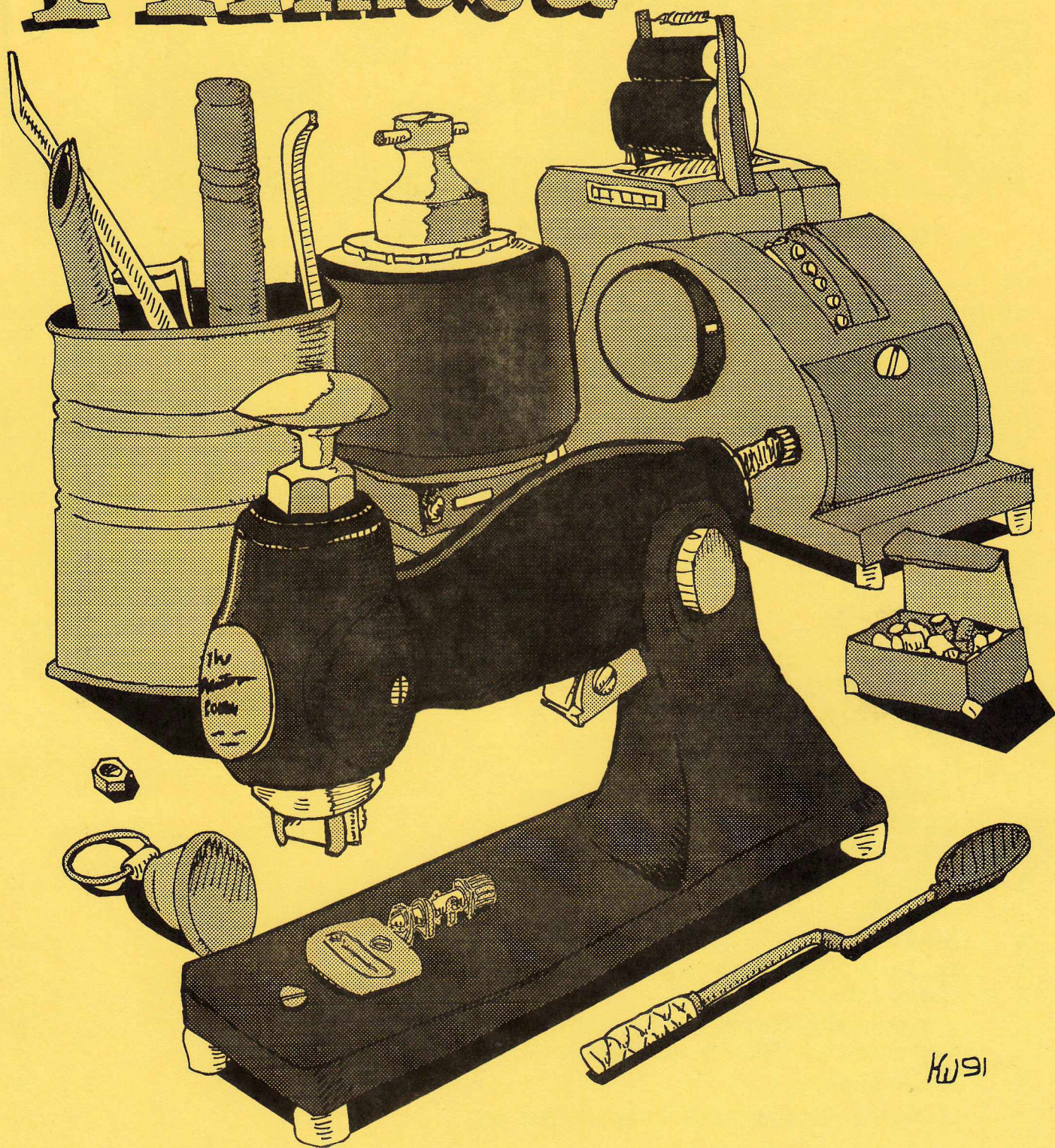


Mimosa

Issue 10



KW91



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

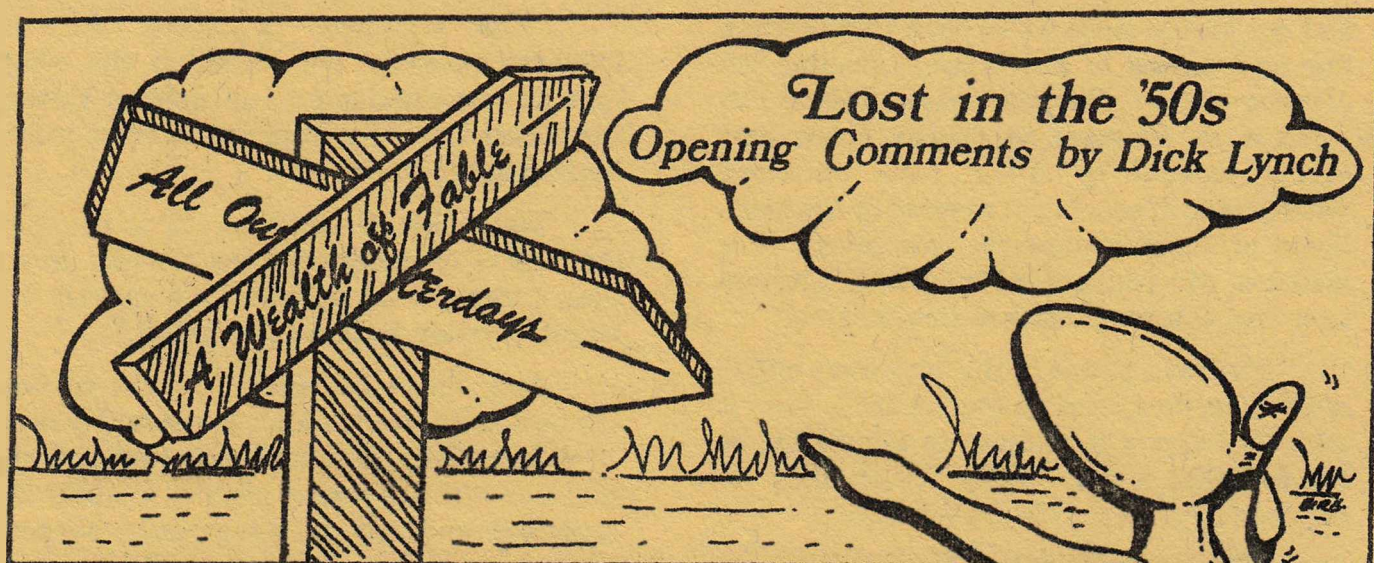
This issue of *Mimosa* was published in early July 1991, and is available for just two dollars in U.S. currency or other spendable equivalent. Before you unfurl your wallet, though, we hasten to add that we'd much rather receive your fanzine in trade instead (dollar bills aren't very fannish, anyway). Or better yet, send us a first-person article we can publish about fandom or things fans do (especially if it's about fandoms past). We also welcome Letters of Comment; for the frugal, a LoC from you on this issue will bring you a copy of *Mimosa* 11 about year's end. Collation help with this issue will probably once again be from Sheryl Birkhead and Vern Clark, who we hope to con into helping us before they can think of a good excuse not to. Australian distribution of this issue is courtesy of Roger Weddall. All opinions expressed by contributors are their own. On with the show...

☐ If this box is checked, we humbly request you send us a Letter of Comment so we can keep you on our mailing list.

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Let me tell you about a project I've been working on.

Some time ago, way back in *Mimosa 4*, we printed a letter from Robert Lichtman, who listed titles of some of the books on the history of science fiction and science fiction fandom you'd expect to find in a compleatist's library. Among the books Bob mentioned were Damon Knight's *The Futurians*, Sam Moskowitz' *The Immortal Storm*, Fred Pohl's *The Way the Future Was*, and two books by Harry Warner, Jr.: *All Our Yesterdays*, a history of science fiction fandom from the late 1930s through the decade of the 1940s, and *A Wealth of Fable*, a narrative history of science fiction fandom of the 1950s. Unfortunately, not many if any of these are currently in print; to find them, it'll take some effort perusing through used book stores and convention huckster rooms. But for those of you who, like us, are fascinated with what has gone on before, all of these books are still acquirable. Except one.

It turns out that Harry Warner, Jr.'s second fan history book, *A Wealth of Fable*, has never been published in book form. Up to now, the only version available has been the three volume mimeographed fanzine that was published in the mid-1970s by Joe Siclari.

Well, that's going to change soon. For those of you who haven't already heard, I'm happy to announce that the good people out in

Los Angeles who brought us the 1984 Worldcon have decided to underwrite costs for publication in hardcover of *A Wealth of Fable*. I've been asked by them to be editor for the project. If you're familiar with Harry's other book, *All Our Yesterdays*, this book will have a very similar appearance; it'll be the same width and height, and each page will have the same area of text. I also expect that the book will have plenty of photographs from the 1950s, which will be inserted into the text as was done in *All Our Yesterdays*. My intent is to make *A Wealth of Fable* appear as if it is the second volume in a two volume set. A year (or maybe less) from now, we'll all be able to see if I was successful.

If you're thinking that this project is going to take a lot of work, you're right. It already has, in fact, from both Harry and myself. The way we chose to translate *AWoF* to a computer disk file involved optically scanning the best available copy of the original mimeographed edition. To get rid of the errors that creep in from this type of operation, we've gone through a word-for-word check of the entire manuscript. And we're also going back and verifying the accuracy of various sections of *AWoF*, getting comments from people involved in some of the events described by it.

That part of the project is actually turning out to be interesting and enjoyable,

and not just because we've been able to add a few new names to our *Mimosa* mailing list because of it. Several times, letters I've received in response to queries about past events covered by *AWoF* have contained descriptions of events not covered by the book. Some of these are pretty intriguing. For instance, did you know that Albert Einstein once had a letter published in a fanzine?

It's true. It was in the 34th issue of *Cry of the Nameless*, back in August 1952. How it came to happen is at least as interesting as the fact that it did. Wally Weber, then co-editor of *Cry*, gives this explanation:

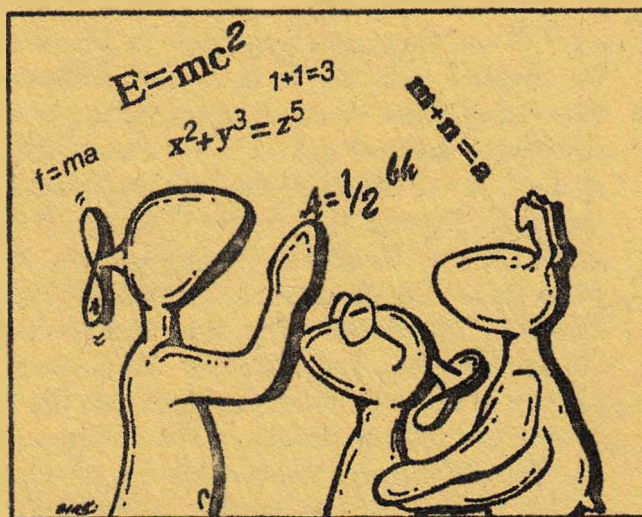
"The early Nameless Ones had ties to the University of Washington, and actually discussed matters of science and science fiction openly at our club meetings. Our program at one of the meetings featured Mark Walstead, a (now deceased) physics major, lecturing on Einstein's assertion that nothing could exceed the speed of light. If true, this would hamper our plan to someday have Nameless meetings in distant galaxies, so he was lecturing to a hostile audience. We got Mark to agree that Einstein would permit our hypothetical spaceship to go, say, $\frac{3}{4}$ the speed of light. We didn't tell him until he had committed himself that our spaceship was carrying a second spaceship that was also capable of $\frac{3}{4}$ c. Once Spaceship A established a $\frac{3}{4}$ c velocity to the University of Washington's frame of reference, it released Spaceship B, which promptly attained $\frac{3}{4}$ c with respect to Spaceship A's frame of reference, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ c to the University's frame of reference. Nyah, Nyah Einstein and Walstead! Mark floundered, but he was sure Dr. Einstein would have an explanation if only he were available."

Jack Speer, who lived in the Seattle area at that time, then wrote a letter to Dr. Einstein, posing the hypothetical question and requesting a theoretical answer but not really expecting a response. According to Wally, "The whole club was stunned and delighted when Albert actually answered the letter." Einstein's note read, in part:

"The argument is faulty for the following reason. The 'earth' is the whole time at rest relatively to an inertial system, the rocket is not; (it is in acceleration before beginning the trip down)."

Wally remembers that, "I'm not sure that any of us understood the answer. In my case, I thought he answered an entirely different question than we had asked."

Jack Speer evidently thought so, too. His postscript to Einstein's letter in *Cry* read: "I wonder why we can't get some of our geniuses who are taking physics to apply the equations and tell us what really happens when a spaceship approaches the speed of light."



Another reference to Einstein appears later in *AWoF*. This also related to hypothetical implications of the Theory of Relativity, apparently a popular topic back then, but it involved Sam Moskowitz this time. In Chapter 21, reference is made to the second Disclave convention (of 1952) where SaM, pressed into service at the last minute, "told about corresponding with Einstein over faster-than-light travel."

Information on this one turned out to be even easier to track down, as SaM had written about it in the Spring 1953 issue of *Fantasy Commentator*. He had read a magazine article which stated that galaxies at a sufficiently far

distance from us would have speeds of recession exceeding that of light, something supposedly prohibited by Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, but permitted in the General Theory of Relativity. So he dashed off a letter to Dr. Einstein to inquire about this, since there were possible stf implications. Unfortunately, Einstein was not a science popularist; his response talked about coordinate systems and inertial systems, and in general made little sense to the layman. However, as Sam relates, "I became a sort of celebrity over this. The local press decided I was challenging Einstein, and devoted a full column to the matter with a photograph of me and part of my science fiction collection."

Just as interesting, albeit less theoretical in nature, was information in correspondence received that sheds new light on more fannish matters like Worldcon site selections. Chapter 23 of *AWoF* provides the following information about the contest staged at the 1953 Philadelphia Worldcon between Cleveland and San Francisco, for the right to hold the 1954 Worldcon:

"There was jockeying for votes on opening night between the only two groups known to be seeking the next year's convention, San Francisco and Cleveland. The California city had a problem, the presence of only one representative in Philadelphia, Hans Rusch, who was not one of fandom's biggest names. The Cleveland propagandists didn't seem to consider it necessary to devote all their energy to the con bid, because they were also passing out propaganda leaflets involving a different project, that of putting Bob Tucker and Randy Garrett into the White House ... Eventually, San Francisco defeated Cleveland on the final ballot, 187 to 157. A late start on preparations by Cleveland fans and the fact that three straight Worldcons had been held east of the Mississippi were generally considered major reasons for the outcome."

It turns out, though, that there was more to it than that. San Francisco's bid was almost not even entered at the business session. Howard DeVore gives these details:

"At Philadelphia, the word was that San Francisco deserved to win, because they'd been shafted the previous year. Apparently only one Frisco fan was in Philadelphia, and when the voting started he could not be located, so Don Ford of Cincinnati made the bid for him. The fan's name was Hans Rusch, who may not have been on the committee. He'd played poker till daylight and was in a nearby hotel, but no one knew where. When he finally showed up, San Francisco was already the winner." Howard, it might be added, was part of that poker game, and was probably the person who convinced Don Ford to make the proxy bid for San Francisco.

Then there was the episode from the second Midwestcon (1951), recounted in Chapter 21 of *AWoF*:

"Fans bought or pretended to buy a tiny patch of ground on which a tree grew, dedicating it as a shrine to a fannish couple who had found true love under its branches the previous year." Howard DeVore was able to, er, flesh out this escapade as well:

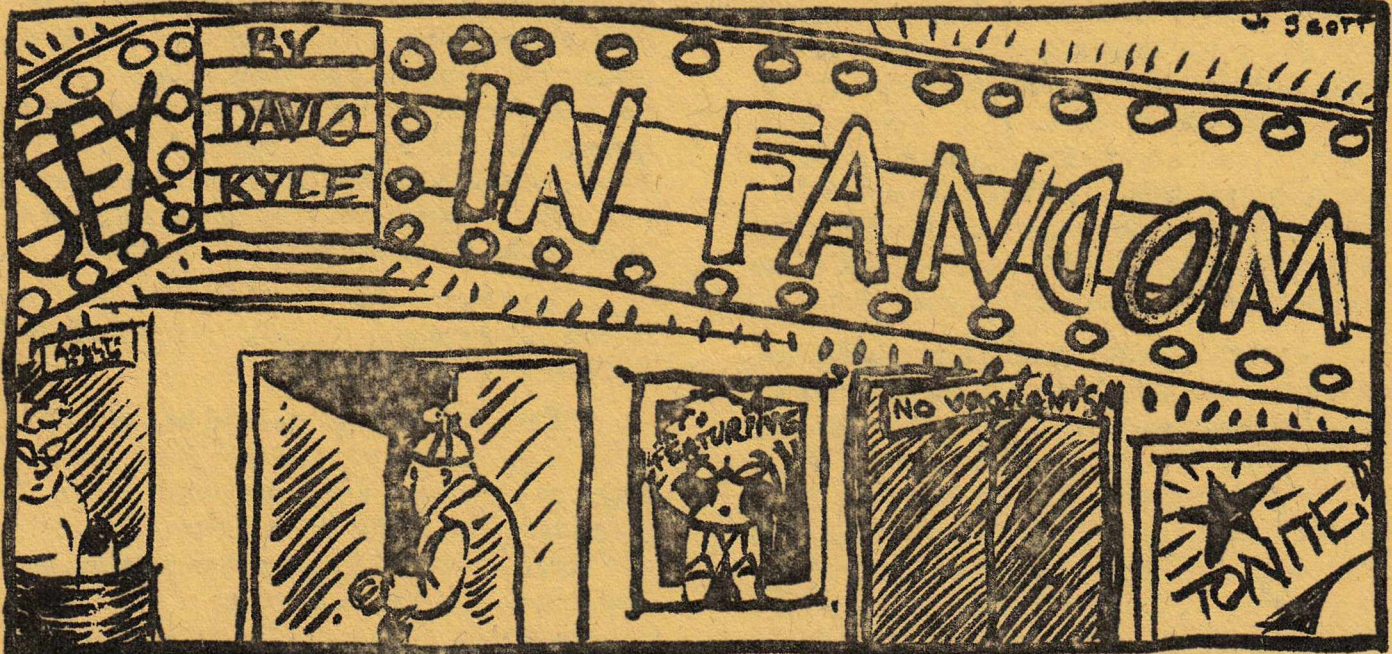
"The 'shrine' was dedicated with an imitation bronze plaque reading 'Under This Bush a Great Fan Love Was Born', with the previous year's dates, and initials of Ben Singer and Nancy Moore with intertwined hearts. Singer claimed it was the wrong bush."

It's only too easy to get carried away in all this; research into the past doings of fandom is, well, *fun*, and I find that all too often I'm getting lost in the '50s when I should be devoting more time to doing other, more pressing matters. Like finishing this fanzine, for instance.

So I'd better get at it. Midwestcon is only a few weeks away as I type this, and we want to have most of the work on this issue done by the time we leave for Cincinnati. This year's convention might even turn out to be more memorable than most. You see, Roy Lavender is driving in from the west coast. And when you get him and Tucker in a room together talking about fandoms past, just about *anything* is likely to happen... ♦♦

∞ It should be obvious to all by now that fan history is one of the driving forces that keeps us publishing *Mimosa*. In the past nine issues, we've run quite a few articles of fan historical interest. But we also don't shy away from anything that could be considered at least somewhat controversial in nature. The following article

might be considered both. Given that, we'll let Dave Kyle finish this introduction: "My belief is that historical facts are worthy of reporting. Veteran fans are aware of most of what I've written in this latest article. I believe I've done it tactfully. This is another piece of our fannish human comedy."



The word "sex" is a loaded word today. Using it in the title of this article is deliberately misleading. I'm looking back here 50 or 60 years to that unique adolescent world of science fiction fandom. Then "sex" identified males and non-males, not the contemporary hot word for literature, films, magazines -- and action -- sillily described as "adult" entertainment or behavior. Referring to sex in SF fandom then meant concern about the "SF minority" of the human race (meaning "females" who almost never were around).

In those days, the males were mostly teenage boys. The non-males were thought of as "girls." Married women and female authors didn't really count in our monolithic fannish sex world. When a girl unexpectedly appeared on the scene, quite a fuss was created. Mostly the reaction was favorable. But not a small number of pre-pubescent (and

neo-pubescent) fans were inclined to be scornful or dismissive of the intrusion.

At this point, I'll qualify what I've said. This reminiscence is very personal. This is what I observed and believed then. Others from that time who are still alive might tell it slightly differently, might even have experienced it differently. I'd be interested to know -- and I might shake my head over an invisible dimension which might have been around me all the time. I highly doubt it, however, for the irrefutable fact remains that in the neolithic age of First Fandom, the girls were almost nowhere to be seen.

I do remember still a few of that other gender. Immediately there comes to mind the sister of Louis Kuslan, a very active fanzine publisher and writer in Connecticut. Trudy (Gertrude) was credited with sharing his enthusiasms and fannish activities. Maybe I saw her in Newark, New Jersey in

the mid-thirties. It might have been at a club meeting of the local Science Fiction League chapter, or of ESFA (Eastern Science Fiction Association), or the transition period in between with Sam Moskowitz. Newark for decades brought friends together and created others.

Trudy was at the first worldcon (New York City Convention -- Nycon 1939) and I recall her as a very attractive, dark haired young lady, even younger than her teenage brother but turning some boys' heads. I was about 18 years of age when I met her. "Active sex life" (an explicit contemporary description) was not a conduct I knew anyone to have. There were a few romances around, a very few, but they were of the old-style, longer-term variety.

Vida Jameson, daughter of author Malcolm Jameson, was another girl around our ages generating attention, but more in the '40s and '50s centered around the Hydra Club at Fletcher Pratt's Manhattan apartment.

Then also at Nycon was the famous Morojo, Forry Ackerman's traveling companion who so tagged her instead of Mrs. Myrtle R. Douglas. (If I remember rightly, I never did meet her daughter, Pogo.) Also present at the con was wife Frances of Big Name Fan, collector and writer, Doctor Robert D. Swisher. To my mind, married women didn't qualify as "femme fans" and got scant notice from me or others of my ilk. However, noteworthy female personalities existed in those days on the professional fringes, such as Doña Campbell, genesis for the John W.'s non-de-plume Don A. Stewart (Campbell/Stewart, get it?), who later married George O. Smith.

Most outstanding at that first worldcon was the young, but much more sophisticated Leslie Perri, whose parents knew her as Doris Baumgardt. The sloe-eyed, attractive Leslie was an activist, very talented with words and pictures, and was the pride of the Futurians. She took on the forces of evil at

that convention when those "infamous" six fans (Frederik Pohl, Donald A. Wollheim, Robert W. Lowndes, Cyril Kornbluth, Jack Gillespie, and John B. Michel) were banned by The Great Exclusion Act of 1939. I got to know Leslie very well over the decades, for she married Fred Pohl and then later my best friend Dick Wilson. Her friends knew her as Doe (pronounced Dough-ee). [A mention of sex might be made here. I had a small cold water flat in Manhattan in the late forties and into the fifties. Dick worked for Reuter's as a news editor in the NY Times building on 43rd Street, and when he was on the night shift he frequently stayed over with me instead of making that long drive back to Rockland County. Dick told me that Doe, in one of her fits of pique, told him that she knew he and I were having a homosexual relationship. The charge was so ridiculous (in early days I was hardly aware of such behavior) that I could never visit Dick's home and look Doe in the eye without wanting to make some subtly suggestive remark to see her react. I resisted the impulse for the rest of her life, and the subject never came up again. As Doe is long gone, too, I never did find out if she really believed her accusation. I heard gossip about others, though. Persons like Hannes Bok and Basil Davenport who lived as bachelors, so open-hearted but with such distinctive mannerisms, were targets, but neither they nor anyone else as far as I knew were closet people.]

Incidentally, as a bachelor myself, I had a long list of short- and long-term residents of the place I called home, and never had any aberrant behavior -- sexual, that is -- on the part of any of them. I do have bizarre memories, however, like Frank Belknap Long torturing my bookshelves time and time again with his burning candles. Scorched patches and huge splotches of carbon were left on the undersides of the upper shelves. And at another period there was Charles Dye appearing dead from time to time. His appearance came from emptying his gallon wine jug alongside my red couch. (That red couch

could tell many a story!) And later, John Forte, the sf cover artist, illustrator, and "Sheena" cartoonist, cooking himself by sleeping under my sun lamp. Frank Belknap Long, somewhat absent-minded, was simply trying to cope with non-payment of the electric bill.

Having no power nor lights brings to mind another blackout time when Jay Stanton's lady friend stayed over after a Hydra meeting. She was a writer and artist of sorts, very mature and good-looking. We spent one sexless wintry night on a couple of mattresses propped up in the kitchen, reading poetry and children's books by flashlights. We were huddled together because there was no heat. (A cold water flat is the description of an apartment with hot water but no heat, strange to say.) At least I had the gas stove burners and oven lit. We had a great time, got headaches, and saw the dawn creep across the Hudson River. She went back to Virginia, I recall, and I never saw her again.

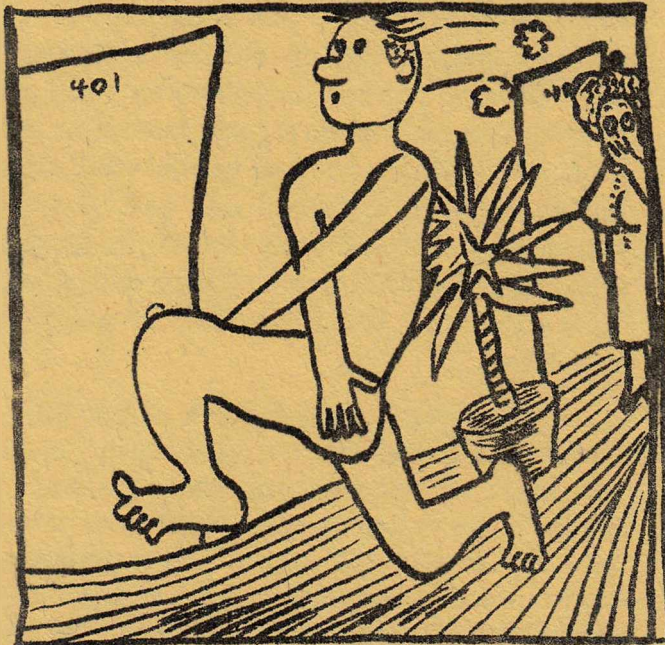
In the 1940s, the war years took me completely out of fandom from the beginning of 1942 through December 1945. From 1939 into 1940, I was again for a second time part of the New York City scene. (The 1936-37 period, the time of the Futurians, the first sf cons ever, and the rumblings up to the end of the decade made all sorts of fannish history, but those are other tales.) As the decade was going into the '40s, Dick Wilson and I had a cold water flat on East 61st Street in Manhattan. We thought we could survive on our fannish-honed talents: Dick was a writer and I was a writer and artist. Our apartment was a tiny two-room affair, with a shower/toilet/basin fitted into space no bigger than a clothes closet. The top-floor walk-up was dubbed "The Ravens Roost" by Leslie (Doë) Perri. The literary illusion escapes me. Leslie had a friend, Rosalind ("Roz") Cohen (later Mrs. Dirk Wylie), whose mother operated Jessica Caterers, so we got fed occasionally with terrific left-overs.

Another "gift" Leslie brought was the company of her friend, Jessica ("Toni") Gould, who later became the first Mrs. Richard Wilson. But it wasn't until my return to the New York scene to start Gnome Press with Martin (the original) Greenberg in the late 1940s that I had a steady girl friend who became part of the science fiction crowd, Lois Miles. She was a garment district model, a tall girl from Pennsylvania described by my friends as a "beautiful, blue-eyed blonde who deserves better." Lois became a regular at the Hydra Club, and when I became chairman, she became the secretary. Lois had two friends who subsequently became regulars at Hydra, Carol and Edna. Carol became Fred Pohl's wife after Judy Merrill, and Eddie became Mrs. A. J. Budrys. A. J. speaks of the time he was a teenager at ESFA where we met and I gave him not only encouragement for writing science fiction, but a wife. Fandom has led to a remarkable number of marriages.

There was a lot of joking about the con name for Cincinnati in 1949 because Cinvention was, of course, pronounced Sinvention. Whether or not that inspired Lester del Rey, he did deliver a talk on "Sex and Science Fiction." Our London celebrity guest was E. J. "Ted" Carnell (whose presence was in part due to Forry Ackerman's promotion of the Big Pond Fund, a precursor to TAFF). We suggested he, as a fan turned pro, follow Lester's talk with something about his British Carnell (carnal) knowledge. Statuesque Lois Miles became "Miss Science Fiction" for the weekend with a newspaper spread. Pretty Nancy Moore, local girl, also was a photogenic item, and convention sexiness began to get some serious coverage. Because of my connection with Lois, sharp tongues wagged about the merits of the idea "of that professional model from the East," but as I was connected with Transradio Press, and science fiction as a genre was not yet booming, the publicity ploy was accepted as worthwhile.

Lois married Jack Gillespie, the kid Futurian of the 1930s, a year or so later. Difficult to realize she's now long deceased. On the scene, and in the process of becoming the belle of Cincy and the MidWesCon was the late Bea Mahaffey. She became sf magazine editor for Ray Palmer's *Other Worlds* and was later chosen for the First Fandom Hall of Fame.

I made my annual pilgrimage to the MidWesCon for decades, unmarried at the beginning in Bellefontaine, later at Cincinnati married. I'm sure sexy things must have happened there, but I remember only one: in the early hours one year, Randy Garrett was locked out of a certain room without his clothes and upset Mrs. Beatley, the management. Another time, Arthur Clarke shocked the weekend crowd by being reported swimming in the nude at dawn. It was untrue (he wore trunks), but we were shocked anyhow just realizing how icy cold the lake water was for Eastertime.



As the 1950s came in, so did another cute girl who was to become perhaps the biggest BNFF (Big Name Femme Fan) of them all. At first known in California as Betty Jo Wells, she became, simply, Bjo. When I first met her, I was utterly entranced

by this vivacious person in the WAVE uniform. She married John Trimble, and together they rose to the heights in fandom (especially for years of ramrodding the worldcon Art Show).

"Girls" have risen to hold the reigns of power at worldcons as chairmen, chairwomen, chairpersons, and chairs. The pinnacle was reached in 1952, when Judy May (Julian C. May) became the chairman of TASFIC, the Tenth Anniversary Science Fiction Convention, in Chicago. She was betrothed to Thaddeus "Ted" Dikty, Earle Korshak's partner in Shasta Publishers, one of the original small sf book houses along with Fantasy Press and Gnome Press in the late 40s and early 50s. Just two years later it was a husband and wife team of Lester and Esther Cole who were the chiefs of the SF Con in San Francisco, with Poul Anderson's enticing wife Karen as an assistant. The following year, at the Clevention, another husband and wife team were the chairs, Noreen and Nicholas Falasca, with cute little Honey Wood assisting. She later married author Rog Phillips.

The Hydra Club in the late 40s and early 50s was the big deal in New York for the serious old-time fans who were becoming professionals. The meetings started off in Inga and Fletcher Pratt's apartment on West 56th Street, down from the Plaza Hotel corner. By now, sex was rampant in the sf fannish world. People were getting married and un-married right and left (an appropriate phraseology). Helen married Lester, Lester married Evelyn, Evelyn married Harry, Harry married Joanie, Damon married Helen, Fred married Doë, Doë married Dick, Jay married Carol, Carol married Fred, etc., etc. Even I got involved when I drove Fred's ex-wife Tina (Dorothy Les Tina) to the Torcon of 1948, but that doesn't really count. And this is just in the New York City area. More sexy details about me and my friends are spelled out in that fascinatingly candid exposé of the 1930s and 40s called *The Futurians*, written by Damon Knight.

Hundreds of words can be written about these relationships of the times, social and business and otherwise. (Torcon's strongest memory for me was meeting the elusive, fiery-headed L. Ron Hubbard for the first time, although I had published his *Typewriter in the Sky* and *Fear at Gnome*. He had been ostracized from the Hydra Club. Fletcher and Sprague -- also Gnome authors -- were said to be responsible. The only charge, undemonstrated to me, against Ron which I remember -- except for his over-bearing ego -- was that he was a womanizer.)

Maybe sf fans invented the 1930s in the 1950s. (Although I must say that, whatever the excesses, the only drug prevalent to a minor extent was alcohol.) By 1953, women were now a fixture in the sf firmament. Bea, Katherine MacLean, and the two Evelyns had a panel at Philcon II and there were talks on "The Future of Love" by Irvin Heyne and "SF and the Kinsey Report" by Philip José Farmer. Phil Farmer really broke the sex barrier in sf, and Kate MacLean was an unabashed advocate of "free love" and took explicit photos with Charlie Dye.

Philcon II produced another sex item: Bert Campbell (British editor of *Authentic SF*) and I met young, prim Phyllis Scott there. She was a native of Maine, living in New York City, and soon became very much part of the sf scene. One day to my horror I learned she was threatened into white slavery by a thug. By her cooperation with police and attorney Marty Fass (my security head for Newyorcon 1956), justice triumphed and she moved out of danger to California.

Ruth Kyle, my wife, entered fandom as Ruth Landis, a minister's daughter from New Jersey. Months before the 1955 Clevention, she read about the worldcon in *Astounding Science Fiction*. A genuine sf enthusiast, she decided she wanted to meet those who were bringing her such enjoyment. Knowing no one and not being familiar in any way with fandom, Ruth showed up alone at the Manger

Hotel in Cleveland. I became aware of her presence when Ken Bulmer and his wife Pamela alerted me.

Ken was the first TAFF (Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund) winner to come to the States, although Vinz Clarke had been voted as the inaugural representative from Britain the previous year and couldn't make it. I had met them the previous spring in England when I had hecked everything to get there. I was pushing for the first worldcon to be held outside of North America, materializing as the Loncon of 1957.

Knowing me as an eligible bachelor limited to the sf arena, they thought of my welfare. "Upstairs, in the convention suite," they told me breathlessly, "there's a very pretty girl sitting alone. Get cracking!" I went there, peeked around a corner into the room and saw a rather plump and plain girl sitting alone on the sofa. I left quietly.

Downstairs, Ken and Pam were a bit surprised when I said, "she wasn't my type." A short while later, an attractive brunette came through the con hall doorway and I got unobtrusive yet frantic signals from Ken and Pam. They finger pointed behind sheltering bodies, waggled eyebrows and cast glances. Intrigued, I walked toward the girl, hesitating alongside the Bulmers. They whispered, "She's the one! Go, Dave, Go!" or words to that effect.

Not being a fool, I went -- and introduced myself and learned that Ruth Landis was there on her own and knew no one. I always have taken it upon myself to introduce the neo to the scene. Most everyone used to do that hospitable chore in the olden days. Was she really an sf reader? Did she really read the magazines? Who did she particularly want to meet? She was very attractive and I considered myself lucky. (Bless Ken and Pam!) For one brief moment I left Ruth unattended while I crossed the lobby to speak to a new arrival. "Excuse me, Ruth. Be right back." My back was turned,

the unexpected took place, and Isaac Asimov torpedoed me. He touches upon this in his autobiography. What happened next was a simple case of TDOM (The Dirty Old Man), the Good Doctor, spiriting off this pretty young thing for himself. He saw her, grabbed her arm, wondered what she was doing all alone and, commanding, "C'mon!" started to rush her toward the elevator. "We're going to a party!" "I'm with someone," she protested feebly. "Who?" he asked. "Dave Kyle," she said. "Fine! Dave's going to the party, too." And without further discussion, whisked her away. I returned. She was gone. Obviously, I had struck out. Maybe I really was expected at 'the party,' but the rest of the day I dodged embarrassment by avoiding her and 'the party.'

The next morning I met her as the congoers multiplied around registration and mentioned, casually, that I was sorry we hadn't visited more before she disappeared. "I'm sorry, too. Mr. Asimov said you would be there." And then I heard the story of the great betrayal by that sly and wicked and fast-moving "Ike." She told me she regretted not being with me. Encouraged, I invited her to sit with me at the banquet, leading to our linkage as a convention couple. Later, she told me how uncomfortable she had felt in the presence of Evelyn Gold, Horace's wife.

Evelyn, holding the title of an editor at her husband Horace's *Galaxy Science Fiction*, was a dark-eyed, dark-haired sophisticate who considered herself the rightful center of masculine attention. She quite naturally resented one of her entourage, Isaac Asimov, showing up with a young and pretty girl, and let Ruth know it in those subtle ways some women have. "She thought she was the Queen Bee," Ruth told me years later. Sam Moskowitz captures the essence by his description of Evelyn's part in a fannish play staged at the con: "Unquestionably the show stopper was supplied by a cameo appearance by Evelyn Gold, who, in a short, tight-fitting, low-cut dress, slowly slunk across the stage.

She stopped when asked: 'Who are you?' She replied: 'I'm the man-ageing editor!'"

At a typically intimate con for those times (less than 400 attended), gossip traveled fast. Everyone knew what Isaac had done, doubtlessly with expressed satisfaction by "Ike" himself. That evening at the awards banquet, for all to enjoy, Isaac stamped the event with his good humor. "Ike" opened his Guest of Honor Speech with the statement, wistful but firm, "Tonight I will be Ruthless!" Dr. Asimov, unlike the old days, does not like to be referred to any more as "Ike." So this is a small moment of revenge on "Ike" after these many decades.



Between that con and the next, Newyorcon 1956 for which I was chairman, Ruth came to New York City from Princeton where she had been working. She became great friends of the local crowd and attended most fan meetings. Most of my time was upstate at Potsdam, where I had built and was running a radio station with my father, although I still had my new cold water flat in the sixties, this time West Side on the corner of 67th and West End Avenue. (Many years before, I had walked down West End Avenue in the seventies and looked for and found the bronze professional doctor's plaque with Donald A. Wollheim's father's name on the front of an apartment house. Such demonstrates the strong personal ties one developed in fandom.) A pleasant surprise at a New

York SF Circle meeting was finding Ruth in attendance. Our romance then really blossomed. I'm glad she chose me to pursue it -- it helped make her a dedicated worker for the forthcoming Newyorcon. In fact, she became Secretary. I must say, as I have said so many times before, she and Dick Ellington carried most of the load for me. Also important on the committee was another female fan of long standing, Jean Carrol, now Jean Engels.

As I was pushing for the next site to be London (only one year planning was necessary then), I organized a chartered airplane flight. It was a promise that a lot of hard work made possible when London won the bid. Ruth was Secretary for that London Trip Fund, keeping things in order because I was so often back in Potsdam (350 miles away). What was more natural than that our plans should crystallize around a honeymoon trip on the fan flight to the Loncon? Accordingly, we were married a few days before. The old four-prop DC-4 carried only 55 passengers. This is still a great story to tell: that we had 53 people along with us on our honeymoon. The topper is that my parents went, too! (I talked them into it when Edmond Hamilton and Leigh Brackett had to cancel because Leigh had to be in Hollywood writing *Rio Bravo* for John Wayne.)

Our Loncon/honeymoon travelers were gracious enough to vote us a five dollar apiece wedding gift out of excess funds returned to them. Almost all the trippers, that is -- two unfriendlies claimed it was a shake-down and their actions mushroomed into an international feud. Lawsuits and libel actions went on for years, and destroyed the World Science Fiction Society as a corporation. Harry Harrison (one of the trippers with wife Joanie and infant son Todd) wrote a scathing letter excoriating the troublemakers and ("expose their imbecility") prompted me to issue three fannish publications: "The Bell Tolls," "Bell the Cat," and "The Final Bell." And who was responsible for the most widespread nasty fan feud in all of fannish history? Obviously, for this bit of history, the fan

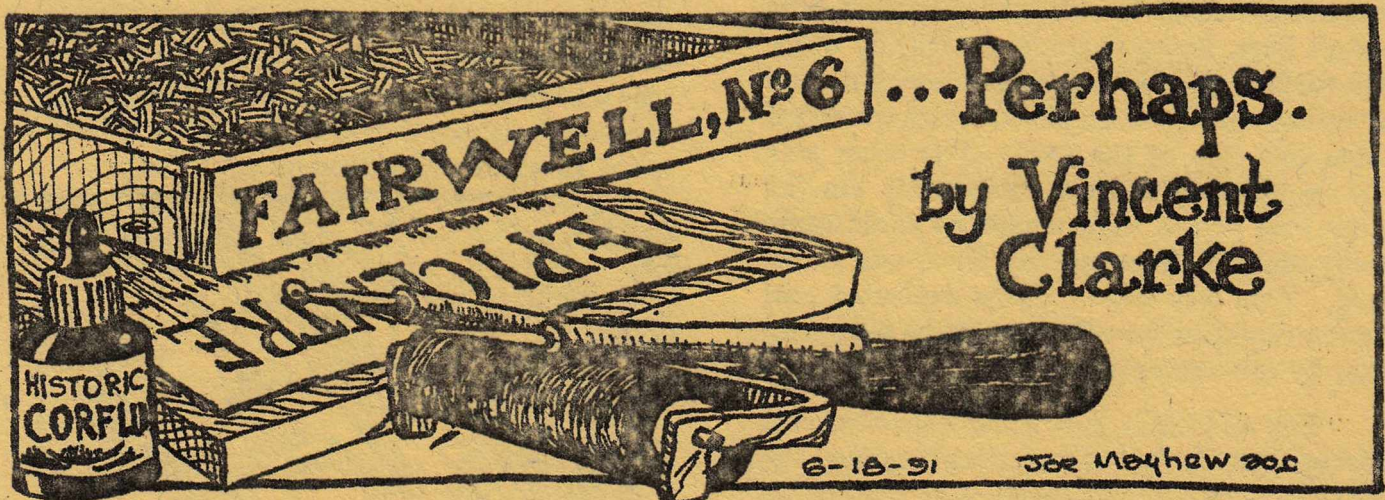
was a woman -- Belle Cohen, no relation to Roz nor to the Futurian, Chester. (But she and the trip with its aftermath is another incredible story for another time.)

Briefer, but even nastier, was a much-publicized "sex scandal" which almost destroyed a world convention in Oakland (was it in 1964 or 1968?). It was another Exclusion Act, ostensibly for sexual rather than political reasons. The background: Dick Ellington and wife Patty had moved from New York to Oakland years before, along with most of the others of the famed Riverside Dive in New York. They had a baby girl, Poopsie. Poopsie, at a fannish party, was "molested" by a very prominent fan. The Ellingtons didn't make a fuss, but others (especially those who didn't like the offender) did. They raised an enormous protest against him attending the con. No criminal charges were instituted, but the con was kept "pure" by his non-attendance. Not so unforgiven is an even more prominent fan. This fan was at the birth of fandom, active from 1930 in the Scienceers and the (International) Cosmos Science Club. His zenith of power was as the Triumvirate chief (not the chairman) of the first worldcon (1939) with its ban of his arch enemy Wollheim and friends. Sad to say, this fellow was convicted and jailed as a pervert, the lurid charges published in newspapers. For those who know the history of fandom, he is notorious as a troublemaker over many decades. He was given a sort of fannish immortality in song by the lyrics of the "Ballad for Futurians," written by Cyril Kornbluth and Chester Cohen; as reported in Damon Knight's history *The Futurians*, one of the sly lines goes, "In thirty-eight ... Dirty Will couldn't sleep in his bed."

So here's my piece on Sex in SF Fandom. The genuine article should be written by Wilson "Bob" Tucker, who knows more about these things than I do. Not to say sex ended here with my marriage and honeymoon. But gone is that past for me and my old-time friends when we were free and footloose. -->

∞ And now a tale of 1950s British fandom. For a few years in the early 1950s, The Epicentre existed as a fabled fan residence. In *A Wealth of Fable*, Harry Warner describes the Epicentre as "... the most famous spot in British fandom. It stood at 84 Drayton Park, high in the wilds of Northern London... Vincent Clarke and Ken Bulmer were living there in 1950. 'Every level surface was covered to the point of instability by fanzines, prozines, letters,

busts of Napoleon, and model ships, their outlines blurred by a deep film of coal dust which sifted continuously in through the window,' Walt Willis wrote. It was here that Bulmer invented the steam engine, after mistaking the motions of a pot lid temporarily for anti-gravitic forces." The Epicentre was also the origination point for many fanzines. Here is an anecdotal tale about how some of those fanzines were produced and the machine they were produced with...



"Duplicate, duplicate, toil and trouble,
The drum won't turn and the ink won't bubble,
The self-feed's shot and the gears are worn,
And that jagged line means the stencil's torn...."

And so on. That was the start of a poem of mine that Walt Willis printed in *Hyphen* 1 in May '52, heading it "Aghast Editorial." The bit about the bubble was pure (or perhaps impure) poetic license, but those lines and the catalogue of misfortunes that followed were a more-or-less accurate statement of the facts. In those days to be a duplicator owner meant you trod a narrow and inky path between optimism and insanity.

As it happened, when I became a publishing fan I entirely skipped the primitive jelly hektograph. No purple fingers for me. I was elected editor and publisher of a club fanzine in 1948, innocent that I was, and given -- by someone whose name has been expunged from my memory -- an Edison Diaphragm Mimeograph, commonly known as a Flatbed Duplicator.

Have you ever seen one in action? It's very similar to a simple silkscreen printer. There's a base with a frame hinged to it, and a silkscreen stretched across the frame. You attach a stencil to the screen, put a sheet of paper on the base, close the screen down onto it, get a roller which you've previously coated with ink, roll it across the screen and, hopefully, an even spread of ink will penetrate the stencil onto the paper.

Then you lift the frame, detach the paper, put another sheet in its place, close the screen down, re-ink the roller, run it across the screen, lift up the screen... A fast operator can probably do one every half-minute, not counting the intervals when you straighten up and scream about your aching back.

There was only one small advantage. The whole caboodle could be carried in a wooden box measuring 20" x 13" x 5" (not counting a couple of reams of paper), so it was quite possible to transport it to a small meeting of suckers fellow fans and have some communal help. And of course you were

inspired by the fact that most of the early British fanzines were printed in exactly the same way. Oh pioneers!

I still had the flatbed when I moved into an apartment with Ken Bulmer, which I named The Epicentre -- I had intended this to mean that it would be the Centre of Things Happening in Brit Fandom, though Willis later rather hurtfully described it as the dead centre. The Epicentre would have been a somewhat eccentric habitation even if fans hadn't been living there and covering every flat surface with sf magazines and fanzines. It was an old Victorian block, which stretched down one side of the road. The other side was occupied by a large brick wall. On the other side of the wall, which we could quite easily see over from our top floor, was a coal yard. This was where trains deposited coal from mysterious far-off places, to be picked up later by contractor's trucks.

Day and night, soft winds deposited coal dust against the house and, if we'd opened the windows even an inch, inside it as well, so we rarely did so. The atmosphere was pretty distinctive -- cooking smells and mimeo ink and Ken's pipe tobacco and yellowing pulp magazine pages.

Ken was only a year older than I, but he'd been an active fan in the early part of the War and I think the experience had aged him -- he always assumed (and still does) a sort of fatherly attitude towards me. There was the pipe too, of course. He obviously viewed the straining and sweating over the flatbed, and probably the depositing of freshly inked sheets over every available surface, with some distaste. When he was out one day, he spotted a rotary duplicator in a second-hand-goods store and bought it. Neither of us could have afforded a new one. It was a hefty piece of machinery and Ken always thought it peculiarly fannish that during the last few hundred yards of walking he was helped by a one-armed man.

This new technological marvel was my pride and joy. There were no instructions with it, of course, and I spent many an inky-

fingered hour learning how the thing worked. It was a Gestetner No.6, which I discovered in an office machine handbook many years later was brand new in 1917, but history didn't concern me with the mighty mechanism standing on the kitchen table before me. Two drums with silkscreen wound around them, a wooden platform holding about 100 sheets of paper which you cranked up by hand every few copies (no automatic gearing), an opening to which you took a tube of ink and spread some of its contents onto one of the drums (no automatic inking)... I didn't realize how much was missing, just revelled in being able to turn the handle (three times) and produce a duplicated sheet (it was manually operated).



There were a few snags, of course. The ink flow was a bit sluggish. It really needed a warm atmosphere to spread easily, and after an attempt or two to thin it out by mixing oil with the ink -- it went on OK but penetrated to the back of the paper in two seconds -- we realised that we'd just have to heat the surroundings. This was easy enough. There was no central heating, but we had a gas oven in the kitchen. That summer we turned on the oven, raised the temperature to about 90 degrees fahrenheit, took off our shirts and turned the handle. It seemed to work, except for the odd drops of sweat on the paper, and that soon evaporated. Visiting fans would take their cold drinks into another room and discuss fanning, shouting out at intervals to ask if we were OK. We kept the door closed to keep the heat in, of course.

In the winter, things became awkward. The duplicator was on the table by the coal dust-darkened window, and on the side nearest the window the duplicating became faint. Bringing my knowledge of Science to bear -- for I was an SF fan, wasn't I? -- I deduced that on the window side the ink was cooled, and so didn't penetrate the stencil sufficiently. We turned up the oven. The kitchen shimmered in heat waves. Once when I opened the door onto the cold landing outside, clouds condensed around me. And No.6 still didn't work properly, in spite of imaginative cursing.

By the next summer, I further deduced that the impression-roller spring which pressed the paper against the stencil on that side was weak. I inserted two or three washers and the problem vanished. We turned the oven down to 90 degrees again and went back to standard cursing.

We learnt how to treat duplicating paper cruelly, flexing it and beating sheets against a flat surface so the guillotined edges wouldn't stick together. We learnt the best solvents for ink under the fingernails and on clothes. When Chuch Harris accidentally dropped a tea cup on the duplicator, we picked out the chips and repaired the gouged drums with Plaster of Paris.

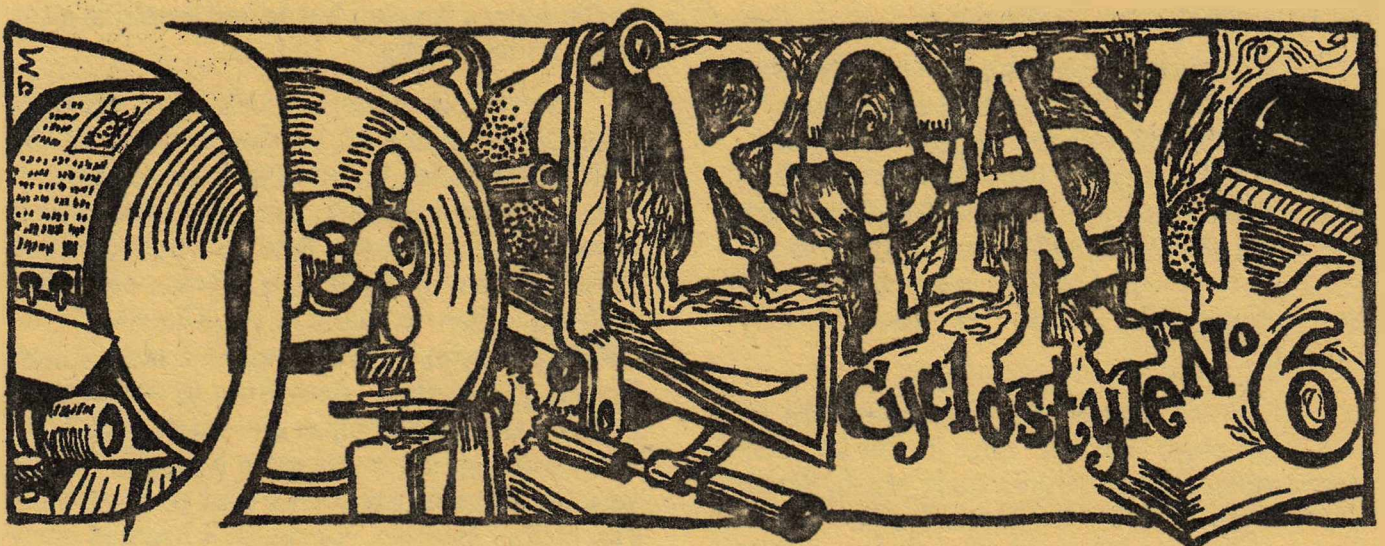
No.6 repaid us. It turned out Convention programmes and Epicentre fanzines and other people's fanzines and even a couple of

pages of the *Willis Slant* when his hand printing machine broke. I became quite fond of it.

It moved with me when the Epicentre broke up (literally -- the ceiling started falling down) and turned out the first Quote Cards (a minor fannish obsession for some years) and the details of OMPA, the first British APA, and lots more. I even started a two-part fanzine called *Duplicating Without Tears*, the first part about stencil-cutting, the second about machines available. I never did get around to the latter -- it was beginning to dawn on me that No.6 was a little old-fashioned.

It was more or less pensioned off in the late '50s, when I acquired a later model, but it wasn't junked. In 1984 or so, Terry Hill wanted coloured illustrations for his fanzine *Microwave* and good old No.6 churned out green pictures on pages already duplicated in black. But the years had taken their toll. Last time I looked at it, the rubber impression roller was soft and spongy -- 'perished'. I could, at some expense, have the roller re-cast, but now I'm beginning to feel my age slightly -- I'm six months older than Harry Warner -- and I can't honestly feel that it's worth it. Possible, at approx. 74 years old, it's time No.6 was given to the garbage man.

But I think I'll keep it a few more years -- just in case. ➡



➡ We keep a sharp lookout for anecdotal fan history articles to publish here in *Mimosa*, but sometimes you get lucky and they find you. Take the following piece, for example. It appeared in the *apa SFPA* about a year ago, as

part of a history of New Orleans fandom from the 1960s to the present. It's a story about the New Orleans Science Fiction Organization and some of its fans, in particular Don Walsh, otherwise known as...



In 1967 the science fiction fans of New Orleans knew every SF writer in the city, and there weren't many. Imagine their surprise then when they opened their copies of the June, 1967 issue of *If* and saw the story "Mu Panther" by one Donald Walsh, who the introductory blurb said lived in New Orleans. They looked Walsh up in the phone book and paid an unannounced visit to the house where he lived with his parents. He came to the door and saw three strangers on the porch excitedly asking to see the author of "Mu Panther." These fans were further surprised to discover that the author was the 16-year-old boy who'd come to the door.

"Mu Panther" was the first of only three SF stories that Walsh ever sold professionally (although he did sell the rights to a fourth, unpublished story to Don Markstein when Walsh was desperate for bus fare one day), and when the June, 1967 issue of *If* appeared on the newstands Walsh went around the city autographing copies "to whom it may concern."

If Walsh seems odd, that's because he was. Although most SF fans in the old days were outsiders or misfits in their youth, Walsh was strange even by these standards. Unlike the anodyne dweeb that is the traditional SF

fan, Walsh seemed like one of those textbook cases who believe they're Napoleon. In high school he let it be known that he wanted to be a spy someday, and he would slither and slink around the deLaSalle High School campus carrying his attache case wherever he went. The other boys followed behind him and laughingly called him "Secret Sam." Oblivious to his bemused audience, Walsh continuously spoke into his fountain pen à la Napoleon Solo of *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* He quite early developed an interest in firearms, especially machine guns, and he would come not only to carry his own machine gun (for which he did have a license) but to sell machine guns as an almost-living.

Stories involving Walsh and firearms could fill a fanzine all by themselves. At the University of New Orleans he kept his personal gun in his mail box, and you could see it through the window. After dropping out of college he set up shop as a private detective, with an office in the old St. Charles Hotel (site of Nolacon I). This wasn't a large office. In fact, it was tiny. According to one source, "there were a lot of pipes and ducts in it." He had cards printed to promote himself as a private investigator and cards that promoted his gun-selling sideline. Local fans learned early

on to be nervous around Walsh whenever he touched a weapon, which was frequently. He's often play fast draw, for instance, on one occasion blowing out a window in author Dan Galouye's house and on another occasion shooting holes in his entire collection of *F&SF*. Once a fan named Jan Lewis saw Walsh on the bus assembling a gun. She said she thought that was as good a time as any to get off the bus.

In addition to guns, Walsh was also fascinated by chemical weapons. He used to carry around two tear gas pellets everywhere. One day he was sitting in the UNO cafeteria with Markstein, and began fiddling with the pellets. Markstein became agitated.

"Don't do that," he said. "They might go off."

"They won't go off," said Walsh.

But he kept fiddling with them, and they did go off, sending tear gas all through the cafeteria and sending Markstein and all the other students scrambling for the doors, while Walsh continued sitting there earnestly pretending that nothing untoward had happened.

How did Walsh, of all people, get to be the first president of the New Orleans Science Fiction Association? Accounts differ. One story tells how Walsh was elected as the result of a combinations of factors involving political maneuvering within NOSFA. A more widely told story is that Walsh was simply offered the position because somebody had to hold the post, and Walsh agreed to do it. However it came about, he was elected the first NOSFA president when NOSFA was founded in July, 1967. A constitution was also written, and provision was made for by-laws. Walsh was re-elected in July, 1968.

A whole set of constitutional amendments was passed over the course of the two-year Walsh presidency, which were known as the Walsh Amendments. These were passed in fun, outlawing various habits of Walsh's, such as carrying firearms at a meeting and smoking extremely nauseous tobacco at meetings. These Walsh amendments remained in

effect until 1976, when then-president Jim Mulé persuaded the group to repeal them in a spirit of breaking with the past.

Two outstanding Walsh stories concern Walsh and the opposite sex. At one point Walsh was infatuated with a woman named Robin, a friend of Jan Sadler Penny. Robin didn't encourage him at all, but Walsh persisted, literally following her everywhere she went and behaving like a perfect lap dog. At first she thought it was funny, but it became more and more irritating. Finally Robin decided to take the tough approach. She told Walsh to stand exactly still, while she began to wrapping him with toilet paper. She wrapped and wrapped. Finally he was almost completely covered, and Robin took a match and lit the paper, Walsh still standing there not saying a word of protest. For skeptics who harbor the idea that this story is a lie, there exists an actual photo of Walsh standing there wrapped up in toilet paper. A great moment in history preserved on film!

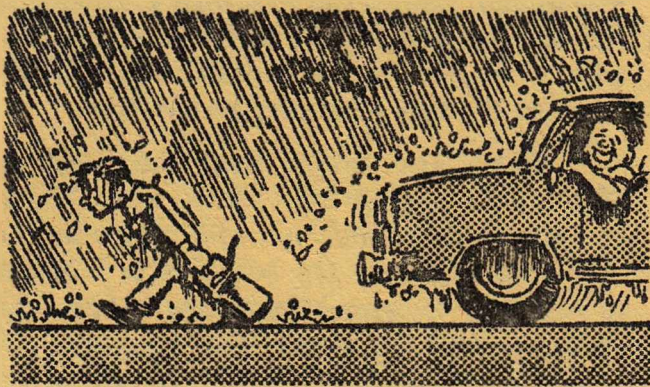
The other story concerns a NOSFA party to which Walsh brought a woman he thought was a knockout and with whom he hoped to score big. At one point Walsh was in the kitchen loading drinks onto a tray. When he came into the living room with the tray, this woman was on the sofa with a fan named Pat Adkins, and Adkins was asking her, "So what's it like being a lesbian?" Walsh dropped the tray of drinks on the floor.

Walsh also served over the years as Markstein's perfect foil. Once, when Walsh was stranded in California without money, he called New Orleans fan host Justin Winston to ask him to wire him money. And who should answer the phone but Markstein. Of course Markstein delighted in the irony of the situation. However, Walsh ultimately found himself avenged. In 1975 Markstein, who was the manager of a porno theater here, was arrested in a police raid on the theater. He called Justin to bail him out, and who should answer the phone? You guessed it: Walsh! "Oh, hello, Don," chortled Walsh, enjoying

every minute of it, "I don't think I should be talking to a criminal and pornographer."

"Put Justin on the line!" begged Markstein. "Put Justin on the line!" The irony was sublime.

Other longtime Walsh teasers included John Guidry and Rick Norwood. Once a group of New Orleans fans took a day's trek to Baton Rouge and back. Everyone shared the driving except Walsh, who with his poor eyesight was never able to get a license to drive. Walsh was expected to chip in for the gas however. Only after the fans were on the road in Rick's car did they learn that Walsh has less than fifty cents in change on him for the whole trip. This didn't end the trip, but coming back into New Orleans on the return trip Rick exacted his revenge. He turned off the ignition. The car stopped. "Well, Don, we're out of gas," he lied to Walsh. "You'll just have to take this gas can to the nearest station and get some." Being that it was pouring down raining, Walsh was considerably disinclined to go. A standoff commenced. Finally Walsh got out of the car and went for gas. When he was about a block ahead of the car, Rick started the car and followed Walsh at a walking pace, as Walsh walked miserably home in the rain.



Even though Walsh only sold three SF stories in his career, he's been immortalized in the work of his friend and fellow SF writer, Roger Zelazny. In three short stories, including the Hugo-winning "Home is the Hangman," Zelazny uses as a supporting character one Don Walsh, who in the stories is the head of the second largest private investigation

agency in the world. Walsh himself may have had more writing talent than he used. Most of his peers in New Orleans fandom said his writing was poor and that "Mu Panther" was swiped from L. Sprague de Camp's classic "A Gun for Dinosaur." Yet Walsh was a well-read, articulate individual, with an in-depth knowledge of chemistry, the Japanese language, and other diverse topics. Walsh often lied outrageously about his life, claiming, among other things, that he was a government undercover agent and that the Mafia murdered his girlfriend from China, but his major interest was foreign intelligence. And while he never realized his dream of working for the CIA, he did move to Washington a while back to work as a government consultant and has since moved on to Thailand from which listening post he contributes articles on intelligence and security matters for a small newsletter.

In July, 1969, Walsh ran for a third term as NOSFA president, but this time he had strong opposition in the form of Dany Frolich. Frolich won, and Walsh was inconsolable. The story of what happened when he tried to drown his sorrows is a story told by Walsh himself. Peeved at his defeat he went out and got drunk. Others who saw him that night pointed out to him that he was barely in a condition to go home, but he insisted he was still holding his liquor well. He managed to get to his apartment somehow, hang his coat up in the closet, go to the bathroom, and then collapse fully clothed into bed. The next morning he awoke feeling like a superman. So what if he lost a NOSFA election, he reasoned. He could hold his liquor better than any man on earth. Then he went to the bathroom and saw his coat hanging there. Uh-oh, he realized. If he'd hung his coat up in the bathroom, what must he have done in the closet? He opened the closet door, and there was the evidence. He'd defecated into a box of *Nolazines* that was on the floor of the closet. In a postlude typical of Walsh's own sense of humor he says that he was glad he'd damaged a pile of "worthless New Orleans fanzines" than soiled a pair of shoes. ➡

☞ We've written several times, in previous issues of *Mimosa*, that the Midwestcon is a fannish nexus — an event where fans of all regions and all eras convene. The DeepSouth-

Con is a little like that, too, and past DeepSouthCons have been the subject and site of many a fannish misadventure. Here is an account of one of the more notorious ones...

THE SANGUINE SWIMMING POOL

by Joe Celko

Jun 91

I submitted an article to the beloved editors of this fanzine on growing older in fandom. Well, it was rejected, which is an unprecedented experience for me since I sell over ninety-five percent of what I write in the computer trade press the first time. And they pay money! They then suggested "An anecdotal article about the first Knoxville DeepSouthCon, the one with the red swimming pool?"

I do not want to write about the infamous "DSC Sanguine Swimming Pool Incident," now known only to Southern SMOFs and whispered about around campfires to neofen. This is not a matter of honor. The only topic more depressing than getting older is writing about how stupid you were when you were younger. One of the advantages of old age is supposed to be living down things like this. But I promised that I would do an article for *Mimosa*, and I surmise that I am duty bound to spill my guts.

So, gather around the campfire, children, while Uncle Celko tells you tales of when the world was young and how it all began.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Southern fandom was starting to enjoy a burst of

activity. If you look at the DeepSouthCon history which gets reprinted in DSC program books, you will see that the convention was starting to get bigger and that it was also being bid for by many regional groups, which were just coming into being. In those days, we thought that getting three or four hundred people to a convention was a major achievement, so to see fan groups actually bidding was an enormous thrill.

The first Knoxville DSC, in 1969, was hosted by Janie Lamb. Janie needs a little explaining since I am not sure that the younger readers will even remember her. She was active in the N3F (National Fantasy Fan Federation) for a long time; to be honest, she was the N3F. Janie was older than most of the fans and was a delight to be around because you did not expect an adult to act like that. A genuinely good, fun human being.

An Atlanta contingent showed up at the motel and we unpacked ourselves into a single motel room. In those days, we used to sleep like cord wood to save the money. There was myself, Steve Hughes, Mark Levitan, George Orentlicher, Glen Brock, and I am not sure who else. At any rate, there were enough

people in the room that I got to sleep in the bath tub. And it was not the worst place.

Mark had brought with him a little, tiny glass vial with a very bright red powder inside it -- water soluble industrial dye which he had obtained from his father. We had a second floor room which overlooked the motel swimming pool. And we had time on our hands. All in all, a bad combination. Ever hear the expression about idle hands being the devil's playground? Our moral character was much weaker in our youth, our time horizon was much shorter, and we healed much faster in those days.

The first effort attempted to deliver a fraction of a teaspoon in a paper napkin. The napkin was too light to be accurate and the stuff needed to be dissolved in very hot water first, anyway. Even defense contractors don't get it right the first time.

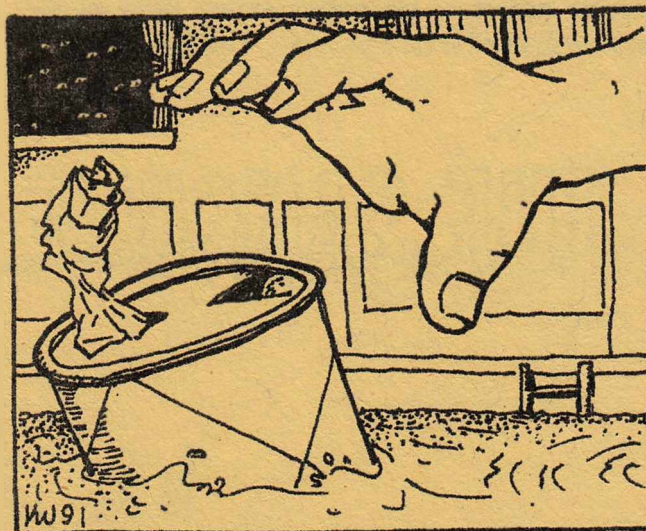
The next effort dissolved the dye in very hot tap water inside a used Coca Cola can, both of which the motel so generously provided. Unfortunately, the delivery system floated upright like buoy when it hit the water. The tissue wick we used to contain the liquid on its way down waved proudly in the air and not in the water.

At this point we probably would have given up and gone to bed, but fate took a hand. Two couples arrived at the pool in swim suits. We already had the room light out, so they could not see us lurking in the dark above them.

One young man (actually older than any of us at the time) got in the shallow end, found the Coke can with its bright red paper wick. In a fit of curiosity, he picked it up and pulled the wick out. The results were immediate.

The water around him turned bright red. He turned bright red from the waist down, panicked and dropped the can in the water. The can sank and he did not try to fish it out, since he was more interested in getting back to shore. This was a tactical error on his part, because the can hit bottom and the scar-

let dye cloud it left behind was sucked into the recirculating pump.



He knew perfectly well that he was going to spend the next few weeks wearing pants in most public places, so I don't see why he was as upset as he was. Crimson privates would not have been a real problem. It would have meant entertaining the young lady he brought with him with something she had never seen before.

The waves of vermillion went slowly but surely over the pool, turning the water a lovely burgundy color by the dawn. This was the morning that motel and convention relations began to break down a little bit.

The young man with the technicolor plumbing facilities turned out to be the manager's son. While annoyed, he would return to normal in a fairly short time. Skin only discolors on the outside and the first layer washes off with gasoline.

However, the pool was not so lucky -- it was made of marine concrete instead of human flesh. Marine concrete absorbs water for about an inch below the surface. The blue stain in the concrete and the red dye were what made this lovely plum color that greeted our morning walk to the pool.

The manager came to Janie and told her that he wanted the heads of the persons responsible. Janie told him with a perfectly

straight face that "Fans did not do this sort of thing" and then literally lined up as much of the convention as she could find in the lobby, and gave a speech for the manager to hear, asking for the guilty parties to step forward. I believe that I was bravely hiding under a staircase at the time. In a fetal position. Nobody confessed.

She then turned to the manager and stated that the convention was not responsible, again with a perfectly straight face. The manager was not kindly disposed to believe this statement, however.

Perhaps Ron Bounds dressed in a Viking outfit carrying off one of the waitresses from the bar the evening before the swimming pool incident had done much to destroy our credibility. Ask Ron about the barmaid; that's probably a good story, too. But don't do it when his wife is around, okay?

Janie found out who had been involved and cornered the lot of us, and told us that she was very glad that we had not been in the line up. We might have cracked under pressure and then she would have had to kill us. While this was going on, the motel confiscated her luggage out of her room to hold until she paid for the pool. Things were getting ugly at this point.

Janie had a fair amount of power in Tennessee at the time, via the governor's office. After all these years I cannot remember her exact title, but it was at the governor's private staff level. She got on the telephone, called the nearest state patrol headquarter and reported that the motel was serving liquor to minors. She then sent some minors with drinks into the motel bar.

The state troopers arrived very, very quickly; the nearest state patrol headquarters was literally next door to the motel. They came in on foot, issued the citation and left. Janie made a second telephone call, got more kids and booze; the troopers returned and issued a second citation. Three liquor violations in a year was a magic number.

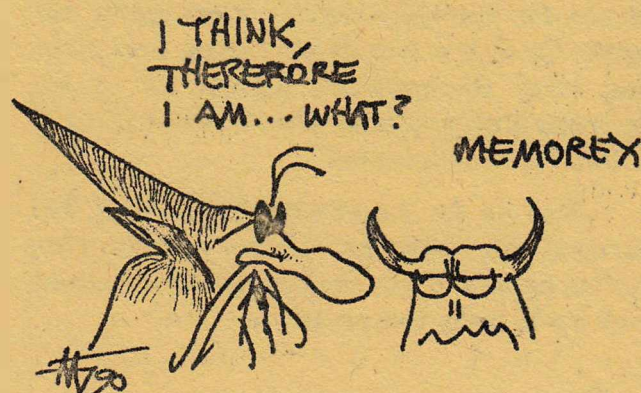
At this point the motel was offered a truce; cool it with us or have no liquor license. Suddenly, management found her luggage and decided that a purple pool looked very classy. Besides, you make more money off booze than off swimming pools.

I visited that same motel many years later for another convention. The pool is once more regulation hotel pool blue, but they had painted it with epoxy sealer to get this color. I did *not* ask questions. ♦♦

Artist Credits

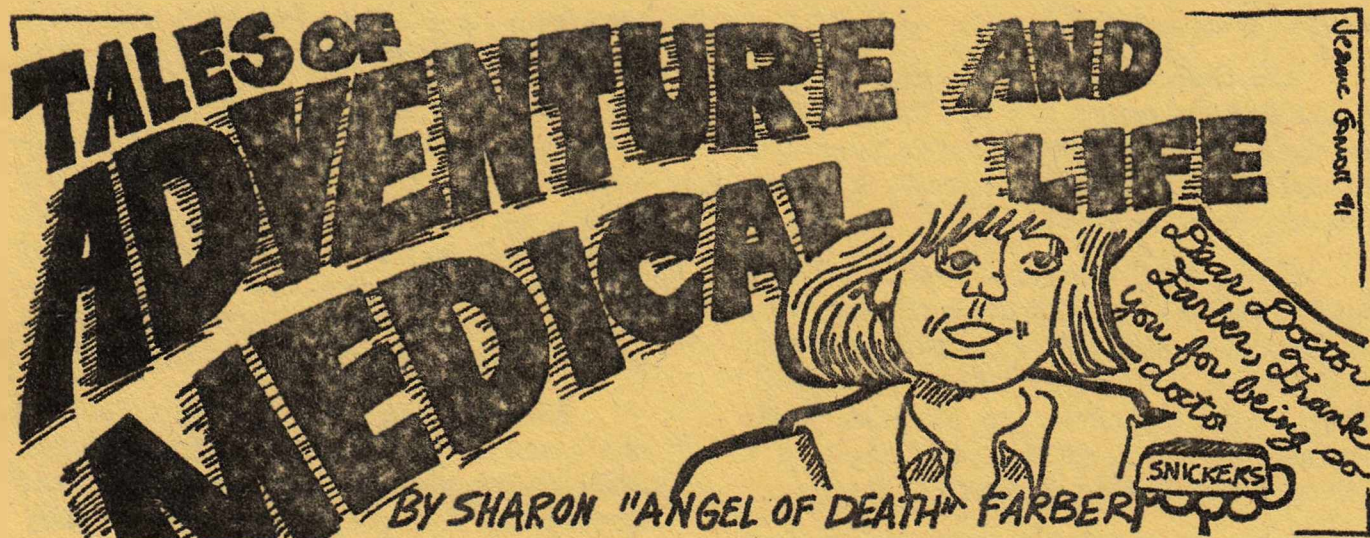
Sheryl Birkhead - pages 3; 4; 47; 48
 Roger Caldwell - page 41
 Brad Foster - page 32
 Alexis Gilliland - page 21
 Jeanne Gomoll - pages 22; 23; 24
 Teddy Harvia - page 34
 David Haugh - page 43
 Terry Jeeves - page 37; 49
 Fred Karno - pages 25; 27; 29
 Joe Mayhew - pages 13; 14; 15; 42
 Bill Rotsler - page 30; 38; 46
 Julie Morgan Scott - pages 6; 9; 11
 Steve Stiles - page 2
 Stiles & Rotsler - page 35; 39; 45

Charlie Williams - pages 16; 18
 Kip Williams - Front & Back Covers; pages 19; 20



Well, the theme for this issue seems to be Fan History Through the Years. Given that, you might think we've got our work cut out for us in attempting to even tenuously connect the latest installment of Sharon Farber's 'Medical Life' series with that theme, but never fear -- we're up to it! Actually, the connection is a

pretty easy one -- the history of fandom is literally filled with many, many stories of and by fan humorists. There are a lot of currently-active fan humorists whose exploits will someday fill pages of fanhistories yet to be written. The writer of the following is one of those fan humorists who we think will be remembered.



Every week, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* publishes a brief vignette by some unknown, unsung doctor. These pages usually feature heartwarming accounts of patients who find love, or satori, or just some bittersweet meaning in tragedy. Every week I read these and every week, as I wipe a tear from my eye (but hey, I cry easy. Sneak up on me at a con some day, say "Lassie, you came home!" and watch me snuffle.) -- every week I wonder, "Hey, why don't I write one of these? Why don't I get my fifteen minutes of fame?"

Well, because I just don't have any stories like that -- when one of my patients dies, it's either fast and unexpected, with no chance for reconciliation or meaningful dialogue. Or else it is very very slow, first stripping away the patient's dignity bit by bit, while the family watches the deterioration and suffers its consequences.

And as for heart-warming -- well, the warmest my patients' hearts get is after cardiac bypass, when the surgeon brings them back up to body temperature.

But if I were to try for one of those vignettes, here are my tales that come closest to their requirements -- only, I think they all fall a little short. Like maybe a mile.

I. THE GRATEFUL PATIENT

Some doctors have patients who bring them produce or home-baked goods; not me. (Of course, I'm not in primary care; my mom had a large population of folks from Chinatown whom she had cured of tuberculosis. They never failed to bring tasty treats on their yearly check-ups. I miss the pork buns, but I can do without the seaweed cookies, thank you.)

During my residency I saved a guy's life -- well, okay, I only diagnosed his heart attack, then hustled him off to the cardiac care unit for the cardiologists to save his life. The man was a raspberry farmer, and despite it being harvest season, and despite the none-too-subtle way I kept saying how much I love raspberries, I didn't even get a thank you when he left the hospital. Patients tended to thank the attendings who came by once a day

and signed the chart, not the residents who sat up all night sweating blood over them.

When I was a fourth-year medical student on my medicine subinternship, I did have a grateful patient. She had been admitted with myxedema -- severe hypothyroidism, with her body just about shut down. Her past history suggested she had a problem with depression, but we didn't know she was actually a manic depressive until we brought her metabolism back into the normal range, precipitating a manic episode.

I made the unfortunate discovery one morning when I came into her room. "I'm so glad to see you," she said, "you've been so good to me. Here is a chocolate bar for you."

She handed me a Snickers, and then held out a piece of lined paper covered with childish handwriting.

"..and here's a letter for you from God."

God said lots of nice things about me. But I was surprised by how rotten he spelled.

II. THE HAPPY DEMISE

I guess I've had one patient die happily. It was during my internship. I'd just finished my rotation in the intensive care unit and two of my patients there, who had been hanging on for no apparent reason for weeks, died a couple days after I transferred to the wards. Then when this old man died too, so that I had, in a way, lost three in one day, people started calling me the Angel of Death.

That's the sort of nickname that can really make your day.

Anyway, we admitted an ancient man with pneumonia and bacteremia -- bacteria in the blood. That carried an 85% mortality in his age group, and as I was leaving the next evening, having been up the usual 36 hours or so, I heard the operator announce a code (cardiac arrest/resuscitation). "I bet that's my guy," I thought, and scurried back to his room. Big mistake.

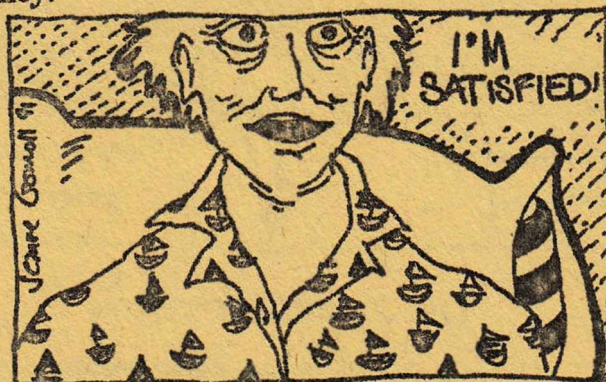
The resident running the code had just taken the Advanced Life Support course, and was anxious to try out his new accreditation. He ran through the asystole (no heartbeat, as opposed to V-fib -- bad heartbeat) protocol several times, until they ran out of calcium and epinephrine on the crash cart. So he told them to go get another crash cart. (Which reminds me of the unfortunate time, a year later at City Hospital, that I was running my second code in as many days. "Epi," I said. "There is none," said the nurse accusatorially. "You used it up yesterday!" I had seen her going through the crash cart after the previous day's code and, silly me, had thought she might have been restocking it.)

Because the resident was having such fun, the code went on for at least an hour, although it was apparent to the rest of us that it was pretty useless. I felt I ought to stick around, so someone who the family knew could give them the news. At long last, while there was still some calcium left somewhere in the hospital, the resident gave up and declared the code over. I went to the waiting room to tell the relatives how sorry I was.

"Oh, don't worry about it," they said, and told me how the code had begun. It seemed that the old man had been sleeping quietly, when suddenly he sat bolt upright in bed and stared off into space.

"I'm satisfied," he said. "I'm *satisfied*. I'M SAT-IS-FIED!" And promptly dropped dead.

And if he was satisfied, well, so were they.



III. LOVE WINS OUT

This happened to one of my roommates during her third-year rotation as the medical student on cardiothoracic surgery. She was caring for a woman with rheumatic heart disease, in for a valve job. The husband was in the room constantly, and a more concerned, loving spouse one seldom saw. The couple had six children -- surprisingly, she had got through the pregnancies and deliveries without the complications one would have expected from her severe heart disease. Thus my friend was a bit surprised when she discovered that the couple were not actually married.

"Wait a minute," said my friend. "You two have lived together for fifteen years, you have kids, you clearly love each other. Why don't you get married?"

They both looked sad. "Well, you see," answered the patient, "when I got the rheumatic fever as a little girl, my doctor took me aside and said, 'Honey, you can never get married.'"

When my friend explained that the doctor had really just meant that she should not have children, and that there was absolutely no reason they could not marry, there was joy all around.



IV. THE FAMILY REUNION

During my stint as chief resident at Regional Hospital (the successor to City Hos-

pital, which was shut down), an elderly alcoholic was admitted to my service, after being found semiconscious on the sidewalk outside a bar. He had alcoholic dementia, old strokes, and new pneumonia. He could tell us his name -- let's call him John Jones -- but no other information. There are an awful lot of Joneses in the St. Louis phone book.

In desperation, I finally called the only address we had on the chart: the bar he'd been found outside. To my surprise, they knew him well -- in fact, he lived in their back room, but they didn't want him back.

He recovered from the pneumonia quickly, but he had no family, no money, and the city nursing home had got in some kind of government trouble, and was no longer accepting patients. It looked like we would be stuck with him indefinitely. This depressed us, as the whole ward was filling up with similar unplaceable patients.

(In fact, if an intern managed to place a patient in a nursing home or otherwise discharge someone, he was awarded my official Superman pen, to use until the next intern or student earned it. After a prodigious feat of servicedom, the entire team would start chanting "The pen! The pen!" until I took it from the pocket of the last hero, and presented it formally to the new one. But then, I also used to round wearing a button reading 'Doom Patrol'. We were a bit loose there.)

Anyway, it looked as if Mr. Jones would be another permanent fixture in the neuro ward. Then, one night, my resident admitted another man named Jones, with alcohol withdrawal seizures. The only empty bed was in the elderly Jones' room, and despite the sensible policy against two patients with the same name occupying the same room, my resident had no choice.

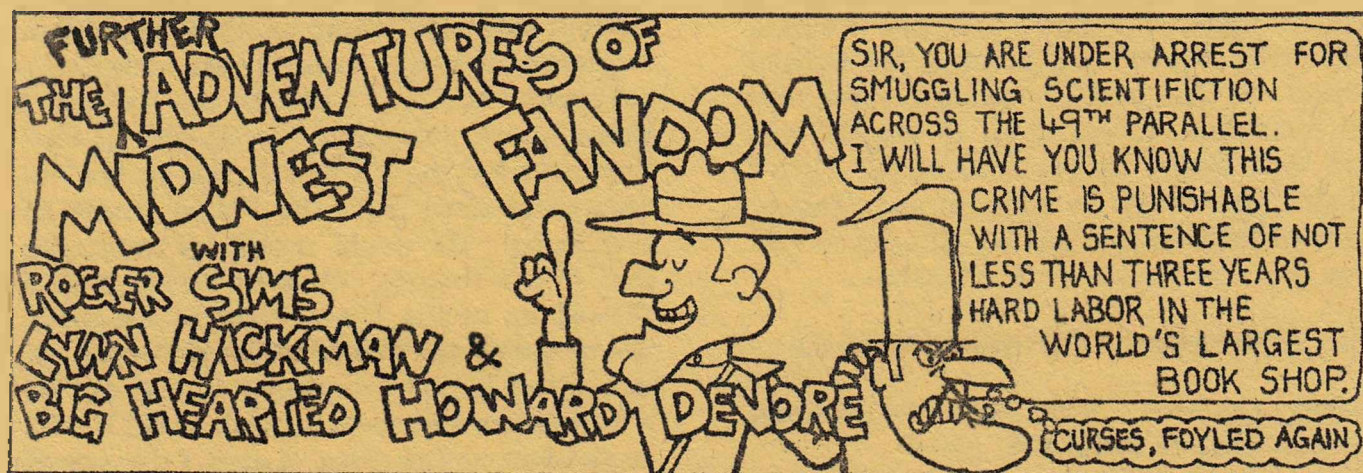
As the stretcher entered the room, the young drunk looked over at the old drunk.

"Daddy!" he cried.

He refused to take him home too. ➡

☞ With all the things we've said previously about MidWestCon being a fan nexus and one of our favorite conventions, it wouldn't seem right to have a 'fan history' theme issue of *Mimosa* without at least one article inspired by

MidWestCon. So here it is. Its genesis was a Saturday night bull session at MidWestCon 41, and all the stories seemed to revolve around fans and events of the 1950s, which seems to be just about everybody's favorite fannish era.



Big-Hearted Howard and the Spectator Amateur Press Society

Howard: Tell them how I kept you in SAPS, Roger.

Roger: I was derelict in my duties. It was deadline time, and I don't know where I'd gone. Was I living in New York at the time?

Howard: You might have been; I don't know.

Roger: Howard kindly decided he would keep me in SAPS. He did six pages and put my name on it. And to make sure everybody knew it was me, he misspelled every fourth word.

Howard: And nobody questioned it!

Roger: When did you come into fandom, Howard?

Howard: Forty-eight.

Roger: 1948?

Howard: Yeah. I was aware of it a long time before that.

Roger: Why, you got in just about a year before I did.

Howard: I think it was last year I was out to this comics con, and I was talking to Julie Schwartz about fandom and conventions. I knew about the '39 Worldcon, but it never really occurred to me to think about attending. He says, "Well, why not? Ackerman loaned Bradbury forty dollars so he could attend." I said that in 1939, if my father had known anybody who had forty dollars he would have mugged him! My father had a failing; he drank.

Lynn: Passed it on, too, didn't he?

Roger: How did you get the nickname 'Big-Hearted Howard'?

Howard: The 'Big-Hearted Howard' name I started myself.

Lynn: Did you?

Howard: Yeah, I did. I, Roger, and Agnes Harook were all in SAPS for a while -- I had talked Agnes into joining. I was the only one with a mimeograph, and I was doing all the work. Agnes would cut a few stencils, and she would leave *very* wide margins. So after she turned the stencils over to me to print, I would proceed to add comments down the margins of her stencils -- about how nice I was, about how big-hearted I was for doing all

this. Then, at some point, I admitted that there wasn't any Agnes, and I was carrying two memberships under different names. This upset Agnes -- she at least wanted to get credit for what she was doing. So, next time she brought the stencils, she waited while I printed them, and then took the finished pages with her to mail them to the Official Editor. At that point, I ran off a cover with my comments, mailed it off to the OE and said we'd forgot to put a cover on Aggie's fanzine, and would he staple it on? Two or three weeks later, the SAPS mailing came and here was a new cover on her fanzine...

The Adventures of Steve Metchette

Roger: Go back. What happened to bring you into fandom in the first place?

Howard: I was down in a big bookstore in Detroit, and ran into Arnim Seilstad, who told me about the local club, and convinced me that I ought to come to a meeting. So I went to a meeting at Ed Kuss's house, and while I was there we split up part of a book collection. Henry Elsner, who was a pre-war fan, was getting rid of everything. Steve Metchette, who was a Canadian, wanted reading material, so he took the cheap stuff to get more volume. At that point, the Canadians couldn't import anything -- they used to check Steve to see if he brought American cigarettes back when he crossed the border. So that summer we smuggled all the books that belonged to Metchette over to him in Windsor. And then, about 1953, he was in the American army in Korea and he sold all his books. I had to cross over to Windsor and smuggle the whole damn thing back again.

Roger: When was the last time that you saw Steve? Didn't he live in California for a while?

Howard: That was before he went into the Army. He moved out there and was living out there for a while. As a Canadian residing in the States then, he had a choice of being drafted into the Army or signing a release that he would never try and become an Ameri-

can citizen. They sent him a notice to either show up for the draft or sign the form. He stalled them a couple of days and then talked Hans Rusch into driving him back to Detroit. Didn't tell the Draft Board a thing! He signed up again with the Draft Board in Detroit without ever mentioning anything about San Francisco. It was probably a year before they got around to him. When he was drafted, I threw him a going-away party, and at that time he asked me if I would pick up his fanish possessions from the YMCA where he was living. He would notify his roommate that I was coming. A week or so later I showed up at the Y and went to his room. There was no one there, but the room was unlocked so I loaded everything up and carried it downstairs and past the desk clerk; it took maybe four or five trips. Later, I discovered that he'd forgotten to mention it to the roommate, so if anyone had stopped me I'd probably have been talking to the police until they found Metchette down at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. Anyway, after he did his time in the American Army in Korea, he applied for citizenship and didn't have any problem getting it.

Lynn: I think I met him at the Cinvention in 1949, before all this.

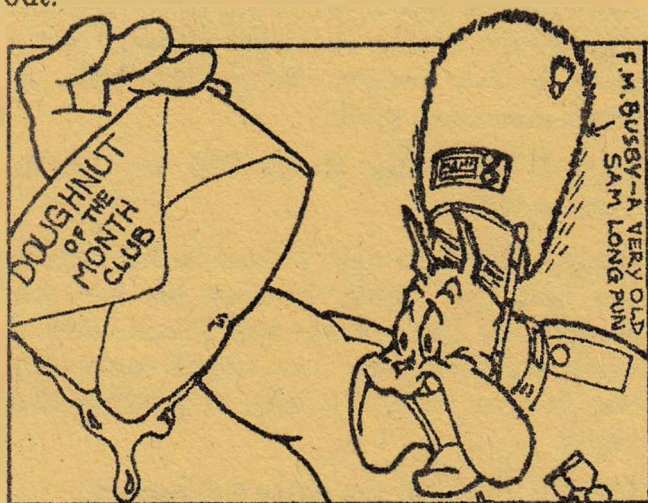
Howard: I've got to tell about George Young and Steve Metchette. During the Korean War, Art Rapp, George Young, and Steve Metchette managed to get together over in Korea. Rapp stayed in the Army but George did his time, got his discharge, and came home. This was 1952, I think. George started taking classes down at Wayne State University, and rented an apartment somewhere around there. About the time George moved into the apartment, one of my neighbors brought over a batch of fish one night. I don't eat fish at all, and my wife doesn't think much of it either, but we took them out of politeness. So I cut the heads off about a dozen of them, got a fancy jar, put the fish heads in plus some ammonia for the smell. I added a little bit of iodine to give it a nice bloody look, then I wrapped a ribbon around it and I took it to George. I told him that

Steve had sent this Japanese delicacy to him, knowing how he loved them. And since he didn't know George's address, he'd sent them in care of me. So George held the jar up at eye level for a couple of minutes and looked at all the little beady eyes staring back at him. Then he walked down the hall and put it in the incinerator.

Roger: Who mailed the fatback?

Lynn: Howard mailed the fatback to me, in a plain envelope that was greasy and *smelly* and *terrible* when it arrived! I had just moved back from the south; he said that's to go with my black-eyed peas.

Howard: This also inspired me to mail F. M. Busby a jelly doughnut in a plain envelope, but I never did know how that one came out.



Detention and the Longest Panel in the World(Con)

Lynn: Tell us about the 1959 Detroit Worldcon.

Howard: How did we open it, Roger?

Roger: We opened it dragging a body across the stage.

Howard: I think you got up and announced in such-and-such a year, I had said that Detroit would hold a Worldcon over my dead body.

Roger: That's right. It was in 1954, at the Border Cities Con.

Howard: Anyway, there was the sound of a gunshot, and I fell to the floor, and they dragged me off to open the convention.

Lynn: At that convention I was on the longest panel of any Worldcon.

Howard: Well, so were a lot of people.

Lynn: John Berry and I left, and got Dave Kyle to replace us, because it was already two o'clock in the morning and we wanted to party.

Roger: It was a fanzine panel. The panel was supposed to have been Friday night, but something happened.

Howard: Every time we ran short in time, that was the panel we moved.

Roger: The panel started about nine o'clock on the Saturday night, and a beer party started at ten o'clock. People were going and getting beer, then going back to the panel.

Howard: Before long, everybody was carrying beer back and forth.

Lynn: And nobody would let us quit!

Roger: People would leave the stage and other people would get on.

Howard: I think it was around four o'clock in the morning before it started to die out. This was an audience participation panel!

Roger: Anyway, Howard *did* say that 'we'll have a Worldcon in Detroit over my dead body.' The reason why was because in 1954, George Young came up with the brilliant scheme that we would have a Border Cities Convention, and people would come not only from all over the United States, but all over Canada for our little convention in Detroit. We were going to have thousands of people there! And everybody was going to go to the banquet. We had to guarantee at least 300 dinners for the banquet; I mean, we *had* to! Well, we talked them down to 100, we sold 35, and the hotel only charged us for 75. At that point, Martin Alger suggested that since we

were paying for 75 that we call the Salvation Army and ask them to send over 40 bums for a free feed. The only way we paid for it was because Howard donated a set of *Astoundings*, which we auctioned off.

Lynn: It was after that he said, "Over my dead body! I haven't got any more magazines!"

Room 770 and the 1951 New Orleans Worldcon

Roger: Let's tell some New Orleans stories.

Lynn: Okay. I drove my brand new Mercury convertible to the 1951 Worldcon. On the way I picked up Fred Chappell in Canton, North Carolina. I stopped in Charleston, South Carolina and picked up Bobby Pope, then I went to Atlanta and I picked up Ian Macauley and Walt Guthrie, and we took off for New Orleans. I met Rich Elsberry there, and we decided to leave the convention for a little bit and take a trip through New Orleans and see the scenery. Besides myself there was Ian Macauley, Max Keasler, Bobby Pope, Rich Elsberry, and Bobby Johnson. And every time we went past a Confederate statue, Bobby Pope had to stand up and salute, because he was a *real* southerner. And Rich Elsberry said, "You know, this is no ordinary convertible." I said, "Of course not; it's a new Mercury!" He said, "I don't mean that. Do you realize every one of us is a fanzine editor?" And we all were. That was something back in those days.

Roger: So anyway, you got back to the hotel...

Lynn: This was the first night. Max Keasler and I decided to go down to Bourbon Street and hear some of the jazz. We got back about one or two o'clock in the morning. Keasler said, "Come on up to the room and we'll have a drink." So Keasler went to the desk and said "I want the key to 770," and the desk clerk raised his eyebrows and said, "There's a wild party going on in that room!" We went up there and opened the door, and people started falling out...

Roger: Ed Kuss, Agnes Harook, and I decided we wanted to go. Well, Ed had money; he had a job at Ford Motor Company so he had money for plane fare. Aggie and I were poor -- we took the bus. We got to Memphis, where these two kids got on the bus. They walked to the back and I said to Aggie, "They're going to the convention -- they're fans." She said, "How do you know?" I said, "I'll prove it." So I walked back and said, "I'm going to New Orleans and the World Science Fiction Convention. Are you going there?" And they said yes. It was Max Keasler and Rich Elsberry.

Howard: They stayed with you at the convention, didn't they?

Roger: Yes. Ed Kuss had told me that since I was going to get there first, I should get a room for the two of us. Well, since Max and Rich didn't have a room yet either, I got a room for four people. Four single beds. It was a mammoth room.

Lynn: That was Room 770 in the St. Charles Hotel.

Roger: Ed Kuss didn't sleep in his bed for the first two nights, because his bed was occupied by Bob Johnson and Frank Dietz. I think everybody who was at the convention was in that room one time or another that night.

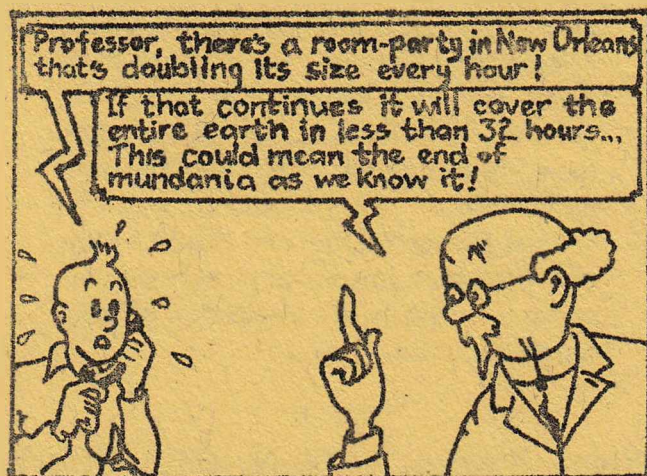
Lynn: How did the party get started?

Roger: Ed Kuss and Rich Elsberry were in the room talking when Lee Jacobs called and asked to come up. He arrived with a pitcher of Seagrams and four other fans. About five minutes later, twenty more fans arrived with whiskey, gin, and mix from a party in Frank Dietz's room that had just been shut down due to the noise. From that time to the end of the con, it seemed that the room was never quite empty of extra fans.

Howard: Tell us about the parade.

Roger: That was one of the 'highlights' of the Room 770 party. There was a parade around the room in which the marchers rather than walking around the furniture, climbed

over it. The march was halted when the slats on one of the beds gave way, spilling fans all over the floor. The other 'highlight' had to do with the mess in the bathroom that I discovered on returning from watching a poker game down the hall. As I walked into the room I noticed that water was starting to enter the bedroom from the bathroom. When I pushed the door open and looked in, I discovered that the bathroom floor was covered with water; cold water had been left running in the sink, but the sink was stopped up with green-covered red stuff, which we later found out was regurgitated lobster combined with green creme de menthe. I cleaned it up as the party went on.



Lynn: And it lasted all night.

Roger: Yes it did. It went on until about 5:30 in the morning. Eventually, Bob Johnson and Frank Dietz had stopped talking and had fallen asleep in Ed Kuss' bed; Ed had gone down to the hotel lobby around two o'clock to sleep. Rich Elsberry and Max Keasler were asleep in their respective beds, and Dale Hart was asleep in my bed. The Detroit bid party for the 1952 Worldcon was planned for the following night, so about six o'clock I decided to prepare for the party by cutting out large letters from old Christmas wrapping which would read 'Detroit in 52.' When I finished, Dale woke up and went wherever he was meant to go and I laid down on the bed for a couple of hours of rest.

Howard: Detroit had a reputation for making last minute bids with no advance prepa-

ration. There was an announcement of bid being made for '53 as well. I managed to derail that one.

Lynn: What happened to that one?

Howard: The Detroit club was falling apart in '52, and Martin Alger announced that he was disbanding it. At that point, Hal Shapiro was in the Army in Missouri, and he announced that he would run the club from Missouri and that he was bidding for the 1953 Worldcon. Then I ran an advert in Bob Tucker's *Science Fiction News Letter*, a leading fanzine of the time. It was quite simple -- it just said 'We the undersigned are not responsible for Hal Shapiro.' It was signed by every active fan in the Detroit area. The Shapiro bid was Dead, Dead, Dead.

Lynn: There was also a bid for '55, wasn't there?

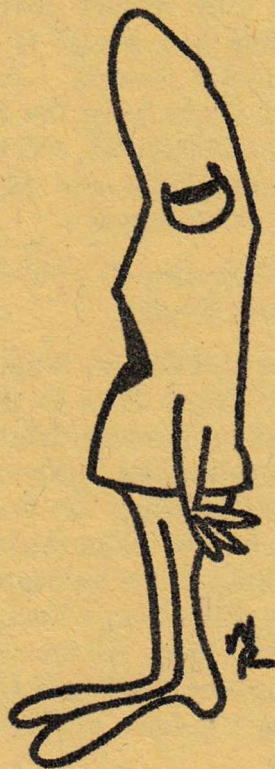
Howard: Yeah, that was at the San Francisco Worldcon in 1954, and it lost to Cleveland. It was rather funny. Cleveland sent perhaps a dozen people to the '54 con and had maybe \$100 for a bid party, but they told me later that they almost abandoned the bid because they had heard of the huge well-heeled club in Detroit. Actually, George Young and Roger were the only two people there for the Detroit bid, and they were eating only one meal a day and had absolutely no money for party supplies.

Lynn: What else do you remember about New Orleans, Roger?

Roger: Lots of things. Walking down Canal Street with Frank Dietz in the middle of the night, drinking a mixed drink out of a glass. Trying to protect Lee Hoffman's honor in the room sometime before the first party started. Discussing how to make the jellied consomme at the banquet edible by heating it. Going to a jazz club with George Young and others to hear George Lewis. All too soon it was Tuesday evening, and Aggie and I boarded the bus for the long trip back to Detroit.

Lynn: It was a helluva convention, wasn't it... --

LETTERCOL



☞ Before we begin with letters commenting on *Mimosa* 9, we should tell you something about the other fannish project we're working on. It's another 'Living Fanzine', sort of. We've decided to do an audiotape version of *Mimosa* 9 that'll feature the four essays in *Mimosa* 9 read by their corresponding authors, plus as many letters of comment from that issue read by their writers as we can get. Please be informed, however, that this audio fanzine, *Mimosa* 9.5, won't be finished for some time yet; there are still (as we write this) several people we're trying to get recordings from.

Meanwhile, we were gratified by the sizable number of letters (and trade fanzines) *Mimosa* 9 brought us. Even though there were only four articles, the overall response was at least as high as for other, more diverse issues. Our opening comments about our Worldcon vacation, "Across Europe on Rail and Plastic," drew comment from just about everybody who wrote us. First up are a selection of comments about it..

Steve Swartz, 6412 N. 28th Street,
Arlington, Virginia 22207-1114

I enjoyed the story of your travels in Europe. I've been twice. Your stories about food and restaurants certainly brought back memories. Since I'd studied German throughout high school and college, I made a point of speaking German in restaurants. This amused my friends -- after a few egregious misses early on [I remember getting two (zwei) bowls of chicken broth when I'd tried to order Zweibelsuppe (onion soup)] they started keeping track of the number of times I could actually use my German to control what would end up on my plate. They would make me write down what I thought I was getting after I had ordered, and compare my description with what actually appeared. I believe I won the contest (eight meals to six,

I think), but only because none of them could tell one schnitzel from another. Schade.

Els Somers, Goeverneurlaan 613,
2523 CG The Hague, The Netherlands

I have read your experiences in Holland before the Worldcon. It is always funny to hear what people noticed in another country, but it was pleasant for me to read what you two noticed in Holland. I myself, for example, had never noticed that many cafes and other places had cats around. Now I noticed and I have seen some of them!

The days of the Worldcon amused me very much. I never expected that it would be so nice. For sure, I am going to another con in the future. Two days at the convention I was dressed in a fantasy costume. People came to me and asked me how I liked Holland before they realized that I was a Dutch girl. This happened a few times, and I asked myself why. Why should only foreigners dress themselves up in costumes? Later on, I found an explanation. I myself come from the south of Holland. There it is more normal to wear special clothes for the Dutch carnival. In the north, it is not so normal to do so.

I have a general question. I read *Mimosa* 9 and it seemed that there are not enough young fans. I myself am 26 years old. When I was 14 or 15 years old, I was also a sf fan, also in Dutch fandom. It appears that I am one of the youngest. Is this happening in each country?

☛ It's possible, and even likely. Back in the 1950s, teenage fans were commonplace. In fact, some of the best fanzines were published by teenagers -- Joel Nychahl's *Vega*, Lee Hoffman's *Quandry*, and Gregg Calkins' *Oops!* are examples that come immediately to mind. Nowadays, we are not only unfamiliar with any teenage fan publications, we don't even know any teenage fans (except for children of other fans). So, has fandom changed, or have we?

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

I envy your visiting Prague, which I would like to see before the Russians re-take it. I would visit the ancient Jewish cemetery and see the grave of Rabbi Lowe, fabled creator of the Golem, inspirator of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley and a horde of her poor doctor's children. And I would try to find the spirit of an unassuming little law clerk whose writings caught and influenced the thinking of the world -- he understood what was and is happening.

☛ Actually, we did visit that cemetery, which is located right in the heart of old Prague. We didn't know about and therefore look for the grave of Rabbi Lowe, but we did visit the Jewish Museum located next to it; in it, beckoning to onlookers decades later, were preserved drawings and writings of children and their teachers who did not survive the holocaust of Auschwitz. And while, unlike Rabbi Lowe, these are not likely to influence the thinking of the world, it was still only too easy to get caught up in the spirit of those people, which is still strong almost a half-century later.

Eva Hauser, Na Cihadle 55, 160 00
Praha 6, Czechoslovakia

Thank you very much for *Mimosa* 9, which is interesting and amusing. I especially liked its beautiful illustrations. Of course, I feel a need to comment on what you said about Czechoslovakia and Czech fans.

I also went to the Confiction by a bus chartered by fans; but it wasn't such an awful trip as it seems possible to you! Most of the fans slept in tents, which is a very common way how Czechs spend their holidays. It's quite easy to go to Bulgaria, Romania, or Yugoslavia by car and to stay there, camping on a shore. It's advantageous because camping is cheap and you can take your food with you. In Den Haag, I didn't stay in a tent

because our editing house paid for a hotel room, but I wouldn't have minded it so much. And I also took some canned food, crackers, biscuits, and so on, so that I didn't have to spend so much money on food. But it was all rather fun, and I didn't mind it. It was like going to the high mountains where there are no shops and no restaurants...

I must protest against this statement: "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." This is completely wrong!!! We are not richer now than we were a few years ago. But traveling was actually banned, or extremely suppressed by the regulations of Communists.

I can explain to you the whole mechanism, which reminds me of novels by Franz Kafka.

Nobody could travel if he didn't have hard currency. But if you happened to acquire some hard currency as a gift, in unofficial exchange, or in money earned abroad, you were obliged to exchange this currency at the bank for Czech crowns or special 'tokens for imported goods' and you could spend these tokens in special shops with western goods. You were not allowed to own any hard currency.

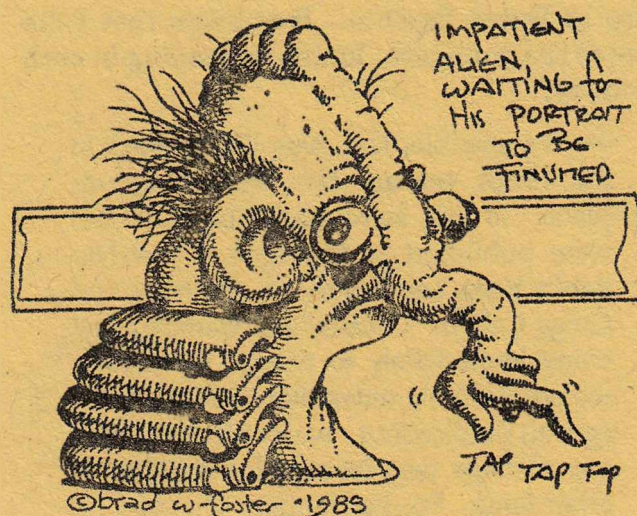
In case you wanted to travel to some country of "evil capitalists" you were obliged to ask the bank for a special exchange of money for traveling. Let us call it 'hard currency contingent'. In theory, you had the right to get hard currency contingent every three years, but in practice, the largest part of these applications was rejected. I was successful only once in my life and I went with my parents on a three-week trip to Italy -- but that time my father went to the director of the bank and explained to him that we never got hard currency contingent and that my parents deserved a lot for the development of society by their scientific work, etc. After rejection, you couldn't do anything -- just wait

one year and try it again. But some people got the hard currency contingent not only once every three years but every year, as they had a friend or a relative in the bank, or managed somehow to bribe the clerk who decided about these contingents.

If you were lucky enough to get the contingent, you got 100 dollars in exchange for your two months salary, and you had to continue dealing with bureaucrats: to get permission of the Police, one day waiting in line for a visa. And then to get train or air tickets, or car insurance, and (if you were a man) permission of the Military office, several more days spent in lines and a lot of encounters with arrogant clerks everywhere. When you finally managed to get everything, you felt completely exhausted and promised yourself that you will not travel any more in your life!

And that was exactly what the Communists intended.

Ha, ha! "Chci voda mineralna, prosím;" the proper form is "Chci minerální vodu, prosím." The first phrase sounds rather like a Polish one. It's interesting that people of most nations are pleased if you try to learn some phrases in their language, but Czechs usually don't acknowledge it -- I don't know exactly why it is so. Perhaps they don't have enough respect and love for their own native tongue.



Irwin Hirsh, 26 Jessamine Avenue,
East Prahran, Victoria 3181, Australia

I always enjoy *Mimosa* and appreciate the efforts you take into its presentation, particularly in getting so many of the articles illustrated. I tend to think of drawings illustrating an article as being fanzine art at its highest form. In part this is because artists tell me it is harder to draw illustrations for an article than to draw a similar number of drawings straight from their own mind. It is also because in having to choose the artist to illustrate a particular article, the faneds skill gets involved in the process. One thing I haven't noticed before (but I'm sure it happens) is the practice of getting a number of artists to each provide an illustration to an article. I'm particularly impressed with the effort you put into this aspect of your fanzine.

Thanks. We deliberately set out to have as many artists as possible provide illustrations for our "Across Europe..." article, since the article itself was a collage of the most memorable events of our European Worldcon vacation. Usually, though, it's easier to let one artist do the illos for an article. That way, we don't have to wait until the last minute after all the artwork is in to work on layouts.

I enjoyed the comments on your trip to Europe. It is always interesting to see someone's views on meeting new lands, and yours was particularly interesting because you talk about some of the things which struck Wendy and I when we were on my GUFF trip -- the Eurorail system, communicating with people whose language is not English, the art museums, etc. Your restaurant experience in Utrecht sounds similar to a lunch we had in Albi (south-west France) where the waiter's limited English didn't allow him to tell us what was on the lunch menu. He enlisted the help of the couple sitting at the next table in telling us about the main courses. When it came time for sweets, we were the only people in the restaurant and he was having a frus-

trating time trying to use hand-movements and slowed-down French to describe the sweets. Then he hit upon the idea of going back to the kitchen and bringing out one of each sweet, enabling Wendy and I to make our selections with the time-honoured pointing of the index finger.

It was traveling around Continental Europe which made me realise the extent to which I've missed out by having grown up in a land where one language predominates. In Europe the distances, particularly in the modern era, between the different languages are quite small, and it is easy to see why so many Europeans are pretty fluent in a language other than their native tongue. For part of our time, we stayed with fans and I often mentioned to them that I felt it was a pity that I knew only one language. In saying that, I always made the point that I didn't necessarily mean knowing *their* language, just knowing a language other than English. Their response was that if I had to know only one language, English was the one to know. That seems reasonable, but only if you ignore that English just happens to be my language. If my language was, say, Japanese, I'd still be putting it upon them to make the effort in trying to communicate. By not knowing another language, I'm not even allowing for the possibility of finding some middle ground where we can be equally handicapped in our mode of communications.

I'm not sure why, when you said a lack of car parking spaces is why Amsterdam is a city of bicycles, you added the remark "worst of all." I would hate to think that you feel it is a pity that there aren't more car parking spaces in the city. I think that if a city provides an effective public transport system it doesn't have to meet the needs of those who wish to use the car within the city. Amsterdam fits the bill nicely, being well served by its transit system. It struck Wendy and I that the single item which separated the larger cities of Europe from Melbourne was that their public transport systems are easy to use, are reliable and meet the everyday needs of

their citizens, while Melbourne's system is unreliable and inconvenient to use for so much of its population. I'm pretty sure that it is this mass-transit orientation in Europe which encourages people to make good use of their streets, adding an attractive character to the cities.

☞ Well, maybe we should have said 'most of all'. We'd hate to think of what Amsterdam would be like if those thousands of bicycle riders had been driving cars instead. The city of Amsterdam (and Europe in general, for that matter) pre-dates motorized transportation by centuries, and streets are so narrow in many parts of the city that two-way traffic is physically impossible. Luckily, the network of trams, metro, and buses is so good there, you don't have to have a car to get around.

 Teddy Harvia, P.O. Box 905, Euless,
 Texas 76039

What is it with all the cartoon cats on the cover of *Mimosa*? Do y'all think you're still publishing *Chat* or what?

I loved Jeanne Gomoll's menu illustration for your Europe trip article. I don't know what is more amusing -- the thought of a waitress posing as an artist or an artist posing as a waitress.

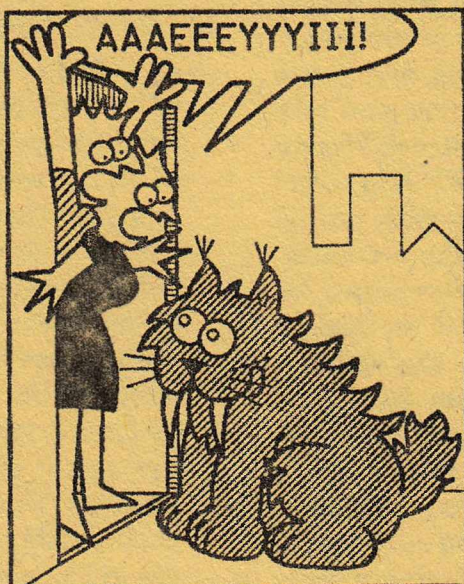
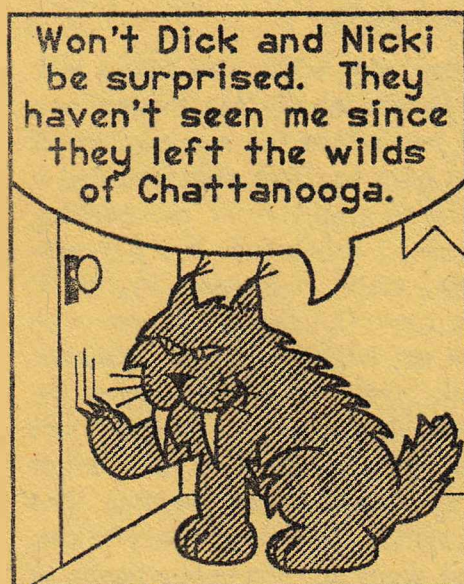
 Ken Cheslin, 10 Coney Green, Stourbridge, West Midland DY8 1LA, England

I deduce by your remark "Europe's fine railway system" that you didn't visit the U.K., or if you did, the U.S. railway system must be indescribable. Our railways are falling to bits due to underinvestment; that includes rails, bridges, rolling stock, the lot. I believe the B.R. spends more money on adverts telling us how good they are than on actual hardware.

☞ You deduce correctly -- we only had enough time in our two week vacation to visit parts of Continental Europe. The 'fine railway system' remark was a compliment on the relative ease of going from one place to another by train, as well as the quality of the facilities (which for the most part were pretty good).

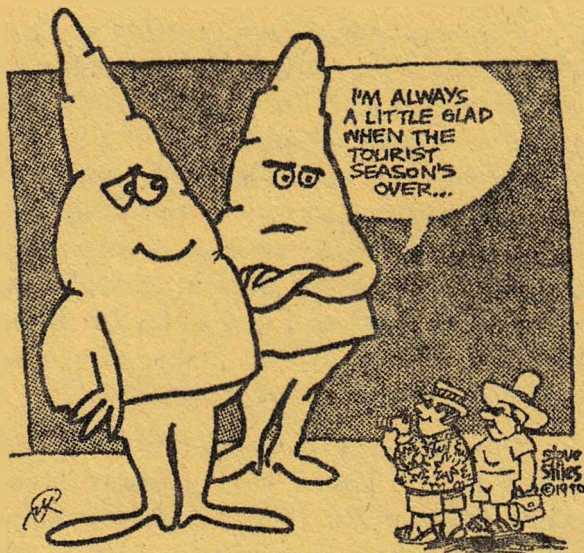
CHAT, THE 4TH FANNISH GHOD

By TEDDY HARVIA



Dave Lockett's article {{☞ "Prose Is the Wine; Poetry the Whiner" }} was great, its mixture of prose and poetry an inspiration. (I still remember, though mercifully dimly, the piles of smelly nappies. Once, when we were driving in the country, there came this awful smell. "Matthew!" we exclaimed, but the (then) little soul was innocent that time for as we came round a bend we whizzed by a farm and about 200 pigs. It became a family joke, "it's either Matthew or 200 pigs." Oh, well, it sounded funny to me.)

☞ We liked Dave's article, too, but some of our readers seemed less than impressed. Among them was Harry Andruschak, who requested to be informed with a *Baby Alert* should we try something like this again. You just can't please everyone...



David Bratman, 1161 Huntingdon Drive, San Jose, California 95129

I enjoyed your trip report very much. Why else should fans spend time and money on traveling to far-off places like Europe (or America, for that matter), if not to accumulate interesting stories to tell when they get home? Particular kudos to the Messrs. Williams for contributing cartoons even more amusing than the stories they illuminate.

Dave Lockett's light verse is brilliantly funny, fit to stand with the masters of the form. I almost caught myself thinking that it's a shame someone who can write like that has to spend time caring for infants, but then I realized that he has to; otherwise what would he use for inspiration? So keep changing those dirty nappies, Dave!

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

Thank you for *Mimosa 9*. I loved Bob Shaw's dreadfully funny piece, but top of the tops of my list was Dave Lockett's bunch of poems. Dave once proved his ability to make even the most base subjects poetic by writing a page of verse to serve as instructions on how to deal with the outside toilet when it tended to block up in wet weather. He finished it off in exquisite calligraphy and nailed it to the door, where it performed its utilitarian function until the first rain shower soaked and ruined it. Such is the transience of art.

J. R. Madden, P.O. Box 25167, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70894-5167

Your article "Across Europe on Rail and Plastic" was interesting and made me feel good about our visit to The Netherlands for the Worldcon. We stayed entirely within the borders of that country spending time in Amsterdam, Maastricht, and The Hague / Scheveningen. We met lots of nice folks while there: one was our cab driver in Amsterdam, who turned off the meter when he couldn't get to our hotel by his usual route due to road construction and had to wend his way through streets not usually on his route. Did you have trouble, as I did while in Amsterdam, trying to imagine Gestapo vehicles rolling through those streets? Or, German panzers guarding intersections? Or, military convoys moving through those oh so peaceful streets? Hard to imagine it ever happened.

Dave Lockett should be warned: He has to deal only with primarily physical attributes

of his offspring at this time. Just wait for the intellectual assault which will come when said offspring has acquired sufficient language skills to append a question mark to the end of a string of words! When watching a movie: "Did he really die?, Why did she do that?, What is he doing to her?" While riding in a car: "How do you know where you're going?, What does that sign (which one out of twenty?) say?, Why do you have to put gas in the car?"

Many thanks for the publication of Bob Shaw's latest Serious Scientific Speech {{☞ "Corn Is the Lowest Form of Wheat" }}. I enjoyed it at Confiction and appreciate having a permanent record as well. Did you note that Bob's speech was better attended than any of the three Professional Guest of Honor speeches? I am not sure if that's good or bad, to be honest.

Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M6S 3L6, Canada

I'm so busy nowadays that I can no longer afford the luxury of reading fanzines before I loc them, so *Mimosa* 9 will be enjoyed and commented on almost simultaneously. I know we warn against this in Advanced Letterhacking For the Serious Professional but sometimes expediency rules, okay? I just thought I'd warn you in case I put my foot in my mouth and don't get to take it out for several paragraphs.

Interesting trip report (although I might have liked just a little about the worldcon itself) which made me envious I didn't get to go this year. I agree with your choice of the train as an excellent way of both getting to places and seeing the country while you do so. It lacks the freedom of having one's own vehicle but may well be cheaper, especially with a good pass.

☞ If we'd written more about the Worldcon, it probably would have degenerated into a series of "then we met so-and-sos,"

not the kind of thing that makes for a snappy, amusing fanzine article. Besides, the article wasn't about the Worldcon at all -- it was about the Voyage of Discovery we had getting there and back.

On one of my trips to England some years ago I managed to circumvent the Shaw Exclusion Principle, albeit unwittingly. I discovered I'd be seeing Bob later in my travels, so while visiting a London one-day comic mart, I bought two paperback Shaw novels so I'd have something to get autographs on. Apparently Bob wanted to spare me the agony of the S.E.P., because when I actually looked at the books they were already autographed, thereby saving me the trouble of carrying them around constantly until I ran into him. I wonder to this day how he managed that but I thought it a noble and unselfish gesture.

The only thing I can possibly say about Bob's Serious Scientific Talk is that I'm glad I got to read it and I'm sorry I didn't get to hear it presented. Well, maybe the only two things I can say are those and that I'm delighted you published it. Whoops. Anyway, it was funny and the illustrations were a delight, and you're very lucky faneds indeed to have published it. Just as I'm a lucky fan to have read it. Whether Bob's a lucky pro to have written it I leave to your imagination.

I don't think, in answer to Pam Boal's musing in the loccol, that younger fandom lacks a sense of fun. What it lacks is a sense of communicating through the written word which results in only a few younger fans becoming interested in fanzines. Those that do, though, such as the self-same Harry Bond who graces *Mimosa's* loccol, can write the same sort of material as the Skels of fandom, although perhaps not yet quite as well. But then, I can't write as well as Skel and I've been trying for longer than Harry has been alive.

What made many classic fanzines classic was actually quite simple: superior creative talent in those producing them, coupled with

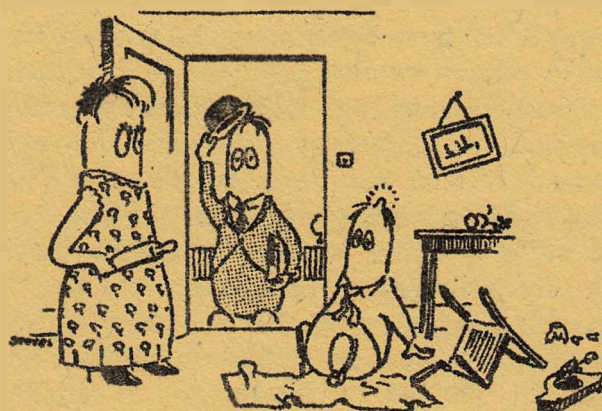
a high level of interaction among a group of such talents, creating a whole-greater-than-the-sum-of-its-parts effect. Talent still exists in fandom, but that special sense of interactive community has either disappeared or weakened, which may be why there are still good fanzines around but few (if any, depending on who is talking) great ones.

Walt Willis, 32 Warren Road, Donaghadee, N. Ireland BT21 0PD

My favourite piece in *Mimosa* 9 was your European trip report. I admired your bravery and enterprise, and thought the piece was well written. It made me nostalgic for a place I have never been, but which has all sorts of memories for me. The most poignant is of hunching beside my homebuilt radio listening in anguish to Radio Praha at the time of the Nazi takeover which led to WW2. While the country was dying, there were long periods of silence on the radio filled only with the interval signal, which was a phrase from Dvorak's New World symphony on a solo oboe. It was indescribably sad and lonely, and I have remembered it all my life. In 1952, en route from Chicon II to Los Angeles, I played it on a deserted piano in a forest in Utah. Another memory is of listening to that New World symphony one cold day in the London Epicentre, while Vince Clarke and Ken Bulmer were reading *New Worlds*, and noticing with an eerie feeling that it was a New World cooker we were all huddled around. And now here you from the New World with news of Prague today, bringing all those memories with you. There's timebinding for you.

Of course, with Karel Čapek and all, there is something subtly fannish about Czechoslovakia. Recently I remember a newspaper correspondent mentioning a conversation he had with a waiter just after the 1989 revolution. Emboldened by the celebrations, he asked if he could possibly have some seasoning with his steak. "This month freedom," said the waiter. "Next month, horseradish."

Dave Kyle and Bob Shaw were marvelous in their different ways. I admire how Bob was able to make fun of Whitley Streiber so effectively without saying anything remotely actionable. In the letters section, I was pleasantly surprised by the cartoon in place of my letter, and curiously impressed by Gorecki's letter about rediscovering Jack Darrow. I don't quite know why, because I barely even remember the name of Jack Darrow: it's something like seeing a lost piece being inserted in an enormous jigsaw puzzle.



"Good morning ma'am. I wonder if I could interest you in a fallout shelter."

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

I enjoyed your trip report, not the least for the hint it gave, that placing the World-Con outside America occasionally achieves its purpose, encouraging homebound Americans to experience other countries, other cultures (and the rest of us stay-at-homes, of course); in fact, you grasped the opportunity with both hands, didn't you? Can't help commenting on the restaurant cats holding their own in the face of more modern methods of pest control (no, not the one about the original ball-bearing mousetrap); they surely are the real environmentalists, the truly green. Mind you, I'd think twice about eating in a restaurant where their mouser was forced to beg for

scraps; either it's been so efficient that there aren't any mice left, or they're there in such numbers that they've forced it out of the kitchen. One restaurant to avoid?

☛ We think the cat was probably just interested in making two visitors feel at home. Cats like to snack as much as people and we were probably eating its favorite meal. That cat did not look underfed!

And I have to admit to enjoying hugely the latest Bob Shaw lecture. Well, on my own discovery of SF, that Sense of Wonder came just as much from considering the true professionals who were also prepared to give their time and effort to contributing to the amateur fanzines, remembering especially long-ago issues of *Niekas* with Jack Gaughan and Dan Atkins. Now, having become more blase, and not being a writer myself, I see time spent away from the desk as being one novel less; so it's with a certain guilt that the other half of me has to confess as to how much he's enjoyed it. Though for his method of helping the totally lost motorist, I can offer a remarkably simple and similar device of finding out the time when your clock has stopped, especially at night. No, not by switching on the radio; all you do is keep a trumpet by your bed, and if your clock has stopped, just open the window and start playing the trumpet. It never fails; you'll be sure to hear someone shouting, "Who's that idiot (or words to that effect) playing a trumpet at three o'clock in the morning?"

I suspect that the legend of *Hyphen* and *Le Zombie* and all the other zines, good as though they might have been, owes as much to nostalgia and the rose-coloured spectacles that we all wear. In fact, the enlightenment on one of them in this issue, *The WSFA Journal*, shows the true story; and who's to say that the story behind those wasn't remarkably similar? I'm inclined to think that the only thing that can turn a fanzine into a legend is time, and word of mouth; so, going by those criteria, who's to say that *Mimosa* wouldn't have as good a chance as any other?

But there's surely no way you can sit down and consciously create a legendary fanzine, one that will live forever. Likewise, you can never re-create a fanzine fandom, in the face of the relentless tread of history; or evolution. If fanzine fandom really has had its day, its moment on the stage, there's nothing anyone can do to halt its night.

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

Nein, Von Felines, haf you no mercy, sending out these flowers that plunge the readers into a welter of nostalgia? This zine is definitely in a time warp; it is in the style of the zines I used to receive 20+ years ago. Those were the wonderful days when even the crudzines I received seemed to have merit because it was all so new to me.

As if the style and content were not enough, in the transcript of the talk you published this ish, Bob Shaw mentioned my all-time favourite of his Convention Inventions, the Uri N 8. I only have to close my eyes to see and hear his deadpan delivery and people almost literally rolling in the aisles.



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

Blessing on BoSh for mentioning Stephen Leacock. Leacock lived most of his life in a massive mansion on the shores of Lake Couchiching, not far from Orillia, Ontario, where I grew up. Leacock was famous not only for his writing and economic theories, but also for his temper and his legendary drinking. Even though scholars and family deny it, Leacock was renowned for having the finest wine cellar in the province in his basement, and one of the most complete bars on the main floor in the billiards room. Like many fans, Leacock had a cast-iron liver.

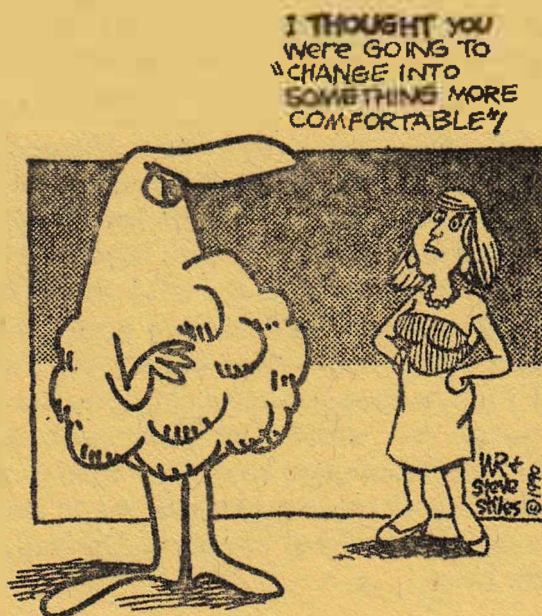
Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue,
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Bob Shaw is as funny as ever. I just don't understand how one individual like him can create unaided a line of patter that is consistently funnier than the monologues by big names like Bob Hope and Johnny Carson which are pasted together from the contributions or several professional jokesters. Come to think of it, maybe I'm laboring under a false assumption. Could it be that Walt Willis, John Berry, and Eric Bentcliffe were inactive in fandom all those years because Bob was paying them to think up bright remarks for his convention speeches?

Dave Kyle must have an amazing memory. Lots of information is included in his latest article {{☞ "Dave Kyle Says You Can't..." }} that didn't see print when the events happened and, to the best of my knowledge, hasn't been put down more recently in reminiscences of other fans. I was particularly happy to see his reference to the comparatively small place alcoholic beverages played in fanac during the first ten or twelve years after Repeal. This bears out my contention that the drinking problem has been growing steadily as the years have passed since the 1930s, instead of having been just as bad during and immediately after Prohibition as it is today.

Now I wonder if Dave has the courage to tackle another retrospective into fandom past, in this case the WSFS, Inc., dispute that practically tore fandom apart for several years, back in the 1950s. I don't think many of today's younger fans have even heard about it, although it was infinitely more serious than the feud that split New York City's fandom in the 1930s. Maybe the topic is still too sensitive and bitter to be exhumed at this time, but I think a light touch would permit it to be retold without starting up any new slander or libel suits.

Dave Gorecki really should have written an article about his visit to Jack Darrow. I had no idea Jack was still alive, since I believe he was older than most fans back in the late 1920s and early 1930s when he bobbed up in almost every prozine issue's letter section. Maybe Jack could be recruited to give a talk or preside at a panel at some large convention in Chicago, where he could see and be seen by some of the fans who were with him at that first WorldCon. I suppose Jack could qualify as the pioneer figure in the trend away from fanzine fandom, since he never did much in the fanzine world while he was a pro letter-hack. Today's congoers and screen watchers who never look at a fanzine don't know what they owe him.



Mark L. Blackman, 1745 East 18th Street #4A, Brooklyn, New York 11229

It's always a pleasure to read fannish reminiscences from Dave Kyle. I did my own bit toward clearing his name at this past Lunacon when, writing about the Fanzine Lounge in the Program Book, I noted, "Dave Kyle says you CAN sit here."

And likewise to read (though more so to hear) one of Bob Shaw's "Serious Scientific Talks." After all, Bob made science stupid long before Tom Weller. (Some of us were mildly frightened when *Science Made Stupid* won a Hugo for NON-fiction Book.) Given the expense of Trans-Atlantic travel or travel to Australia, some of Von Donegan's ideas might be worth a second look (that is, a look for one second).

Michael Sherck, 51786 Hazel Road, Granger, Indiana 46530

Dave Kyle sez I have to write, eh? Does he say what I have to write about? I don't suppose he's gifted me with a subject, not to mention witty prose...

Kyle's fannish history essay was interesting, as I find all such. I think it singularly appropriate that such history is printed in your zine on what some of us might term biodegradable pulp paper: one wonders whether the memory will outlive the rememberer....

But what I really like about *Mimosa* is the cartoons and the letters from other readers. In *Mimosa* #7 my favorite cartoon was the one mixing "Star Trek" with "Star Wars." (I'm the stormtrooper on the left.) In #8 my favorite was Alexis Gilliland's on page 33: as a smoker who is determined to hang on to his vice (since I have so few and I simply refuse to go through life without at least some bad habits) I've experienced that more than once. Like the time the woman wanted me to leave the house because I was smoking. Dammit, it was my house!

☞ The cartoons tend to be a holdover from the monthly newzine we did about ten years ago for a local fan club (for more on that, see *Mimosa* #7). Since you enjoy letters from other readers, this ish should be just your cup of tea. It looks to be a long lettercol this time.

Richard Brandt, 4740 North Mesa #111, El Paso, Texas 79912

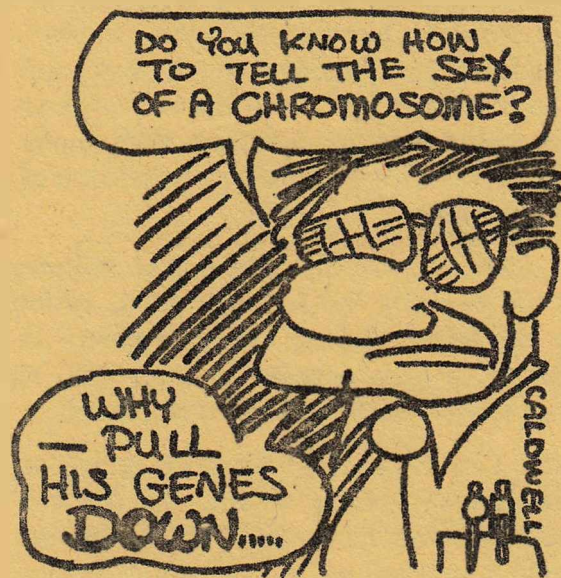
Thanks for *Mimosa* 9. (Geez, it's like leafing through that stack of *Fanac's* again...) Nice covers from Joe Mayhew, who impresses me more and more after making a modest first impression. Especially neat to have Dave Kyle explain the origins of his famous edict. I was surprised, when I was in charge of the Press Room for Noreascon Three, to receive a volunteer form from none other than Dave Kyle -- yes, that Dave Kyle. It's a peculiar sensation, I can tell you, to realize that you have the opportunity to boss Dave Kyle around. Now that's egohoo.

Craig Hilton's letter reminds me of a veteran English nurse who came to the States to help fill a nursing shortage. Asked to name the single biggest difference between hospitals here and in England, she promptly replied, "Gunshot wounds." Until she came Stateside, she'd never seen one.

Of course, I once attended a lecture and slide show by a British Army surgeon who'd been stationed in Northern Ireland, and learned a great deal about entry and exit wounds, as well as the results of sitting in a car with a bomb going off underneath it. "Not a lot we could do for this one," as he cheerfully described it.

Great loc from Joseph Nicholas (recap-ping many points made in his fanzine *Flag-rantly Titillating Title* or whatever). It will be interesting to see how the history books view the ongoing upheaval in Eastern Europe: as a response to the shining egalitarian example of the States (as Bush would clearly prefer to think it), or as a response to the reformist

example of noble Mikhail Gorbachev (the Martin Luther of the USSR) -- or as a temporary aberration, should the feared hardline backlash materialize in Moscow. (As some have remarked in re the prospect of the Soviet Union disintegrating, you don't really want anarchy among a band of states sharing one of the world's largest arsenals of nuclear warheads.)



Janice Murray, P.O. Box 75684, Seattle, Washington 98125

Richard Brandt's comment "Of course, at the same time we bemoan the scarcity of new blood we often view with alarm the barbarian hordes at the gates." really hit a familiar chord.

When I first became involved in fandom a dozen years ago, it was thorough a conrunning fan who roped me into working on Norwescon. At Norwescons I met the local fanzine fen at a fan-oriented panels. Once I tired of club politics the relatively anarchic atmosphere of The Other Fandom was a welcome change.

That was way back when Norwescons were famous for being literary-oriented. Sure, there were dances, ice cream socials, and John Shirley's band *shudder* but there was also lots of fascinating people to meet. The pinnacle was Norwescon Three in 1980 where I met

Judith Merril from Toronto, A. Bertram Chandler from Australia, and Mack Reynolds from Mexico. Those Norwescons drew intelligent, articulate, literate people like flies.

From there it went downhill. Somewhere along the way someone figured out that appealing to the gamers, vidiots, and costumers would be a lot more lucrative. As a result, ten years later Norwescon has no fanzine room, no fan guest of honor, minimal fan programming (not counting the obligatory panel where local conrunners get together and tell us how wonderful they are), and damn few people I would want to meet.

Insofar as Norwescons can no longer offer me a good return for my thirty bucks, I have gone to the last few only to sit at the bar and go to dinner with friends up from the Bay Area. In this, rich brown would say that I am in disagreement with Mike Glicksohn about the definition of "deadbeat." Well, I've disagreed with him before and no doubt will again. But I don't consume anything in the consuite, I don't try to get into programming, I don't even dance. In fact a few people said we had better panel discussions in the bar than they did in the function rooms.

I also go to the bid parties -- they want my vote, they'll answer my questions. Why should the concom get part of that action?

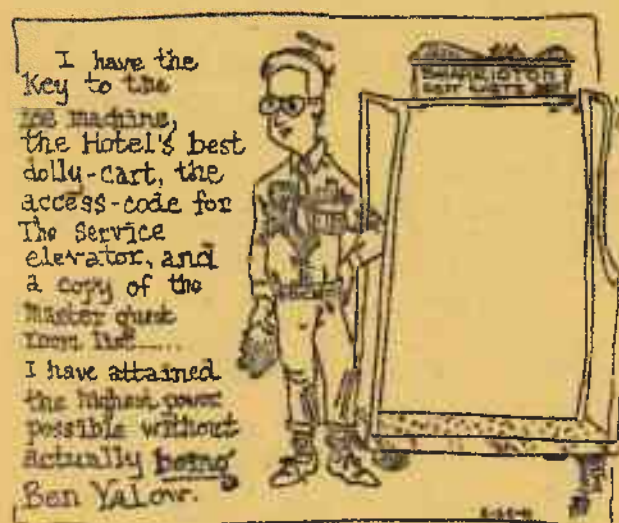
☞ It's sad that so many good cons have gone downhill. We think you're right that cons appeared to have changed when fringe fans got in change and were out only to make money. When a 24-hour video room or gamers' tournaments gets bigger billing than some of the invited guests, it's easy to see that times have changed. Like you, we've occasionally gone to cons as 'non-attending' members, where our only purpose was to see people we know and visit a bid party or two. And like you, as long as we're not gate crashing by pretending to be paying customers, we feel there is no harm.

This year even the Bayareans stayed away. Most of them said they're saving up for

the Vancouver Westercon. Three of them are hucksters who would rather brave the Canadian customs officials than sit at a convention notorious for lousy book sales.

So when the conversation known as Whither Fandom (or is it wither fandom?) comes up here I just point at the disintegration of book-oriented cons in Seattle. Fanzine fandom used to recruit from Norwescons. We can't do that any more.

So where will Seattle fanzine fandom recruit new blood, now that Norwescons are no longer good hunting grounds? Probably from the Clarion West workshops. Think of it: intelligent people, people who write even unto the point of paying a thousand dollars to be verbally abused... sounds like fanzine fandom to me.



Martyn Taylor, 14 Natal Road, Cambridge CB1 3NS, England

Charlie Williams' "Rat du Jour" illo on page 6 really got me, although I couldn't for the life of me say why. I just thought it was hilarious. Then I divined the reason. I spent a brief time in Vienna (from what I saw of it, one of the most over-rated cities you will find) and the one memory which keeps on coming back is of a lunch in the royal gardens or some such tourist trap. Ratsherrentoast it was, and I have to admit I enjoyed it, but I don't even have schoolboy German to know

that it doesn't mean gentleman rodent on toast.

☞ And that isn't even the illo we expected we'd get when we sent that page to Charlie! We'd left a spot at the end of the page, where we'd compared the elevator at the Brussels Beaux-Arts Museum with a shuttlecraft of the Starship Enterprise, figuring that lead-in would be an easy one for him to pick up on. Instead, he found an even better spot for a cartoon on that page. He continues to amaze us in being able to come up with funny illustrations for even the most mundane of descriptions.

I believe you are aware that *Mimosa* is just too friendly for its own good, which is why the letter column always appears to be made up of little articles in their own right rather than specific letters of comment.

☞ Lots of people have been telling us lately, in one way or another, that *Mimosa* is a hard fanzine to LoC. You're the first one who's said we're too friendly for our own good, though! Thanks (we think). Anyway, there's no good answer to the comments about it being difficult to find comment hooks. Maybe one reason is that fan history articles are not easy to relate to. Or that amusing, anecdotal articles are fun to read but not very comment-inspiring. Or maybe it's just that we're too damn friendly for our own good...

Shelby Vick, 627 Barton Avenue, Panama City, Florida 32404

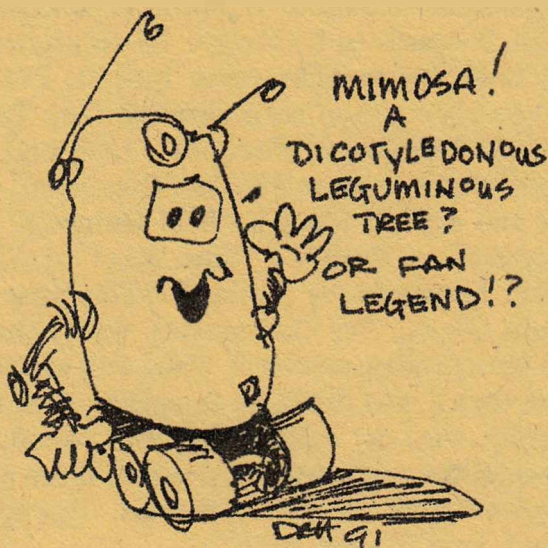
rich brown's comment that *Mimosa* left no handles to grab reminded me of a bit of self-analysis I indulged in recently to Norm Metcalf in a LoC to his fanzine *Tyndallite*. Lack of handles seems to have been my trademark in fandom; not only with my fanzine, Confusion, but also in letters and articles. I bring up a point, then look at both sides of it and -- if I reach any conclusion at all -- say

something like, "Of course, that's just my personal opinion..." I try not to be offensive, I try not to be argumentative, and just attempt some mild humor.

Admittedly, this has some advantages; I don't collect enemies, I don't get into feuds... but I also leave little trace behind me. If I hadn't been in on the revelation that Lee Hoffman was NOT a sixteen year old boy, and then followed that by the Willis Campaign, my other works in fandom would have left barely a ripple. You know, a pleasant occurrence, but nothing memorable.

But, transferring this to *Mimosa*, I'm NOT advising that you start a feud or raise Cain in some other way just to be sure you're remembered. Don't change... unless, of course, you want to launch some worthwhile Campaign for a worthy fan... (But be careful that it's a fan who is willing to devote 48 hours a day to making the campaign succeed.)

Roger Waddington hit a point I have often remarked on: All the advances in desktop publishing have made it too easy to put out a polished-looking fanzine, far superior in appearance to the old mimeoed or hectographed zines. Note I said 'appearance': there were some zines that were hard to read but well worth the effort -- and, if nothing else, your appreciated the effort it took to put it out.



Peggy Rae Pavlat, 5709 Goucher Drive, College Park, Maryland 20740

Thank you for sending me a copy of *Mimosa* 9. Your fanzine and those of Mark Manning are extremely reminiscent of the wonderful fanzines which were being published in the early 1960s. I didn't intend to write a tale of the past, but I seem to have done so. Use it if you wish.

My reluctance to write letters of comment stems from an experience I had when I was (probably) seventeen. At the time, I was dating Ron Ellik (the Squirrel) and he had come to the east coast to see me. During his stay, we traveled to New York City and visited with both the Lupoffs (Dick and Pat) and the Shaws (Noreen and Larry).

This was the period when the Lupoffs were publishing a marvelous fanzine, *Xero*, and the Shaws were publishing a frantically-paced newszine named *Ax*. *Ax* was the kind of fanzine which may only have been possible in that era. It served to keep all of us in the science fiction family abreast of Important Affairs (and other matters of state). During this same period I was publishing a little-known and long forgotten fanzine named *Etwas*. (I saw a copy in the fanzine room at a Worldcon not too many years ago -- how nice to say that I enjoyed re-reading it! Even the first issue!!!)

While we were at the Shaw's home, the mail was delivered. I was shocked to see Noreen bring in about TEN INCHES of fanzines! When I made some smart comment about the mail being light today, Noreen looked at me ruefully and replied that this was "about normal."

Some years later, I brought in my own mail and there were TWO INCHES of fanzines!

Since I wasn't publishing *Ax*, and I wasn't doing anything but publishing my 80-copy fanzine and sending letters of comment to interested fanzines, I quickly figured out

where this could lead if I didn't change my behavior!

My last letter of comment was sent the day before the Three Inch Day. Ever so slowly the mail carrier's expression changed when we happened to meet on the street. No longer did he cower and turn his back should we meet. Occasionally he even smiled.

Harold P. Sanderson, 25 Washington Drive, N. Lindenhurst, New York 11757

It was interesting to see that Dave Kyle is still going strong as is (obviously) Bob Shaw. The last time I saw Dave was when we discussed '50s fan-type things on a panel during a Denver Worldcon. That was about ten years ago and it was the last con I attended. I haven't seen Bob since we left England to come over here, and that is over thirty years ago.

I don't mean to ignore your own sterling effort (any more than I mean to pound in the fact that I'm British -- damn you Shaw, you're still contagious) or the amusing piece by Dave Luckett which I did luckett and read, but I wanted to spend most of the time with your letter column. Letter columns have always been the major element of '50s fanzines. I almost said 'major focal point' but I think I killed that phrase stone cold dead in several issues of *Aporrheta* (1958-60).

In connection with the general subject of the letters in *Mimosa* 9, I could claim that the major reason I stopped going to cons was, in fact, the sheer size of the monsters. To be truthful tho', I have to admit that was only a part of the reason. (Although a big part. Prior to arriving in the States, the largest con I had attended was the first Worldcon held outside the North American continent. That was the first London con and I was the Treasurer and I don't even want to think about what that meant. I still have nightmares...)

I suppose the main reason was that Joy and I found so much to do in this New World that we just naturally gafiated. We did have a little fan life at the start of our time here, but it was mainly limited to local New York events.

I have to object to a point made by Marc Ortlieb that 'It is only hindsight that gives zines a legendary status'. This might be true of some fanzines, but not the two he mentions, *Hyphen* and *Le Zombie*. I'll limit myself to *Hyphen* and simply point out that this was very much a legend in its own time. My God, grown men were known to go around weeping and moaning and suffering terrible withdrawal pains each time that *Hyphen* was late. Walt Willis, Bob Shaw (he of the Typewriter), James White, George Charters, Chuck 'Down with King Billy' Harris (Irish Fandom's very own London Circle spy), and later, John Berry -- all were an essential part of this heady mixture that we all had to have at any cost. And let us not forget ATom. His 'Church, anyone?' after-the-con-party cover for *Hyphen* is one I will never forget. I will always be thankful that he did the covers for me for *Aporrheta* (all 17 of them), but his work for *Hyphen* was simply superb.

I would like to try to respond to Lloyd Penney's question as to what made the '50s fanzine writing so fannish, but it seems to me this is one of those things that is almost impossible to define. If you have to explain a joke, it ceases to be funny. In an attempt to at least try to offer some insight, I've just taken time out to scan through Guy Terwilliger's *The Best of Fandom - 1958* and as a result I am at more of a loss than ever. How do you explain Bloch's "Bah! Humbug" from *Oopslal*, or Burbee's "The Mind of Chow" from *Innuendo*, or Tucker's "The Biter Bit" from *Grue*... For that matter, would they be as funny today, anyway? They still are to me, but then I was there, so to speak. And then, surely that is colored by the period, the events, the environment in which these pieces were created. All of that is gone. The style is dead, long live the style.

Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, California 91722

Richard Gilliam's description of The Founding Fathers Period of Fanzine history rather frightens me. It seems to be an accurate description of the era which ended a decade or so before I entered fandom, but also of Media Fandom today, and the latter group is so much larger than ours was (and publication is so much easier now, albeit perhaps more expensive) that I don't want to think about what's going to happen in the next 50 years.

Like Lloyd Penney, I see no dearth of fanzines. I don't receive as many as I would like, of course, but far more than I can handle as a very slow writer of very long LoCs. As Lloyd says, fanzines are now "just one of the many activities fandom encompasses;" what he doesn't mention is that they used to be one of the things every fan did.

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

A postscript to my letter in *Mimosa* 9. Looking through my art files for something else, I found *The WSFA Journal* covers for #83 and #85, issues I don't have in my fanzine collection, so I was clearly mistaken when I said #76 was the end of Don Miller's run of *TWJ*, even though it did sort of mark the finish, or the beginning of the end. Don was very, very tenacious.



Martin Morse Wooster, P.O. Box 8093, Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Thanks for *Mimosa* 9. Since Don Miller isn't around to answer Alexis Gilliland, may I say a few words in his defense?

I first met Don in 1975, after he split with WSFA but while he was still publishing. Yes, Don was a bit of a nerd; he was the sort of person who thought the epitome of fun was to hide in his attic and type stencils on a battered old Underwood. And WSFA was probably right to institute a divorce with Miller, since few WSFAns, then or now, are interested in fanzines or fan publishing. (I can only think of one fanzine, Mary Hagan's *The Mad Engineer*, published by a WSFAn during the 1980s. All of the zines Gilliland cites were published before 1980.)

But Miller's fanzines were good sercon zines. They always had items of interest, and featured major articles by Thomas Burnett Swann and Gene Wolfe. Miller also was one of the first mystery fanzine publishers. His zines were not flashy, and certainly not faanish, but they still hold up well. Miller should be regarded as one of the major fan editors of his time (1970-1977).

Don Miller's wife did not sell his fanzine collection "for scrap paper." The collection ended up in the hands of a Pennsylvania dealer, who sold fanzines from the collection at East Coast conventions for several years after Miller's death. And Don Miller's wife was the quintessential Antifan; even if Don had published the sort of fanzines Gilliland prefers, she would have still hated fandom.

Barry Newton, P.O. Box 153, Sandy Spring, Maryland 20860

I hope you will be suitably impressed at receiving my first LoC of the new year. Almost my first ever, but that went off to some folks in England shortly after *Confiction*.

A few impressions on form and content; firstly as to form: this looked a lot like the

zine I'll publish if I ever find the gumption. You don't use too many type styles, which suits me just fine. One thing I had trouble with was the typeface you use for your comments and responses. On shiny, coated white paper, it would probably stand out from the text very nicely, but on your solid, trufaanish stock, most of the contrast is blotted out.

☞ That typeface is called 'Tongue-in-Cheek'... Well, not really, but we do agree that some typefaces look better than others in a mimeo'd fanzine. We're still experimenting to see which of the ones we have available will reproduce readably.

In the general category of form, let me include style. As someone who has only occasionally picked up a fanzine in the last twenty years, let me say that it's nice to be able to follow the text without a key to acronyms. Also, there's very little stridency of tone or coarseness of language. Are all of your writers this gentle, or do they get a bit of editorial help?

☞ We (usually) let our writers be as #*&#ing coarse and ungentle as they want to be...

As for content, before I ever consider publishing anything ever, I will study your techniques for getting material. Forty pages of coherent language from fans. People even I have heard of. Art, by artists who had been given a chance to read what they were illustrating. There's a lesson in production by itself.

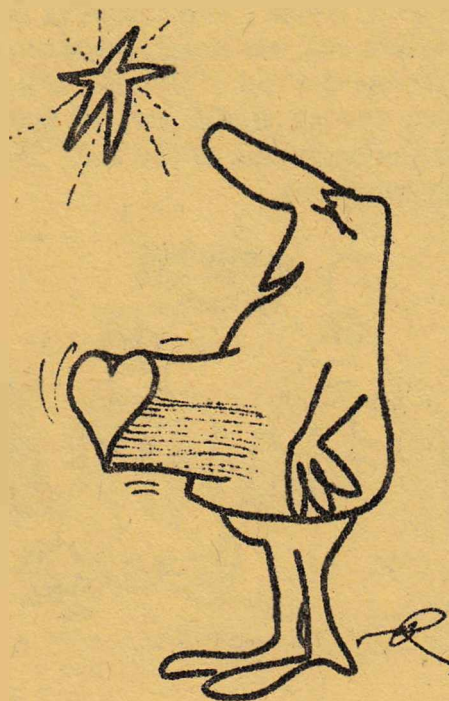
☞ Our technique for getting material is a simple one to master -- it's called 'begging'. Some of our contributors refer to it as 'pestering'. Seriously, it does take quite a bit of effort to gather all the contributions for each issue, and we've got the telephone bills to prove it! If you keep publishing a fanzine year after year, though, it eventually gets easier and easier to get enough material for each succeeding issue, as if there's a fannish Law of Inertia that eventually takes effect. And we're glad that it does; with the high cost

of new clothes, we can't afford to wear the knees out of too many more blue-jeans!

We Also Heard From:


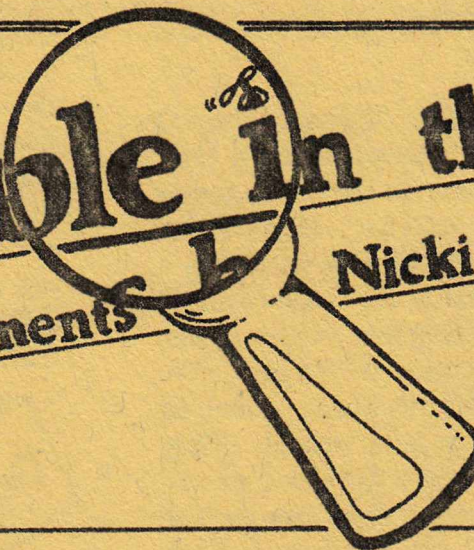
Harry Andruschak; Martha Beck; Sheryl Birkhead; Redd Boggs; Bill Bowers; Ned Brooks; Brian Earl Brown; Gary Brown; Roger Caldwell; Gregg Calkins; G. M. Carr; Joan W. Carr; P. L. Caruthers-Montgomery; Joe Celko; Russ Chauvenet; Vincent Clarke; Buck Coulson; Richard Court; Don D'Amassa; Gary Deindorfer; Carolyn Doyle; Jenny Glover; Ian Gunn; David Haugh; David Heath, Jr.; Arthur Hlavaty; Lee Hoffman; Alan Hutchinson; Ruth Judkowitz; Arnie Katz; Irv Koch; R'ykandar Korra'ti; Fred Liddle; Guy Lillian III; Mark Manning; Norm Metcalf; Pat Molloy; Chris Nelson; Spike Parsons; Bruce Pelz; Dave Rike; David Rowe; David Schlosser; Julius Schwartz; Bob Shaw; Ricky Sheppard; Ruth Shields; Dale Speirs; Alan Stewart; Alan J. Sullivan; Phil Tortorici; Paul Valcours; Wally Weber; Toni Weisskopf; Taras Wolansky

(Thanks also to those who sent Canadian and Australian stamps.)



Undetectable in the '90s

Closing Comments



Nicki Lynch

Besides Midwestcon, we always try to attend the DeepSouthCon, since it's the one regional that just about every Southern fan attends. It's also where most of SFPA (the southern apa) meets every year and it's often a source of fan history anecdotal stories. This year, the DSC was in Knoxville, Tennessee, so we also wanted to catch up with some of our Knoxville friends we hadn't seen in a while.

We had some trepidation about this DSC. Unlike most of the Southern cons, we didn't know the people running this one very well. This con also had next to no publicity. We wrote on several occasions for information, but received nothing in return. Even offers to put out fliers on the freebie tables at conventions in our area didn't get a reply. So, we began to call this DSC the "Stealthcon," after the airplane that can't be detected by radar. This con couldn't be detected by fans!

As we drove down to Knoxville for this year's DSC, I thought about fans and con-going in general. With eight hours of driving, that's a lot of thinking time, and I came up with various stages that convention fans seem to go through.

Everyone is different, and some people jump right to Stage 6 without passing GO or collecting \$200. However, here are the stages I have seen. I don't include the people who only attend cons to drink or dance, having no

real interest in SF or the other fans. I'm talking about the real fans.

Stage 1: The Discovery. A person discovers conventions. The person may have been in fandom for years, attending club meetings, doing fanzine work, or simply reading about conventions. The line is crossed when the fan attends his or her first con. The fan then discovers all the activities at a con -- programming, huckster room, art show, and parties. This is all new and wonderful, and worthy of exploration. Anyone who isn't interested in any of this doesn't come back and doesn't become a confan.

Stage 2: The Entrapment. This is when the fan begins to attend cons on a regular basis. Many fans begin to follow a circuit in their region and make the annual regional their primary convention. There are many fans who only attend one convention, the one in their city. There are also people who only attend WorldCon, no matter where it is. The fan at this point is beginning to make friendships that may last a lifetime. In time, the fan will have a circle of friends that show up at the same cons and hang out together. Besides making friends, the fan begins to attend programming. We all have spent some time at programming, whether it's the panel discussions, banquet, awards ceremony, masquerade, dances, gaming, or films and videos. They may also be interested in attending all the

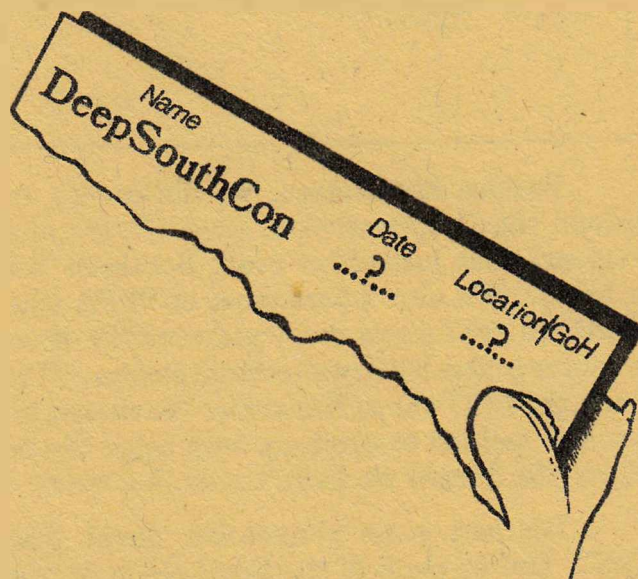
parties in the evening. Many fans start this stage while in Stage 1.

Stage 3: The Organizing. This stage begins at Stage 2, but usually reinforced by a club. Nowadays, clubs run cons as the club's major (and sometimes only) activity. Many a fan has been sucked into confandom by doing a few favors out of friendship for those running a con. For those organizing few, running cons becomes the important part of fandom. We know who they are. They're always involved in running whatever con they attend. They volunteer when they register for a con, or run a section of the local con. They run parties for bids or to publicize the local con. They have all the latest gossip about cons and know all the details about the WorldCons. There's nothing wrong with all this activity, but it's not for everyone.

Stage 4: The Burnout. This stage is usually reached by fans who are serious Stage 3 people. They find every weekend is taken up with traveling somewhere and working a con. Or, they find most of their spare time taken up with con-related activities. Or, they find that not only are their every weekend and spare time taken up with con activities, but their regular job is put aside for con running. The usual sign of this stage is that the fan drops out of fandom. When all the con activities get to be just too much, a fan will gaffiate, just to step back and take a breather. In other cases, too much of the mundane life -- family, job, or studies -- is being neglected. Then the fan is forced to drop out of fandom to get work done in other areas, thus faffiate.

Stage 5: The Renouncement. This stage is taken by the fan who wants to avoid Stage 4. The fan cuts back on the number of cons or drops off committees, or learns to "Just Say No" to volunteering. The fan takes the time to be with friends, rather than running off to do a job at each con. At this point, the fan has been around long enough to skip most of programming, but generally attends the parties to see friends and talk about cons.

Stage 6: Just Having Fun: This stage can be reached at any time after Stage 1. This is the stage where the fan goes to be with friends, maybe attend a little programming, maybe cruise the huckster room, maybe see the art show, may dance a little. The parties are definitely in. In fact, that may be the only con activity the fan attends. Many fans are at this stage, usually the older fans and the trufans.



There are no hard and fast delineations for these stages, just general feelings. There may be other stages I've forgotten, or they probably could be rearranged or renamed. But these are my observations, based on over 15 years in fandom, attending cons and the like.

What stage do I see myself in? Well, as we drove out of Knoxville, I realized that I hadn't gone in the huckster room as I usually do. Many of the people I talked to were disappointed in it, so I guess I didn't miss much. I acquired books from the Baen party and a half-price store we found in our travels, so I was satisfied. I also reflected on what a good time I had being with friends, even though the con was loosely organized. When it comes down to it, the friends we have in fandom are the most important part of a con. I'm glad I went. Guess I'm Stage 6. Hope you are, too. ➡

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