continue.

Brad W. Foster, P.O. Box 165246,
Irving, Texas 75016

I hadn't really bothered to try and figure out why before (if it ain't broke, why fix it?), but a couple of locs this issue made it clear that it is this decline in general, article-related zines that makes it seem the 'fanzine' is dying off. I don't get anywhere near as many zines as I did a few years back, probably due to the reduced amount of artwork I have had time to draw and distribute recently, but I do find that many of the zines I get are of the quick-flip variety, filled with things of no interest to me.

{{ We have no qualms about trading *Mimosa* for clubzines because each issue we sent to a SF club will likely be read by several people, not just one. Not only does that give wider exposure to the fan writers and artists who contribute to *Mimosa*, once in a while we acquire a continuing letter of comment writer in the process. }}



Marc Ortlieb, P.O. Box 215, Forest Hill, Victoria 3131, Australia

The idea that legendary fanzines like *Hyphen* and *Le Zombie* are no longer being published isn't really valid. It is only hindsight that gives zines a legendary status and I'm sure that there are zines around to which fans in the future will accord legendary status. I suspect that they won't be **our** sort of fanzines, but that's the nature of evolution. In Australia, the Melbourne New Wave of fanzines have a lot that will give them legendary status -- I suspect. They have small circulations and they cater to the needs of the current Melbourne milieu -- perfect ingredients for legendary status as seen with zines like *Hyphen* and *Le Zombie*.

Richard Gilliam, P.O. Box 25676, Tampa, Florida 33622-5676

My observation is that there are far more, not fewer, fanzines being published today than in any previous era. There are fewer traditional fanzines, such as *Mimosa*, but then again what we consider a traditional fanzine today is much different from what was considered a traditional fanzine fifty years ago.

Fanzine history breaks down into three periods. The Founding Father period goes back to those serious and constructive days of the thirties and forties. Virtually all of the new SF being published was centered in a very few pulp magazine titles. Most fans read the majority of what was published. This shared body of experience allowed fanzines of the era to concentrate on the relatively few authors in the field.

The second period is the Baby Boom period. Here fandom became a primary fanzine topic, much to the outrage of serious and constructive fandom. The boom in digest-sized SF magazines of the fifties, along with the discovery by paperback publishers that there was a market for science fiction, both expanded and shifted the shared body of fannish experience away from the published SF toward fandom itself.

Lee Hoffman, whose zines pioneered that era, once commented to me, "We were the Trekkies of our period. The serious and constructive fans complained we were ruining fandom, writing about other fans and about conventions. We didn't respect the traditions of fandom, so they said." What we currently view as a traditional fanzine far more resembles Lee's efforts of the fifties, than those of the Founding Father era.

The third period is the Media period, clearly marked as having begun in 1969 when the first *Star Trek* zines began being published following the cancellation of the television series. Again, this is tied to an expanding and shifting of the shared body of experience, as well as to the rapid growth of fandom.

By the seventies, even those few fans who had not seen *Star Trek* in its original run, had repeatedly been exposed to it in syndication. Interest in publishing SF exploded following *Star Wars* (1977) to where we reached a point that not even the most diligent SF fan could keep up with all the new written SF.

The most frequently shared experiences were now motion pictures. In the 1980s, most fans saw *Blade Runner*, *E.T.*, and *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. This is not true of the written works of the era. The shared experience of readers of science fiction became greatly diluted. Hobbit and elf fandom rarely picked up Niven and Pournelle, and no one much read cyberpunk except aficionados and academics.

What began in the Baby Boom era and coalesced in the Media era was fragmentation and crossover. Pick up most any zine today, especially clubzines, and you'll find a significant portion discussing motion pictures or television.

Thankfully, we still have *Mimosa* and zines like it. In these days of diversity I find it best to take an ecumenical view of fandom. My values were much formed in the sixties when "do your own thing in your own time" was the motto of the era. My personal interests may lie with traditional fandom and traditional fanzines, but I am willing to count

the media zines as a valid portion of the canon of accumulated fannish knowledge.

{{ So that's why all those *Space 1999* fanzines kept turning up in our mailbox! Seriously, thanks for your views on the evolution of fanzines, and for the kind words about this particular fanzine. We don't dispute your viewpoint that SF-in-the-media has profoundly affected the intent newer fan publishers and as a result the content of their fanzines. We are interested, though, in what people perceive as the 'future' of fanzines, and whether or not today's rash of mediazines is it. }}

Lloyd Penney, 412-4 Lisa St., Brampton, Ontario L6T 4B6, Canada

I certainly agree with Joseph Nicholas {{ ed. note: from the letters column }} when he says that fanzine fandom has changed along with the rest of fandom. Fanzines were the connection between distant fans; now, it's just one of the many activities fandom encompasses. Fanzine fandom would have more a place in fandom as a whole if it was still necessary as a tool to communicate. It will be interesting to see how fanzines flourish in eastern Europe -- there are plenty of fans who can now freely publish, but even though they have no travel restrictions to worry about, they have little money to travel to see one another.

Many people comment on the dearth of fanzines compared to earlier years. I still see plenty of them around, and receive a good number. There are also comments about legendary fanzines like *Hyphen* and *Le Zombie*, zines I've never seen. Can anyone quantify what made those fanzines so memorable? What did they consist of, and what made the writing so fannish? If we can define this essence of a legendary fanzine, perhaps we can create a few of our own. I suspect that an attempt would be futile, should we be able to answer any of those questions -- even well-produced zines with fannish contents are raked over the coals as being inadequate or even incompetent, given the negative way fans treat one another.

At the end, fanzine fandom seems alive and well to me, but as Dick says, it does not thrive. Rather than simply bemoan its demise, how do we revitalize it? I ask the questions, but I don't have ready answers. Does anybody?

{{ Not that we're aware of. On the other hand... }}

David Thayer, P.O. Box 905, Euless, Texas 76039

The continuing discussion of the impending death of fanzine fandom is becoming tiresome. It reminds me of the character in *Pollyanna* who derives more pleasure in planning her own funeral than in living. Get a life!

{{ Okay, okay; we will. Honest! }}

Richard Brandt, 4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso, Texas 79912

Thanks for *Mimosa* 8 (hey, there's that cat on the cover again). I was especially pleased by Teddy Harvia's lead-off art for my courtroom reminiscences {{ "Five Years Before the Bench" }}. It's a deliciously apt illustration of one of the more alarming incidents therein.

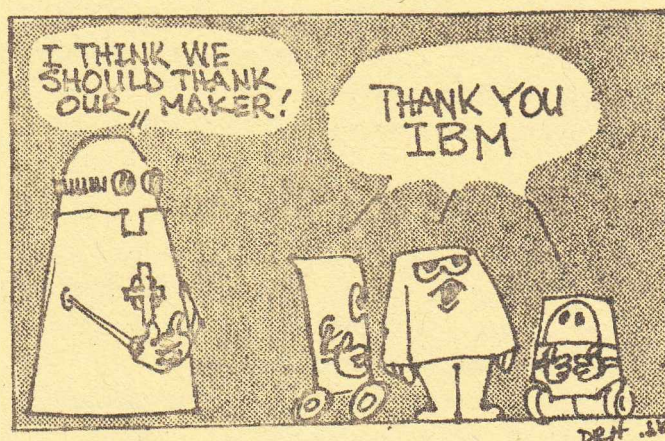
Dave Kyle's Chicon story reminds me how fortunate I've been on my fannish road trips, in spite of driving across the breadth of Texas annually since 1985, and one marathon trek from El Paso to Baltimore and back. Of course, I had a blowout while driving Poul and Karen Anderson to dinner, which is its own brand of embarrassment. I'm surprised they let me drive them into Mexico two nights later in the same car...

I ran into Roy Tackett and Len Moffatt at Bubonicon this weekend. They were considering the theory that fanzine fans, who originated fandom in its humble beginnings, looked around one day and discovered that nobody knew who they were, so they created a place where they could hang out with only the

people who knew them and be BNFs again. (Hey, if this philosophy appeals to you, have I got a deal for you...) Be that as it may, it's clear that the main body of fandom has drifted away from the center; either that, or fabulous fannish fanzine fandom is no longer there.

While one waxes enthused over the occasional appearance in the mailbox of a zine like *Trapdoor* (or *Mimosa*), one does indeed wonder how we'll replenish the ranks of younger faces and ensure the continued survival of fandom as we knew it. Maybe from the United Kingdom... Here in the States, though, the faces one recognizes tend to be the old familiar faces, some of whom drop out of sight for a few years and resurface to the grateful welcome of the old crowd. Even a rosy-cheeked lad like myself fears he will awaken some morning quite soon and discover he is an Old Fart.

Of course, at the same time we bemoan the scarcity of new blood, we often view with alarm the barbarian hordes at the gates. When suggesting some area fans who might attend Corflu for the first time, I'm reminded that they might not feel, well, comfortable trying to fit in with this group of folks who already know each other and share a body of tradition (and gossip) that must be obscure and baffling to the newcomer. True enough, and not necessarily an elitist assumption, but there's plenty of times I've belonged to that band of outsiders myself. (Why, a few years ago some might have questioned my credentials to attend a Corflu, and now some folks are asking me to hold one...)



Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Road,
Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH,
England

This time my attention was caught most by Todd Mason's letter concerning the US's forgotten socialist history. I have no background in political science either (assuming that politics can actually be said to be "scientific"; the terminology is very Marxian!), but his conclusions seem pretty accurate to me, and I think point towards the reasons why this history is so overlooked. The frontier, he says, "makes a hell of a mythos", because most citizens "cherish romanticised notions of individualism"; but he could have just as easily mentioned several other examples from the general body of the US's national myths. The notion of the USA as a land of equal opportunity, for instance, from which the "American Dream" of limitless success is derived. The idea of the War of Independence as a revolution of egalitarians against an absolute monarchy, for another. Yet, as such revisionist histories as Howard Zinn's *A People's History of the United States* and Peter Carroll's and David Noble's *The Free And The Unfree* show, if these beliefs were ever true then they were so only for limited groups of people and for limited periods of time -- but it is because they suit the ideology of the ruling class that these beliefs have been elevated to the status of unquestionable truths and deemed to be held by all.

I should hasten to add that this concept of a set of "national myths" is not unique to the United States; similar corpuses of belief are held by the peoples of other nations, and help to give both unity and identity to their culture and society. In Britain, for example, we have the notion of the English rural idyll, and the factually evasive heritage industry to which it has recently given rise. Here, too we elevate beliefs and ideas that were only true of limited groups of people for limited periods of time to the status of unquestionable truths, ignore or downplay the evidence of movements and events that contradict them, and sometimes falsify the past entirely -- as in much of

the nonsense churned out during the past year's fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Dunkirk evacuation and the Battle of Britain. (For example, the Dunkirk evacuation is often acclaimed as a miraculous triumph when it was clearly the disasterous end of an ill-led and under-armed expeditionary force, and its execution is usually ascribed to a fleet of heroic "little ships" without which tens of thousands of British soldiers would have been taken prisoner, when in fact the majority of them were evacuated by navy cruisers and frigates from the Dunkirk mole at a rate of 40,000 a night. And I could probably bore you rigid with the blunders and stupidities committed by both sides during the Battle of Britain...) How these national myths are created in the first place, and why they come to be accepted as the standard, consensual view of the past, is intimately bound up with the question of who writes the nation's history, for what audience, and from which perspective.

This is not a matter of censorship: simply that the more a particular view is repeated, the more widely accepted that interpretation of the past becomes and so the more marginalised the opinions of those who disagree with it. Thus, for example, the pushing out of sight of the US's socialist history, because the nation's consensual, "official" histories are written to reflect the views of a wealthy, white, male elite, who in Revolutionary times owned land and slaves and whose modern successors own stocks and oil wells. As Todd Mason remarks, the US may not have "formal hereditary class distinctions" but it does have "practical, informal ones" built on money and the necessity of remaining in office -- which means that any history text which fails to justify this distinction and/or promote the national myths favoured by the ruling class will have a fairly thin time. This is true of Britain as well -- indeed, arguments over the way history should be taught in schools have been in train here ever since the fifties, centred around two main currents of thought: "history from above" versus "history from below". The former, generally held by the right, involves a straightforward chronological recitation of important

dates and events, focused on the rulers rather than the ruled, and thereby excludes such things as trade unionism, non-conformism and pacifism, and the struggle for electoral reform and women's suffrage; and the latter, generally held by the left, promotes the ruled and their lives and struggles as the main focus, and sees individuals (including kings, generals, and prime ministers) as achieving importance only because they happened to be in the right place at the right time rather than because they initiated and guided the events in question. You get no prizes for guessing that the Conservative government favours the former, although it's been unable to completely eliminate the latter from the centrally imposed new national curriculum.

So, while you're doubtless correct to claim that "most Americans would probably say that socialism is something going on elsewhere in the world, but not here", it seems to me that the fundamental question is why they think this. Is it because they've studied socialism and rejected it in favour of capitalism; or is it, as must be the case, that they know nothing about it, and perhaps have barely heard of the Farmers Alliance, the Haymarket Massacre, Eugene Debs, and the Molly Maguires?

It's interesting to speculate on what might have happened had US socialists succeeded, and what the world would look like now (Jack London's *The Iron Heel* is about just such a thwarted revolution), but also pretty idle. In this post-Cold War world it's more interesting, and important, to speculate on whether the US's socialist history will ever be brought back into the mainstream, and if so, what people will make of it. No doubt some people will gesture gleefully at Eastern Europe, and claim that since socialism has failed there it doesn't need to be resurrected in the US; but I'd point out that what failed in Eastern Europe was not socialism but a particular style of command economic management that claimed to act in the name of the people while in fact impoverishing them. One could almost argue, indeed, that socialism has never been tried -- perhaps because no one has ever

agreed on what it is or ought to be, but perhaps also because, as Ford Madox Ford remarked, the triumph of Leninism in the Russian Revolution set the socialist cause back by at least seventy years. In the event, it's taken seventy-three years; but of course it could have been much longer!

Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore Avenue,
Teaneck, New Jersey 07666

Nicki's opening comments vis a vis conventions hit all the nails most appropriately on the head! Them pesky young'uns are a different species (and loaded with specie, too!).

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

Lon Atkins; Harry Andruschak; Martha Beck; Lester Boutillier; Ned Brooks; Russ Chauvenet; Damir Coklin; Richard Dengrove; Cathy Doyle; Tom Feller; Kathleen Gallagher; David Haugh; David Heath, Jr.; Lee Hoffman; Alan Hutchinson; Ruth Judkowitz; Arnie Katz; Irv Koch; E'ykander Korra'ti; Andrzej Kowalscy; Robert Lichtman; Fred Liddle; Guy Lillian III; Dave Luckett; Kev McVeigh; Todd Mason; Janice Murray; Bruno Ogorelec; Alexander Popov; Sarah Prince; Charlotte Proctor; Peggy Ranson; Tom Sadler; Julius Schwartz; Bob Shaw; Roger Sims; Alexander Slate; Leah Smith; Dale Speirs; Alan J. Sullivan; Martyn Taylor; Phil Tortorici; R Laurraine Tutihasi; Tony Ubelhor; Kees Van Toorn; Chuq Von Rospach; Michael Waite; Taral Wayne; Taras Wolansky; Roger Weddall.

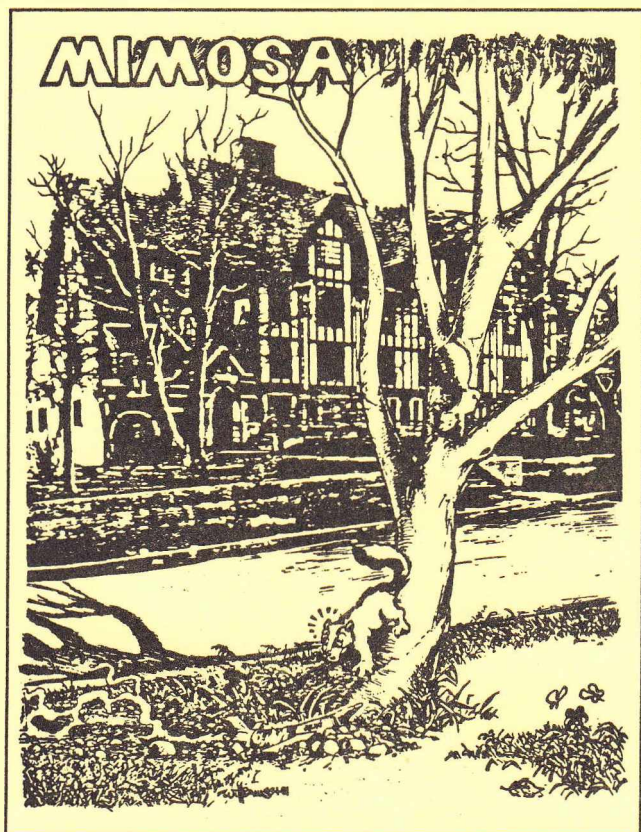
We received used Australian and/or Canadian stamps from: Harry Bond; Dave Luckett; Janice Murray; Dale Speirs; Roger Weddall. Thanks to one and all.



Contributors

Sheryl Birkhead, 23629 Woodfield Road, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20882
Kurt Erichsen, 2539 Scottwood Avenue, Toledo, Ohio 43610
Brad W. Foster, P.O. Box 165246, Irving, Texas 75016
Wade Gilbreath, 7813 Vienna Avenue, Birmingham, Alabama 35206
Jeanne Gomoll, 2825 Union Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53704
Alexis Gilliland, 4030 8th Street South, Arlington, Virginia 22204
Teddy Harvia, P.O. Box 905, Euless, Texas 76039
David Haugh, 556 North 3rd Street, Woodburn, Oregon 97071
Craig Hilton, P.O. Box 430, Collie, Western Australia 6225, Australia
Alan Hutchinson, 6640 13th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, Florida 33710
Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, England
Dave Kyle, Route 4 "Skylee", Potsdam, New York 13676
Dave Luckett, 69 Federal Street, Tuart Hill, Western Australia 6060, Australia
Joe Mayhew, 7-S Research Road, Greenbelt, Maryland 20770
William Rotsler, 17909 Lull Street, Reseda, California 91335
Julie Morgan Scott, 108 Woodlawn Drive, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37411
Bob Shaw, 66 Knutsford Road, Grappenhall, Warrington, Cheshire WA4 2PB, England
Diana Stein, 1325 Key West, Troy, Michigan 48083
Phil Tortorici, P.O. Box 057487, West Palm Beach, Florida 33405
Charlie Williams, 1200 Woodcrest Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37918
Kip Williams, 26-D Copeland Lane, Newport News, Virginia 23601

Back Issues Available!



Our inventory of *Mimosa* 7 and 8 still takes up quite a bit of room in our living room bookcase, so we'll be happy to sell copies to readers who came aboard recently for two dollars each. We have somewhat fewer copies of issues 5 and 6 available, for three dollars each, and even fewer of issue 3, for four dollars each. There's still hope if you're looking for copies of issues 1 and 4, because we usually bring one copy of each of our almost depleted stock to Worldcons for sale in the fanzine room. If you're looking for *Mimosa* 2, the rarest issue, you might have a problem, since we have exactly one copy left, which we're protecting with our lives.

Also, there's *Mimosa* 3.5, the VHS video version of *Mimosa* 4 (68 minutes running time), with appearances by Jack Chalker, Ron Goulart, Bob Tucker, and Julius Schwartz (among others). If you can find someone who has a copy, feel free to make yourself a copy (and also make a small donation to a Fan Fund). Or, send us fifteen dollars for a copy.



FRANZ KATFKA

Joe
mayhem
doc
10-2-90