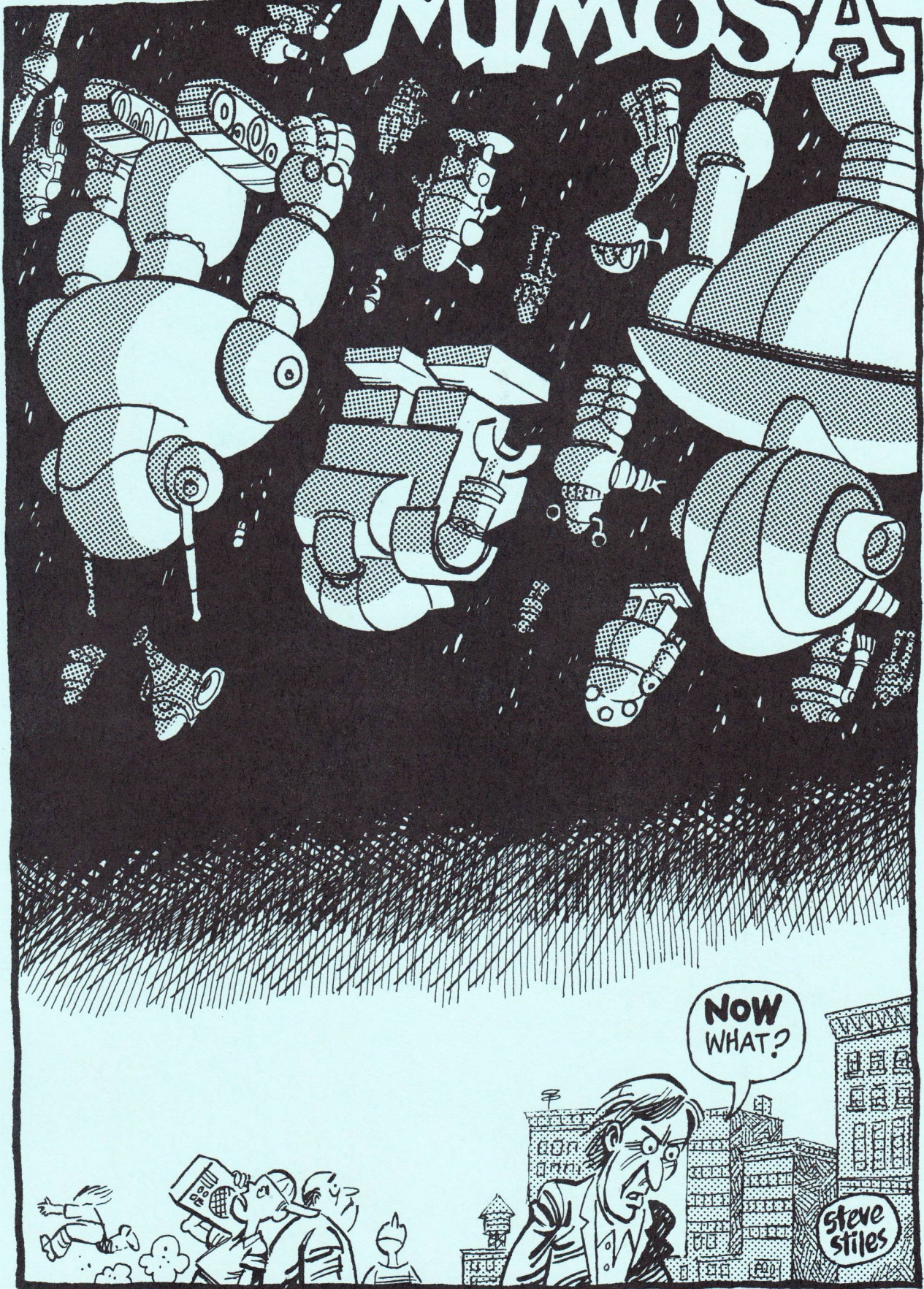


# MIMOSA



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n u m b e r   e l e v e n





from 1993 Down Under Fan Fund candidates **Dick and Nicki Lynch**, P.O. Box 1350, Germantown, Maryland 20875, U.S.A. (and please note our new postal box number)

This eleventh issue of *Mimosa* was published in late December 1991, and is available for the truly cost-effective price of two dollars U.S. or equivalent. A letter of comment on this issue will bring you a copy of *Mimosa* 12 in late June or early July. We also have a continuing need for first-person articles of an anecdotal nature about science fiction fandom and/or things fans do, especially if they are of fan historical interest; publication of same here will keep you on our mailing list permanently. This entire issue is ©1991 by Dick and Nicki Lynch, with individual rights reverting back to contributors after this one-time use. All opinions expressed by contributors are their own.

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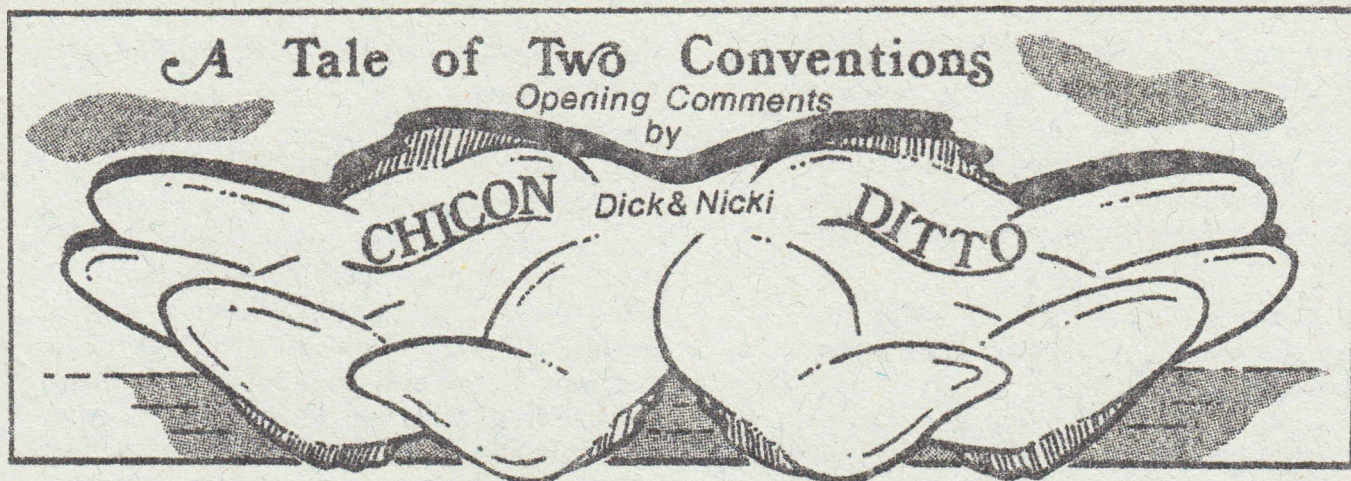
## CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Opening Comments: A Tale of Two Conventions (Dick & Nicki) .....	3
2. The Most Noble and Illustrious Order of St. Fantony (Dave Kyle) .....	8
3. Operation Dessert Storm (Bruno Ogorelec) .....	14
4. The Fiat Worse than Death (Craig Hilton) .....	18
5. The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Nullarbor Plain (Ian Gunn) .....	22
6. Thru Darkest Florida with Sample Can (Shelby Vick) .....	28
7. I Remember Me (Walt Willis) .....	30
8. The Horrors of War and Other Morbid Clichés (David Thayer) .....	35
9. Tales of Adventure and Medical Life, Part 6 (Sharon Farber) .....	40
10. Cry Wolf (Sheryl Birkhead) .....	44
11. Tales from a Time Traveler, Part 1 (Julius Schwartz) .....	46
12. Artist Credits .....	47
13. Mimosa Letters .....	48
14. Contributors .....	61



## A Tale of Two Conventions

Opening Comments  
by



We suppose it's only natural that people we correspond with think of us as fanzine fans, since that's how many of you have come to know us. This fanzine and its predecessor, *Chat*, have provided us visibility to others who are interested in this particular kind of small press publication. And, in return, we've gotten to know quite a few of you pretty well, even if we haven't yet had the pleasure of actually meeting some of you in person.

However, it also wouldn't be wrong to classify us as convention fans. Before we ever did a single issue of *Chat*, we had been regularly attending sf conventions for over two years. We currently average about eight or nine conventions a year -- pretty small by Tuckerian standards, but still probably well above the average for sf fandom.

Most of the conventions we go to are reasonably close by, but there are a few that we'll travel a long distance to attend. One of them, of course, is Midwestcon. It's now about four hours farther away than it used to be from Tennessee, but it would have to be a lot farther than that before we'd scratch it from our travel plans each year. Two other conventions that have become habits with us are about as much a contrast to each other as can possibly be -- Worldcon and Corflu, the latter being, of course, a fanzine fans' convention.

And yet, we attend them for the same reason -- they are two places we're likely to meet other fanzine fans and friends that we rarely get to see otherwise.

It was that very anticipation of getting together with friends that made us look forward to the long drive to Chicago for Worldcon this year. We had discussed other means of getting there, like flying, but the drive didn't look difficult -- just long -- and it turned out we could save several hundred dollars by providing our own transportation.

So drive we did. We left home the day before the convention, with the intention of stopping over somewhere in Indiana or Ohio that night, leaving what we expected would be an easy drive to Chicago on the opening day of Chicon. To get there, we took a southerly route through western Maryland, southern Pennsylvania, and central Ohio and Indiana. Besides avoiding hundreds of miles of toll roads, this would also allow us to visit an architectural marvel we'd been wanting to see for quite some time -- Frank Lloyd Wright's "Fallingwater" house in southwestern Pennsylvania.

We stopped in Cumberland, Maryland for lunch, and to that point the drive had been pretty routine, but we were amused by all the science fictional references we had noticed along the way. One of the exits from Interstate 68 is M. V. Smith Road (no sign of any R. A. Heinlein Avenue though). Farther along, right where I-68 passes up and over the eastern continental divide, we passed beneath Green Lantern Road (the day was pretty bright and no evil was in sight). The radio stations we listened to along the way were playing music as if they *knew* we were heading for a science fiction convention -- the



send-off we got as we left home was the Byrds' "Mr. Spaceman", just before we stopped for lunch we heard "2,000 Light Years from Home" by the Rolling Stones, and as we neared the turnoff for Fallingwater, there was Donovan and "Sunshine Superman".

Perhaps Donovan's other 1960s hit, "Mellow Yellow", might have been more appropriate at that point, though. The road to Fallingwater was two lane and narrow, and we were often trapped behind slow moving vehicles. On the one occasion where it was possible to pass, Dick eased the car out over the yellow line to have a look-see for oncoming traffic. Immediately there was a wet-sounding \*squelch\* from the road as if we were driving through congealing mud. Ulp! We looked at each other, then, with a feeling of dread, in our car's rear view mirrors. Sure enough, there was a yellow tire-mark trail on the road. A little farther on, the road-painting truck was parked in a turn-off, having just restriped the section of road we had traveled. We never did see any road crew setting out warning pylons; we suspect that the Pennsylvania state budget is so tight these days it's cheaper and easier just to let motorists find out for themselves.

When we got to Fallingwater, we found a thick splattering of yellow paint along one side and near the bottom of our nice white car. Most of it is still there. It won't wash off, but Dick says it will flake off under his thumbnail, bit by bit. In fact, every time he goes out to drive it, he makes a point to flake off a little bit more of it. The rate he's going, he should be finished by, say, "In the Year 2525"...

Anyway, Fallingwater was spectacular, and lived up to our expectations, especially the magnificent view from the southwest atop a little ridge overlooking the creek that runs past the house. The rest of the way to Chicago presented no further difficulties, aside from long stretches of interstate repaving. We got as far as Springfield, Ohio that night, and made it to the convention the next day about an hour before opening ceremo-

nies. It was time for the Worldcon First Fan guessing game...

We play this little game every time we go to a Worldcon. The object is to correctly guess who the first fan we recognize will be. Past 'winners' have included people almost anyone would recognize (Moshe Feder and Marty Cantor), and people almost anyone wouldn't (George Wells and Ron Zukowski). Last year in Holland, the first fan we recognized at Confiction was Barry Newton, who lives only about 20 miles from here. We looked at each other in mock disbelief, then Dick said, "You mean we came to this convention just to meet you?"

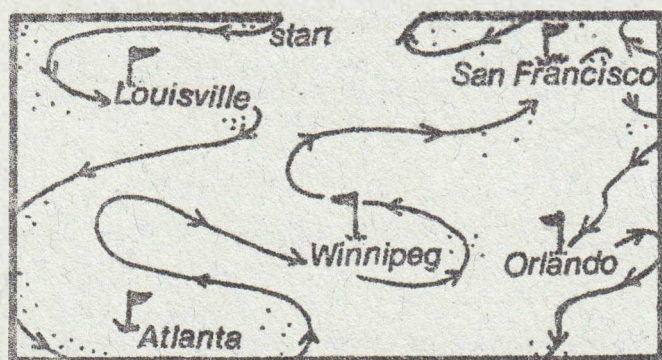
This year, the 'winner' was Dan Hoey, who lives only slightly farther from us than does Barry. The odds of this happening two years in a row we figured was pretty steep. We didn't seem to find any omen from the fannish ghods in it, but Dick decided he'd better rush right out and buy an Illinois lottery ticket, just in case.

Actually, we didn't need too much luck during Chicon in finding people we had looked forward to seeing, but we weren't usually fortunate enough to be able to enjoy their company for more than relatively short periods of time. We were always able to connect up with friends for dinner or sight-seeing, but never seemed to hang around with each other afterwards. This was true even beyond the bounds of the convention itself -- we barely managed more than a hail and farewell for two old friends from Knoxville we met in the Chicago Institute of Art's rest room, before we had to move on (this gives a different kind of meaning to the parting phrase 'gotta go!').

The chaotic nature of Chicon was perhaps most typified by the nightly room parties. It used to be possible to find people you knew at Worldcon bid parties, and be able to sit down with them and talk for a while. It was something you looked forward to doing, in fact. No longer! Bid parties at Worldcons are now human pinball machines. You carom off people making your way to the bar for refreshments; your senses are assaulted by a



kaleidoscope of sight and sound. It's impossible to understand anyone who is more than two feet away from you. The most extreme example of this was Winnipeg bid party, where people were ushered in one doorway of their suite to where beverages and snacks were being served; the press of incoming people then sort of extruded you out the other doorway. If you weren't quick with your hands, you didn't get anything to eat or drink. We don't know how anyone could be expected to find out anything about a Worldcon bid there.



One quiet innovation in bid parties we observed during Chicon was the *morning* parties served up by the Louisville and Atlanta Worldcon bids. This saved the cost of breakfast for those who could haul themselves out of bed before the crack of noon. (We had seen this done earlier at a regional convention, so it wasn't a totally new idea.) Louisville had a low-tech breakfast of cake and cookies while Atlanta went hi-tech with french toast. Unfortunately, the hotel wiring wasn't so hi-tech, and all the hot plates going at once caused their hotel suite's circuit breakers to trip with annoying frequency. Eventually, they did work it all out, and we hope this will become a new tradition at conventions everywhere.

Apart from the parties, other things we remember most about Chicon were the baseball game excursion we and about 20 other fans took to the new Comiskey Park (we even received scoreboard recognition, which probably left the other 40,000 people at the game wondering what a 'Chicon' was), the off-the-beaten-path location of the fanzine

room (yet again), and our first Hugo Awards ceremony as nominees.

We weren't exactly surprised when we were notified in May that *Mimosa* would be appearing on the Chicon Hugo ballot. The year before, we had tied for seventh in nominating ballots, and two fanzines that finished higher were not published in 1990. On the other hand, we wouldn't have been upset if *Mimosa* hadn't been nominated -- the reason we publish *Mimosa* has nothing to do with winning awards. Instead, the experience was mostly pleasant, a point we tried to bring across in the autobiographical sketch we were asked to write for the Hugo Ceremony booklet:

#### DICK AND NICKI LYNCH AVERAGE FANS

Even though we edit a general interest fanzine, we are somewhat unaccustomed to writing about ourselves, so this fan-nish autobiographical sketch will be mercifully short. For those who have never met us, Dick is the taller and the more rabid baseball fan, while Nicki is the comelier and the more artistically inclined. Although we are originally from New York State, we now live in the Washington, D.C. metro area, a far cry from southeastern Tennessee where we were living when we discovered fandom going on two decades ago. There, we were co-founders (along with a lot of people) of the now-defunct Chattanooga Science Fiction Association. Since then, we have been, individually or combined, active as convention chairs, fanzine publishers, amateur press association official editors, artists, and artist agents. We've also attended lots of conventions, although until the last three years, most of them have been in the mid-south U.S.A. At one of them, the 1981 Deep-SouthCon, we were honored with the Rebel Award "... for service to Southern Fandom." All in all, though, we consider ourselves fairly ordinary fans -- we own fewer books than Forry Ackerman, have



fewer fanzines than Bruce Pelz, have attended fewer conventions than Bob Tucker, and have a much lower annual income than Jerry Pournelle, Inc. It's only our fanzine, *Mimosa*, that you Chicon V members have kindly informed us that is above average. And for that, you have our thanks and appreciation.

It turned out that we weren't fortunate enough to win this year, but if nothing else, being seated in the nominees section gave us a better view of the proceedings. And one of the things we got a good look at was the actual Hugo Award itself (we were seated right next to Teddy Harvia, who won one). The rocket was made out of acrylic instead of metal this year, and was attached to a thin circular marble base by a hex nut that could easily be tightened or loosened by hand. The Chicon committee had designed the award for easy disassembly for packing and shipping. This was demonstrated to our amusement when one of the winners unscrewed the rocket from the base and stuffed it in his pocket. At that point, the fellow's female companion asked him, "Is that a Hugo in your pocket, or are you just happy to see me?"

We *were*n't really very happy to see the convention wind down, even given the reality that it was by no means the best-run Worldcon we've been to. At times, organizational breakdowns affected many of the scheduled program events. One example was an unscheduled practice session for the Masquerade, which disrupted scheduled events for that ballroom the same day. Some events, most notably the opening and closing ceremonies, looked pitifully under-rehearsed. A few planned events, like the Worldcon bidders panel, were, by some oversight, omitted from the pocket program altogether and as a result never happened. The TAFF/DUFF Auction almost fell into this last category, but word-of-mouth publicity as well as some last-minute hand-lettered signs posted in the Program events area saved the day.

As we were driving home, we had lots of time to think back over the previous six days and talk about our individual highlights. We enjoyed seeing many of our friends again, many of whom contribute to this fanzine. We also made new acquaintances, like TAFF representative Pam Wells and first fandomite Mel Korshak. In spite of organizational breakdowns, real and perceived, it's really the people you meet that can make the difference between a subjectively 'good' and 'bad' convention. Using that as a yardstick, Chicon was a 'good' convention for us. We're happy we went, and we're happy we had the chance to see old friends and new, even though we wish we could have been in a more compact setting.

\* \* \*

That 'seeing old friends and new' wish came true for us a little over a month later, at Ditto 4, hosted by Cathy Doyle and Kip Williams in Virginia Beach; it was a convention as much unlike a Worldcon as can possibly be. Whereas Chicon had thousands of people in attendance, this convention had about thirty. Where Chicon tried to appeal to just about everyone, this convention was meant exclusively for the fanzine fan. Where Chicon had many different concurrent tracks of programming, this convention had less than one, and that consisted of sitting on a veranda looking out onto the Atlantic Ocean.

The Atlantic Ocean turned out to be the featured attraction of the convention. Mid October was well past the tourist season, so the beach was almost deserted. But the weather that weekend was unseasonably warm, and much of the convention's activities moved outdoors to the large patio area overlooking the beach. It was almost surreal, sitting in the warm sunshine talking about fanzine publishing with Ted White and rich brown, all the while watching big ships slowly sail out beyond where the ocean meets the sky.

The nice weather that weekend also benefitted other events besides Ditto. Since



the season was over, we expected Virginia Beach to be almost empty. Well, it wasn't -- it was overrun with people getting married! The hotel we stayed at hosted several weddings each day we were there. Fortunately, we were on the 'non-wedding' floor and weren't bothered by all the partying. Saturday night there were three weddings going on. One of them, at the older part of our hotel across the street from us, was an elaborate affair with a very loud country music band -- we had no trouble hearing it from almost a quarter of a mile away as we were walking back to the hotel's main entrance from the meeting rooms. That same night, another wedding party commandeered the hotel's rooftop restaurant for a private party. We fans could have probably joined any of the festivities, if we hadn't been dressed like fans. Somehow, we didn't think 'Jophan Says: Pub Your Ish' t-shirts would go unnoticed in the bride's reception line...

There was really no need to get involved in other people's parties, anyway. Cathy and Kip had gone out of their way to make sure the convention had enough refreshments to easily last the weekend. And there were no human pinball parties here! There was plenty of time to talk about fanzines and fan

publishing, something we never seemed to be able to do very much of at Chicon. One recurring topic was the forthcoming new edition of Harry Warner, Jr.'s fan history of the 1950s, *A Wealth of Fable*. Dick had brought dozens of photos of past-era fans that he was trying to identify for possible use in the new edition. Several enjoyable hours were spent listening to Ted White, Roger Sims, and Bill Bowers provide identifications, and then tell stories involving many of the fans pictured in those photos. It was the stuff that fanzine articles are made from...

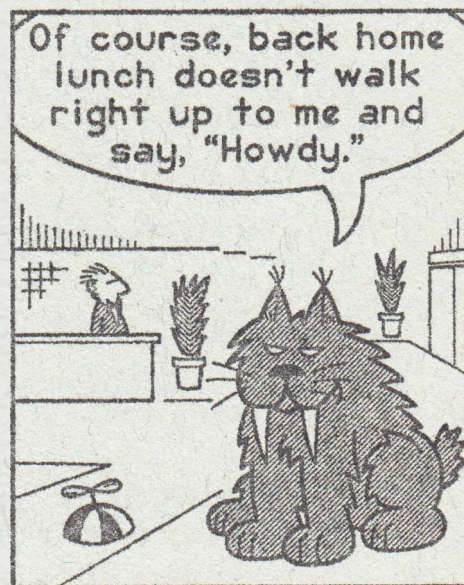
It seemed almost a shame when Sunday afternoon rolled around and it was time to leave for home. Ditto had been a nice counterpoint to Worldcon, and had banished some of the discontentment the chaos of Chicon had left with us.

In spite of all our travels this year, we're not in any danger of burnout. In fact, Corflu, the *other* fanzine fans' convention, is a mere 75 days (and a transcontinental plane ride) away as we write this. The convention committee is inviting several 1950s-era fanzine fans who live in the area. It'll be epic.

It'll be the stuff that fanzine articles are made from... ➡

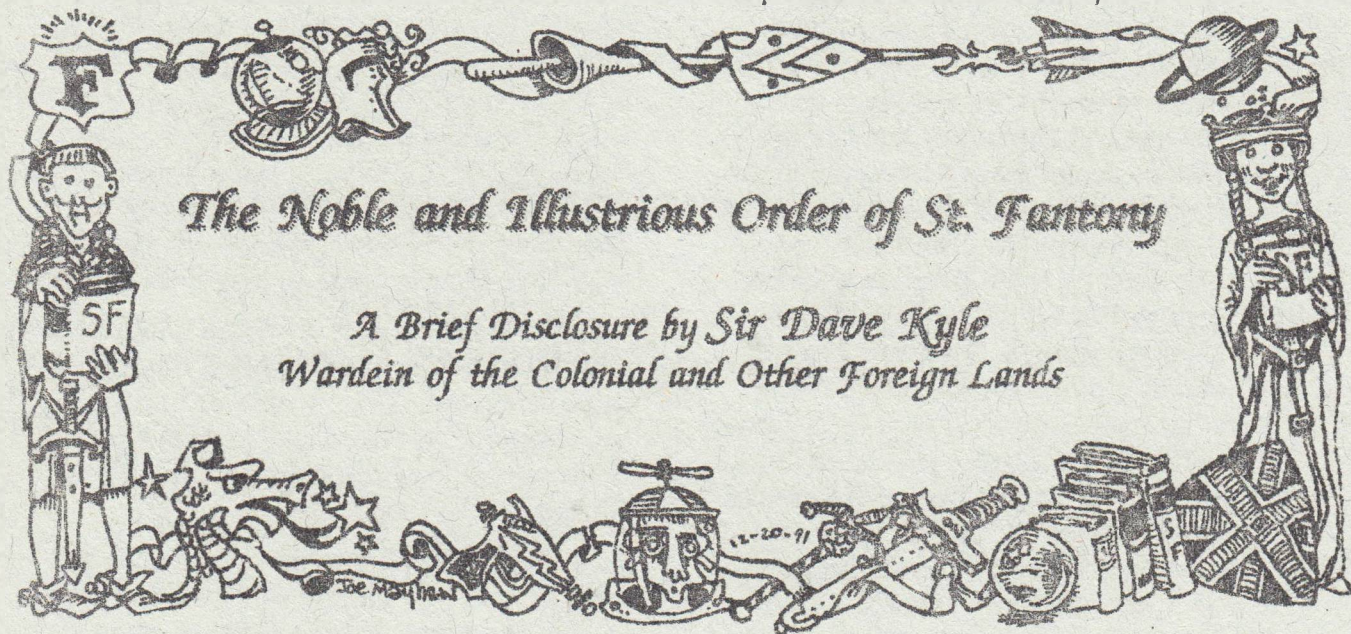
## CHAT, THE 4TH FANNISH GHOD

By TEDDY HARVIA





➤ We begin this eleventh issue of *Mimosa* as we've begun several previous issues, with a trip to northern New York State for a visit with Dave Kyle. The wilds of northern New York are by no means uncharted territory for us; we both attended college, met each other, and were married in the small town of Potsdam, New York before either of us were aware that Dave also lived there. On our brief but fannish visit back to Potsdam and Dave's house this past July, he showed us his collection of anachronistic fan artifacts that were the inspiration of this fan history article.



## *The Noble and Illustrious Order of St. Fantony*

*A Brief Disclosure by Sir Dave Kyle  
Wardein of the Colonial and Other Foreign Lands*

*Verily, even as the legend foretells, only the TRUFAN may taste of the spirit in the water from Saint Fantony's well. -- so declaimed the original Grand Master during the climactic moments of The Test by which one becomes a Knight or Lady of The Order.*

What's this all about? Who are the Knights and Ladies of St. Fantony? What is the Great Ceremonie? Who was Saint Fantony, anyhow?

The St. Fantony Ceremonie, over the past third of a century, has from time to time been presented at many science fiction conventions. First it was viewed by only a chosen few. Then it moved from regional get-togethers to regional conventions, then to worldcons. The Order of St. Fantony, whose ceremony it so thoroughly remains, had grown out of fandom, represents fandom, and remains, at its very heart, a fannish tradition, still somewhat wrapped in a mist of secrecy.

The practices of the Order of St. Fantony at the beginning were strictly English,

then Britain and finally America and Europe were involved. The real-life movement and events are many decades old, starting in 1956, but the fannish fantasy puts its mythological origin way back -- many, many centuries. "Yea, into the antiquities of time." And where else would the Order have evolved into modern times, but in ancient Englande? From where else in the dim and remote past would the legendary Fantony and his spirit have come but from the lands of Charlemagne's Frankish Empire?

The last ceremonial event to have been held -- not, however, a Great Ceremonie -- was at Noreascon Three. That was the 47th World Science Fiction Convention, in Boston in 1989. The Order was given the honor of opening the Hugo Awards Ceremony by leading the parade of nominees and guests into the auditorium.

The Hugo rocket trophies were carried down the aisle and up to the table on the stage by Knights or Ladies, each one followed by the appropriate group of nominees. At



the head of the parade, as the dramatic music was played, came two courtiers of St. Fantony, each holding a pole between which was stretched a green banner bearing a silhouette of a white rocket representing the Hugo Award. Then came the Master of Ceremonies for the event, Fred Pohl. The black and red Banner of St. Fantony trimmed in yellow and green was next, followed by Sir Dave the Wardein in his red blazer. The other parading members of The Order who participated were suitably dressed, about half of the Knights and Ladies in costumes and half in dark blazers or black gowns. The end of the file was punctuated by a black banner which bore the mystic proclamation in glittering letters: GHOD BLESSE SAINT FANTONY. Before the entrance of the procession, the prologue was read to the audience. Unfortunately, the original recording in the sonorous English tones of Sir Stanley Nuttall (with appropriate fanfare and music) was not put on the sound system. As a result, it seems that most in the audience had no idea as to what was happening -- as to why all those people, some in fancy dress, were shuffling through the audience so solemnly. The Knights and Ladies had a great time, however, and there was much excitement getting ready behind the scenes, especially as some of the prepared paraphernalia was found almost at the last minute to have been left behind.

Not many science fiction fans in the 1990s know about the legend of Fantony, the patron saint of trufen. Not many fans, fen or trufen remain who have seen The Ceremonie. The concept of The Order is chivalric of Medieval character such as the Knights Templar to which it would be an honor to belong. The scene-setting prologue to the Great Ceremonie introduces the uninitiated into the legend:

In the beginning, before Gernsback, before Kubrick and Clarke, before Lucas and Spielberg, even before Verne and Wells, there was nothing. No science and

invention. No ess-tee-eff. Darkness was in the minds of Mankind. No ess-eff. Blackness was in the spirit. No sci-fi. No trekking to the stars.

In the emptiness of the beginning, there were no fans, there was no fandom. Then at last came the Amazing light. The blackness was slowly dissolved. In the old world there came New Worlds and Tales of Wonder and the forgotten history of the one called Fantony came to light again

A spirit had come from the furthestmost depths of time and space. It had reached across the parsecs to This Island Earth. It entered into the mind of a certain visionary who undertook a voyage extraordinaire to the isle of Britain. This mysterious traveler, on his journeys to the west countries, carried within the voluminous pockets of his cloak and in the bottomless pack over his shoulder certain writings from the past, the present, and the future. This inspired roamer was Fantony, and it was he who undertook a revolutionary mission. What he introduced to the world made him a legend. Small groups there were who heard the message of Fantony and called themselves Fantony's or Fan's. Those who were ignorant and refused to believe whispered of the strange books and printed sheets called mags. Those mundane ones sneered at the awesome stories he brought to be told and re-told, and to be read and re-read. Some said he foretold of Arthur and his knights-errant on incredible quests to be. Especially was Merlin mentioned concerning magical visions of the future.

But the wandering Fantony, carrying his librerie of precious fantasies, was set upon by disdainful mundanes before he reached Camelot. In the rural hamlet of Cheltenham they captured him. They jeered the works of Verne and Wells and Poe, and threw him on his pile of books. There they torched the papers and the pulps, and caused his death in flames. In his martyrdom for fans and fandom, he became a patron saint.



Today the town is a famous spa, for from the ground where in his final moment he had thrust his staff a spring gushed forth. The waters of S.F. -- Saint Fantony -- still flows today. And all who can drink its water and taste within it the fire are the trufen. Thus is the legend of the patron saint of science fiction, fantasy, and fandom. And all which took place in those far off days in antiquity are forevermore to be encompassed within the forms and rituals of the Most Noble and Illustrious Order of St. Fantony.



On the last occasion where a Ceremonie was held, a "short discourse of origin to inform ye" was published for convention-goers. This is to be found here reproduced to accompany this piece.

As mentioned in the 'short discourse', the original goal of The Order was "Good Fellowship". The 'Ceremonie' was, more or less, a sort of prelude to a 'Merrie Party of Trufen'.

The original good fellowship was developed in the post-war fannish activities of many groups, clubs, and societies throughout

England and later the rest of the United Kingdom. London, of course, was the biggest center of fanac, but it thrived in Liverpool and the environs of the Midlands. The third most significant area was in the west, in and around Cheltenham.

The founding officers of The Order were Eric Jones and Bob Richardson, Grand Master and Knight Armourer respectively, both from Cheltenham. The next officer was Norman Weedall, Executioner, from Liverpool. It was the invitation from the Cheltenham Science Fiction Circle to the Liverpool Science Fiction Society in 1957 which brought the two clubs together to initiate the first Ceremonie and establish The Order.

After the death of Bob Richardson in 1962, The Order lay dormant for two years. Then, Keith Freeman, an original Cheltenham founding member, queried the existing members about a revival, partially as a memorial to Bob Richardson, and the favourable response resulted in Keith becoming Master of the Archives, the driving force for revitalization. Eddie Jones of Liverpool became the new Knight Armourer. In 1967 came the next terrible blow when the Grand Master, Eric Jones, died. Momentum carried The Order into 1968 with further activities at fan gatherings in Buxton, England (where Phil Rogers was appointed Noble Master to assume the leadership of Grand Master Sir Eric), in Heidelberg, and in Oakland, California, at the Baycon World SF Convention. Earlier that same year, 1968, an American fan, Ron Ellik, initiated at Cheltenham in 1962, was killed in a motor car crash within a few days of his wedding. His betrothed was The Lady Lois Lavender, also of California (initiated in 1966). The death of Eric Jones following Richardson's death took a lot of the heart out of The Order in England. Ellik's death in 1968 was a tragedy that further diminished the zest of the membership in the 'main aim' of The Order.

According to *A History and Structure of The Most Noble and Illustrious Order of Saint Fantony* by Stanley Nuttall and Keith





# the most NOBLE and ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF ST. FANTONY

*And it came to pass that in the year of Our Lord Nineteen Hundred and Fifty Seven did the Noble Fen of Cheltenham chance upon certain parchments and other documents pertaining to one St. Fantony, whose origins be lost in the mists of Arthurian England but whose Spirit and Workes did endear him to these Fen. Whereupon did they wish to do all honour to him by carrying forthe his Workes and Deeds and Spreading his Spirit amongst all Those who are Trusen. Thus the Great Medieval Ceremonie was born.*

*In Conclave the Fen of Cheltenham did decide that those who do service to Fandom in whatever form they may do, should be honoured by being made members of The Order. Those first honoured were the Noble Fen to be found in the region inhabited by the ancient Liver Byrd in those days. It is intended that those persons to be honoured should be acclaimed at A Great Ceremonie to be held as may be befitting at the tyme of Conventions of many fen. As has been done to the delight and astonishment of many. As the Order groweth, permission may be granted by the Grand Master for such ceremonies to be held in Colonial and other Foreign Lands so that such persons who may reside in such lands but who are unable to undertake arduous journeyings may likewise be honoured. It be recognised that the Customs of those lands may alter the Form of the Ceremonie, but the Spirit Shall Remain.*

*Be it known that the Spirit of The Order be not a Serious and Constructive one of exclusion but that of Good Fellowship to all. The quaffing of greate flagons of ale is not unknown amongst the Members of The Order.*

*Trusen who are honoured shall be knowne as Knights and Ladies of The Order and shall be recognised by the heraldic device worn upon their clothing, their kneckerchief, and sometime, their Carriages. Prospective incumbents shall not know in advance that they be honored, and it be incumbent upon those members of The Order so charged to ensure that they be present for The Ceremonie and suitably unprepared.*

*"A Most Important part of The Ceremonie is the imbibing of the Water of St. Fantony's Well. The Secret of this Fount to be closely kept and not disclosed to any persons outside The Order,"*

*so saith Sir Bob Richardson and Sir Eric Jones, R.L.P.*

*This be just a short discourse of origin to inform ye that  
The Spirit of St. Fantony be Hale, Merrie and Strong*



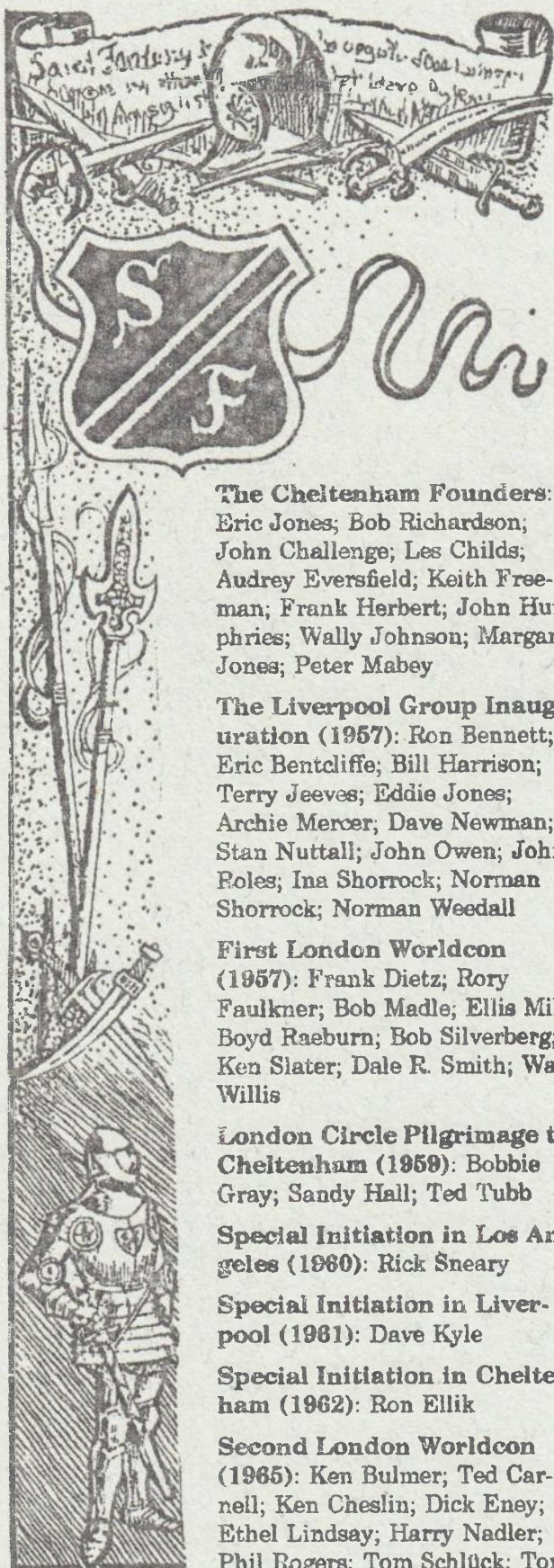
Freeman, "...the main aim is to have fun." Ceremonies and initiations, though light-hearted, are treated with dignity. However, behind the playfulness lies a number of serious purposes. The Order exists to help one another, if need be, as in any other Order. In fandom, The Order is pledged to offer its services at science fiction conventions -- and is "...willing to bring groups together and new fans into the fold." Membership is based on two factors, social compatibility and demonstrated interest in fannish activities. Beyond the 'fun' itself, The Order attempts to institute or encourage projects in fandom and to make or proclaim awards for "...the recognition of convivial fans who have done good works but are not necessarily eligible for TAFF, DUFF, and the like." The Order wants "...to consider the little-known fan who works hard behind the scenes; may not have his or her name on a fanzine, perhaps merely helps in collating it; may not run the club or convention, merely helps it to be a success." This is precisely the basis for the Big Heart Award, given annually at World Science Fiction Conventions by its originator and trustee, Sir Forrest J Ackerman. (Oh, by the way, let's not forget -- The Order used to love to have a party for itself and its friends. It's been a long time, now, since the trumpets have sounded for a reunion.)

I queried Sir Stan Nuttall of Liverpool when I first started writing this article. Part of what he had to say follows:

It all started as a spoof thing we did in L'pool when we were still L'pool S.F. Society (LaSFaS) around '56. We did a fake medieval ceremony -- direct from Danny Kaye's 'The Court Jester' -- with lots of "Yea, verily, yea" in it and decided the highest honour we could bestow on anyone was to be an ex-Chairman of LaSFaS without the rigours of being one in the first place. We had a party up here in the club rooms and invited people from all over, and the first two to be made ex-Chairmen were Eric Bentcliffe and Eric Jones, the

Chairman of the Cheltenham Group. (I'm sure you're one as well, David.) So it was this that sparked off Eric Jones to do something in return, and he and Bob Richardson cooked up 'St. Fantony'. Not surprisingly, the first knights were our lot, as we were invited down to Cheltenham (early in '57, I think) for the first ceremony. We think they also did one at the Eastercon in '57 which went down well, and then again at the Worldcon in London in '57. Most of the Americans, we think, were done in Heidelberg in '70 and some later in Salzburg. Norman [Shorrocks] found the Eastercon '71 programme booklet for Worcester, and there is a mention by Keith [Freeman] about St. Fantony (there was also a ceremony then) wherein he states that the purpose was to recognise fans who had done good works and were convivial, but wouldn't necessarily be eligible for TAFF (the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund). Also he says, new fans were encouraged to look for the S/F badges, as they were worn to help make introductions... *Blazon* was the official organ [a sporadic fanzine]. I don't know how many were produced. Norman says the first issue was high quality, but the next wasn't... There were various criticisms that it was all too serious. Well, of course, the ceremony was played with a straight face -- it has to be -- but otherwise no one took it seriously. Also, some thought it was forming an elite grouping within fandom. Others thought it should have a much broader base, which would have lost its purpose... The main officers in the early days were Eric Jones (Grand Master) and Bob Richardson (Armourer). With Bob dying in the early '60s and Eric circa '66, a lot of heart went out of it. There were the special get togethers at the George Hotel, Kettering, for members and spouses/girl friends. There were two or three around '67-'70... It tended to die out in the early '70s -- a revival later never got off the ground.





**The Cheltenham Founders:**

Eric Jones; Bob Richardson;  
John Challenge; Les Childs;  
Audrey Eversfield; Keith Free-  
man; Frank Herbert; John Hum-  
phries; Wally Johnson; Margaret  
Jones; Peter Mabey

**The Liverpool Group Inaug-**

**uration (1957):** Ron Bennett;  
Eric Bentcliffe; Bill Harrison;  
Terry Jeeves; Eddie Jones;  
Archie Mercer; Dave Newman;  
Stan Nuttall; John Owen; John  
Roles; Ina Shorrock; Norman  
Shorrock; Norman Weedall

**First London Worldcon**

**(1957):** Frank Dietz; Rory  
Faulkner; Bob Madle; Ellis Mills;  
Boyd Raeburn; Bob Silverberg;  
Ken Slater; Dale R. Smith; Walt  
Willis

**London Circle Pilgrimage to**

**Cheltenham (1959):** Bobbie  
Gray; Sandy Hall; Ted Tubb

**Special Initiation in Los An-**  
**geles (1960):** Rick Sneary

**Special Initiation in Liver-**  
**pool (1961):** Dave Kyle

**Special Initiation in Chelten-**  
**ham (1962):** Ron Ellik

**Second London Worldcon**

**(1965):** Ken Bulmer; Ted Car-  
nell; Ken Cheslin; Dick Eney;  
Ethel Lindsay; Harry Nadler;  
Phil Rogers; Tom Schlück; Tony Walsh

**Special Initiation in Liverpool (1966):** Joe  
Navin

**Yarmouth Convention (1966):** Brian Aldiss;  
Dave Barber; Harry Harrison; Mike Rosenblum

**Special Initiation in South Gate (1966):** Lois  
Lavender

**Vienna Convention (1966):** Walter Ernsting

**Tricon Worldcon (1966):** Bjo Trimble

**Special Initiation in Los Angeles (1966):** Fritz  
Leiber

**Bristol Convention (1967):** Jill Adams; Charles  
Partington; Wendy Freeman

**Special Initiation in Liverpool (1967):** John  
Ramsey Campbell

**Berlin European Convention (1967):** Waldemar  
Kumming

**Special Ceremony at Buxton Eastercon**

**(1968):** Sir Phil Rogers invested as Noble Master,  
and duly initiated were Ken McIntyre; Beryl Mer-  
cer; Doreen Parker

After the 1968 Worldcon (Baycon) and  
the special event held there, activities of  
The Order diminished and few ceremonies  
were held thereafter. During this period,  
those who entered The Order were: Forrest  
J Ackerman, Mario Bosnyak, Bob Pavlat,  
Fred Prophet, Harry Stubbs, and John  
Trimble.

Those members of Saint Fantony who  
participated in the Hugo Awards Ceremony  
at the Noreascon Three in 1989 were:

**Knights:** Forry Ackerman, Bill Burns,  
Frank Dietz, Dick Eney, Dave Kyle, Bob  
Madle, Fred Prophet, and Harry Stubbs.

**Ladies:** Mary Burns, Ann Dietz, Ruth  
Kyle, Billie Madle, Peggy Rae Pavlat, and  
Bjo Trimble.

**Courtiers:** Arthur Kyle and Kerry  
Kyle, son and daughter of a Knight; and  
Eric Pavlat, son of a departed Knight; plus  
Ian Macauley, Camille Cazedessus, and  
Suford Lewis. ♦♦





☞ It seems almost a callous transition to segue from past fannish fantasy to the real world of today. A few months ago, just as the Yugoslav civil war was starting to get really nasty, we received a letter from Bruno Ogorelec, who last appeared in these pages back in *Mimosa 6*. He writes: "The last few months have been nothing to cheer about. This article and another I wrote for Mark Manning and a few letters have been the only fanac I've managed to do since November or December. I enjoy writing, but it's difficult to work up the elan with tanks rumbling around your house. I can but hope the country returns to something resembling normal soon." We hope he's been able to keep his head down, and hope to see more amusing fanzine articles from him like this one.



I left home at a rather late age, having to endure the usual parental pestering and recriminations till I was almost 25. The standard of living in this country means that housing is both scarcer than in the U.S. and much more expensive. It's next to impossible for a young person to accumulate enough money to strike out on his/her own. I was lucky to have a friend offer me to move in with his younger brother. Their parents had died recently, he was contemplating a move to his girlfriend's place and hated to leave his kid brother alone in their amazingly large, cavernous apartment in a very old building downtown. Needless to say, I accepted the offer with the speed of greased lightning.

It was a godsend, not only providing the long-awaited opportunity to try fashioning my life in my own way, but also promising a revival of my sex life which -- due to an almost total lack of someplace private -- had become rather dormant. Fashion my new life I did; it took quite a different tack then, more different in some ways but much more

satisfying in others. As for the promise of a sex revival, well, it didn't work out quite as easily as I had hoped it would.

This young man I moved in with was a bit of a slob. I hate to admit it, but I soon turned into one myself, probably in reaction to the years of unrelenting home discipline. Neither of us would lift a finger in the interest of tidiness, and the place soon turned to seed. It acquired a uniform grey coating of fine dust, deep and velvet-like in appearance. The smooth surface was broken only by the narrow footpaths leading from the apartment door to the beds and connecting the beds with the kitchen, bathrooms and toilet.

Quite a few girls, oh, all right, all girls were a bit put off by the ambience. Luckily in those days we were both attractive enough in body and character to make some girls overcome the aversion and/or dust allergy. Having successfully passed that first hurdle, such hardy types would then be confronted with real challenges.

Branko, my apartment mate, and I were both bearded but kept our beards short. The



trimming was done over the washbasin in the bathroom and, as we never washed the basin itself, a sediment of short, curly snip-pets accumulated there, adhering to the sticky surface, until the washbasin resembled a hairy ape hanging out from the wall fixtures. It would scare the bejasus out of girl visitors trying the bathroom for the first time. One of them reported it growled at her when she'd tried the hot water tap. Not that we believed her, of course, but still, it was kind of reassuring that the thing was firmly bolted to the wall. Good old-fashioned pre-war engineering, not the modern cardboard-stucco-and-parcel-string housing project crap.



As Jessica Lange has shown us so ably, an adaptable girl can learn to live with a hairy ape, and some of our girls did. You beat your chest with clenched fists once in a while and you're OK, apparently. (Wonder what Dolly Parton would make of that?)

Branko's aunt Ettie, however, was a much more serious threat. Her actual name was Erzsebet (Hungarian for Elizabeth) and she was as bad as her name sounded. Over the spring, summer, and fall she lived in a seaside house on the Adriatic coast, but over the winter she'd simply move in with us and take over the kitchen. She didn't cook for us -- Branko, who knew her well, wouldn't touch her cooking and I prudently took his hint -- no, she lived in the kitchen. There were some other rooms in the apartment, but they were filled with clutter to such an ex-

tent that they were uninhabitable. The fans familiar with Harry Warner's story of 'The House on Summit Avenue' {{ed. note: in *Mimosa* 6}} will know what I mean. So, the kitchen it was.

The problem with such an arrangement was that we often needed the stuff from the kitchen. Our fridge was there, for one thing, taking good care of the staples: beer, cheese, frankfurters, and Dr. Oettker's Chocolate-and-Vanilla Pudding. That's what we lived off in those days. With Erzsebet in the kitchen, a trip to the fridge was not a thing we looked forward to.

Old Ettie was a... er, a lady who had spent all her allotted lifespan of three score and ten years learning the art of the disapproving stare. Her normal life over and her skill honed to perfection, she then lived for another half-dozen years on borrowed time, putting what she'd learned into practice.

Ah, the sheer expressive range that that woman's stare had! If you can imagine the late Sir Ralph Richardson in drag, boiling inside with resentment, yes, that would be the close approximation of Branko's remarkable aunt.

By day, we took turns for the forays into the kitchen, and by night, we tried to do without. The wisdom of such policy was amply proved one chilly evening when a girl I was rather piqued at (she had come as *my* guest but immediately took a liking for Branko, and started emitting various coded and not-so-very-much-coded signals at him) expressed a desire for some of our Beaujolais, to get warmed up inside. (At this stage in our narrative, I trust it will not surprise you that the wine was not actually Beaujolais. The bottles and labels were genuine enough but the wine was God knows what; the point was that it worked.)

Anyway, the girl wanted wine and I wanted to get even. Without stopping to think, I told her to go help herself from the fridge. "Yeah, why don't you bring a bottle for us all?" chipped in Branko's girlfriend



with a malevolent gleam in her eyes. Obviously, I wasn't the only one who saw the signs flashing. Branko looked somewhat alarmed but said nothing. The words were still hanging in the air when I felt the first twinge of conscience, but by then it was too late. The poor girl went into the hall and opened the kitchen door. We had neglected to tell her to knock.

There was a double scream, and in a split second we were all there to witness a curious spectacle: Erzsebet the Terrible, wearing an ancient lacy *peignoir*, was in the middle of the kitchen, standing ankle-deep in a shallow tin tub full of hot water. Steam was curling around her bony legs like the dry ice smoke at a rock concert, while she waved her hands around in impotent fury, a big hair brush in one hand and an elaborate wig in the other. Without her head covering she looked as bald as Kojak and twice as dangerous. The rest of the night does not bear describing.



The one and only useful thing in life that that woman did was getting rid of the kitchen growth. Her arrival at the beginning of winter sounded the death knell to the refrigerator fungus. Or was it mold? Lichen? Can't be sure; botanics has never been my strong suit. Whatever it was, she attacked it with a potent-smelling cleaning liquid and a Brillo pad, and wiped it out in a single afternoon. Throughout the winter, the fridge gleamed antiseptically.

Even after Erzsebet was gone the fungus was reluctant to return. The white fluffy down didn't spread over the Mozzarella before May, and we were well into June when the first thin strands of green appeared in the salad drawer. Branko and I watched it grow with mixed feelings. The plant was a household fixture we had come to know well, and its reappearance signalled a return of normalcy into our lives. On the other hand, before aunt Ettie razed it to the ground, it had grown to unmanageable proportions. It was good to get rid of it for a while.

We debated the need to control it for most of the summer while it grew and developed and asserted itself over larger and larger portions of the refrigerator. In August we finally gave up. After all, it seemed to be pretty harmless and much less scary than the apelike washbasin. It didn't growl and it never actually bit anyone.

Branko did comment once that we were curiously free of insects, bar a few spiders and house flies. He had the idea that the fridge flora might have been responsible, but I doubted it. From what I could remember of my high school biology classes, the carnivorous plants liked it hot while our box of green tricks was still close to zero, dutifully cooling the beer and murmuring to itself occasionally.

Branko's theory was soon put to test and disproved in a dramatic fashion. A curious and very unpleasant smell was beginning to be felt in the kitchen in those days. Over a couple of weeks, it gradually increased in intensity, finally reaching epic proportions, a true acme of household fetidity. At about that time the bugs started to appear, isolated at first, then in twos and threes, and finally in droves. Very unpleasant. It had all started to interfere with our sex lives again, just as we repaired the damage aunt Ettie had wrought. The girls simply refused to enter the reeking, bug-infested place.

Branko had put his hope in our fungus, but the plant failed him utterly. Instead of whooping ferociously at its prey and



wreaking havoc among the insect hordes, it just stood there and watched noncommittally from the butter and cheese compartment. In the end, we had to do something ourselves. A thorough search of the kitchen nooks and crannies turned up an opened cup of (what used to be) Dr. Oettker's Chocolate-and-Vanilla Pudding with whipped cream, well hidden in the cupboard. Branko sheepishly admitted hiding it a few weeks previously and forgetting about it. He'd been loath to leave it in the fridge, afraid that the fungus would get at it.

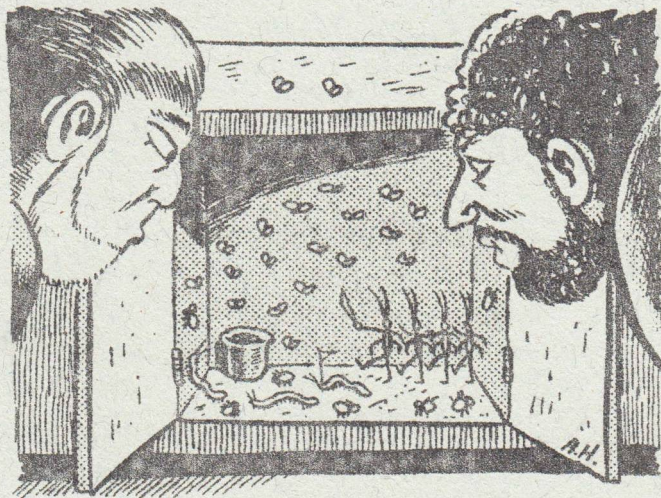
By then the cupboard resembled a bug Worldcon. Dr. Oettker would have been proud of his product, as every insect known to inhabit Central and Southern Europe seemed to have gathered there, milling about purposefully. It was an illusion, naturally; the huge swarms feeding on vanilla were composed of perhaps four or five orders of *Tracheata* altogether. The invaders' strength lay in numbers, not diversity.

*Coleoptera* were out in force, of course, with the various *Staphylinidae*, *Silphidae*, and *Bruchidae* frantically busy over the last dregs of cream and chocolate. A few hundred *Blattaria* were the only representatives of *Dictyoptera* and all were of the mundane *Periplaneta orientalis* variety, a.k.a. the brown cockroach. Nothing remotely exotic, apart from sheer quantity.

The only surprise was the presence of several dozen *Forficula auricularia*, proudly crawling under *Dermaptera* banner. What they wanted was anyone's guess; they usually feed on rotten fruit, not pudding. Perhaps they were simply attracted by the commotion, the way crowds will gather at the site of a traffic accident.

*Diptera* made up the remainder of the insect forces. *Borboridae* (their cheese-loving *Piophilidae* in particular) found their natural habitat there, wallowing in the cream curdles with merry abandon, while their cousins *Muscidae*, homely flies, so drab among the shiny and scaly intruders, seemed much more reticent. They preferred to hover

around, occasionally poking their hairy heads into the busy cupboard and quickly pulling back, as if resenting the whole business. Poor old *Fannia canicularis*, our regular tenant, looked downright annoyed by the bustle. So were we, baby, so were we.



Since the killer fungus proved to be a dud we contemplated chemical warfare for a while, Geneva convention or not, but it turned out to be unnecessary. Once the food source had been removed (with the proverbial ten-foot pole) the arthropodic ranks slowly dispersed and our normal fly and spider population went back to life as usual.

If our spiders looked relieved after the bug tide had ebbed, you can imagine our sentiments about it. Not to mention the girls'. Understandably shaken by the sexual ostracism the invasion of vanilla snatchers had brought upon us, we introduced strict apartheid and the crawlies were firmly kept in their place thereafter. Even so, several weeks of intense persuasion were to pass before the girls returned, nervously casting their glances around and sniffing the air with suspicion.

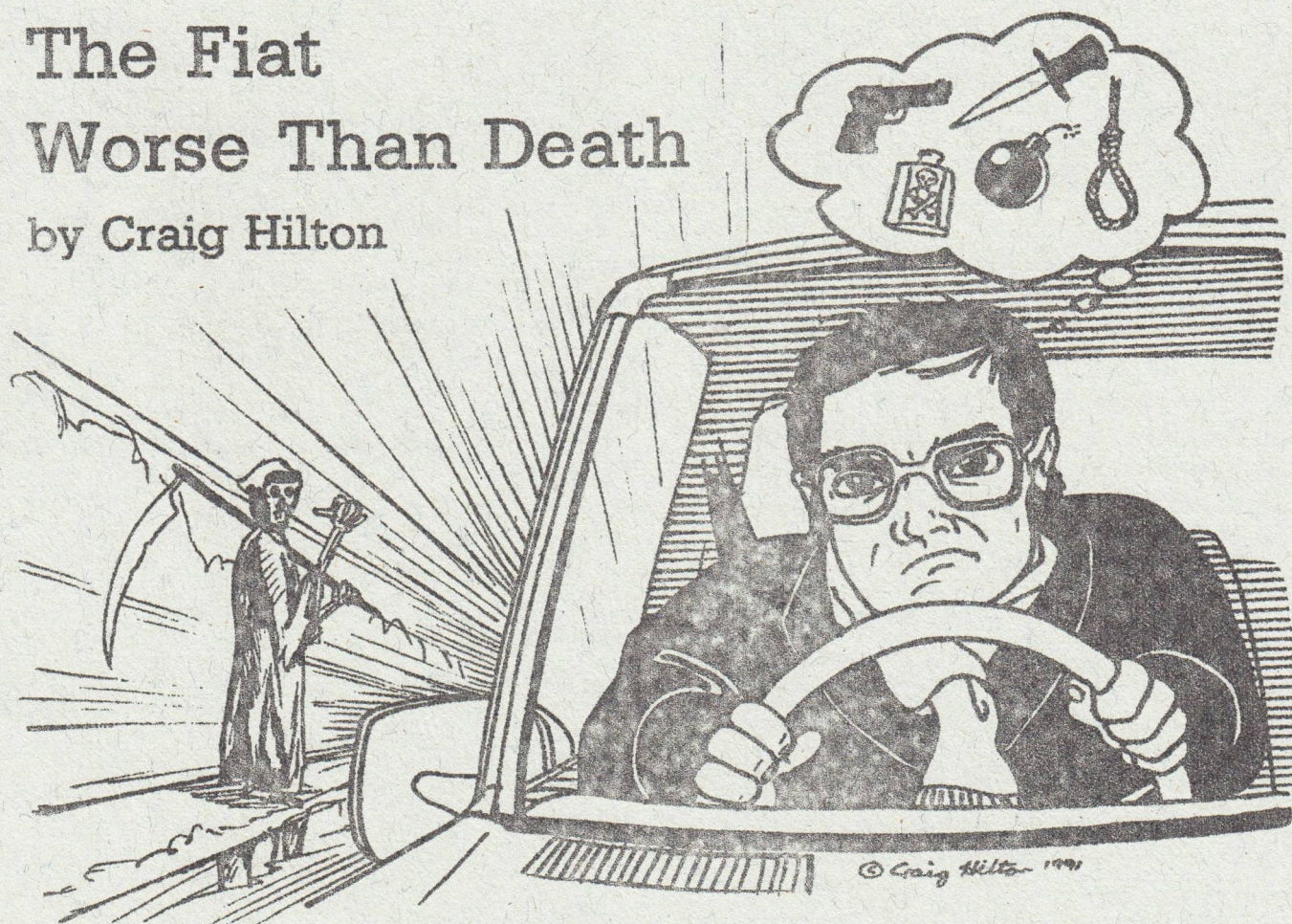
Ah, the complications of bachelorhood! Well, at least we were safe from burglars. Anyone unlucky enough to break into our apartment would certainly rue the day. How would you feel if somebody sicced Erzsebet or a hairy washbasin at you in the middle of the night? ♦♦



☞ From Yugoslavia it's back to England again, with an article by an Australian fan. One thing about fanzine fandom that we like so well is its globalness. Via fanzines it's possible, without ever leaving the confines of your home community, to know other fanzine fans from halfway around the world quite well without ever actually *meeting* them face-to-face. Many of our Australian readers fall into that category for us, a situation we'd like to change in 1993.

## The Fiat Worse Than Death

by Craig Hilton



"Curse the Lawbury Hire Car Service. Curse them to the bottom of the ocean, through the sea bed, along the earth's crust and out again at the top of a very tall hill. Curse them thenceforth down the cold and snowy slope, and may they form subsequently a momentous snowball which bounces and trounces and lands on many sharp rocks as it hurtles its way for one final plunge onto the High Street, just in time to be run over very slowly by a Number Nine bus."

That was an extract from my travel journal dated the evening of Thursday, the 10th of January, 1985. As you may gather, I

was a little upset. I was in London with Julia Bateman (to whom I was engaged and who is now my wife). We were holidaying in England, staying with her parents in Mill Hill, and we had wanted to arrange a jolly day trip to Oxford.

That the name of the firm *wasn't* Lawbury will be self-evident, but if I use a pseudonym, then I'll be at liberty to tell you the whole lurid truth without pussyfooting around, and in this case, truth is much funnier than fiction. Wasn't bloody funny at the time, though.



England was experiencing its harshest winter for ninety years. Or was it Living Memory? Or had everyone over ninety died? I can't remember. In any case, it was excruciatingly cold. What had presented itself to me a week previously as a fairyland of fluffy soap suds on roofs and gardens was now just a stubborn coating of grubby ice on footpaths and gutters, which made walking a precarious step-by-step exercise. It was a miserable cold, a depressing cold. Certainly there were moments of stark beauty, such as skeletal black trees set against sepia-toned skies, but for the most part, reality held the casting vote, and it voted with all thumbs down.

So you've got your setting and you've got your foreboding. You, dear readers, have the advantage of knowing what I did not -- that things were going to turn nasty. I just thought I was onto a bargain. You see, through some telephoning around I had gotten hold of a firm who hired out second-hand cars at very reasonable rates.

"They're not new," the dealer at the other end of the phone was in unexpected haste to warn me. "They're not new, but they're very reliable. Fifty pounds a week with a sixty-five pound deposit. Full insurance, unlimited mileage, and AA membership. Where do you plan to go? Just around the city?"

"Yes, basically," I said.

"Not in the country?"

"No..." I didn't quite his drift. "No, just around London. And a day trip to Oxford."

Sharp intake of breath. Pause. "Yes, that'll be alright."

"Are you sure it's okay?"

"Yes. You can have the Fiat. Very, very reliable little car. I use it myself to drive to work. Or there's the Cortina..."

"The Fiat sounds fine. I'll have that."

The deal was done. He even promised free home delivery. Now who can argue with service like that?



Well, dear reader, you may well wonder what could possibly have gone wrong with just that very situation, on that sombre Thursday morning, as Julia and I stood gloved, coated, and packed in front of her parents' house. The dealer from Lawbury had rung at 8:45 to confirm they were on their way. But one hour, three telephone calls, extensive road directions, and a non-existent minicab later a cheap stooge rolled up in a dirty van. He transported us downtown to where Lawbury Hire Car Service (head office) was located. It was a shop front whose growth had been stunted by the buildings on either side. I followed the man up the stairs, floor by floor, past knee office, abdomen office, chest office, and neck office to the attic which was head office.

It was a shambles of boxes, desks, and files, populated by long-lost clones of Arthur Daley in cheap suits. Displayed on a pin-up board were appreciative letters from happy survivors. In this hive of activity I asked my

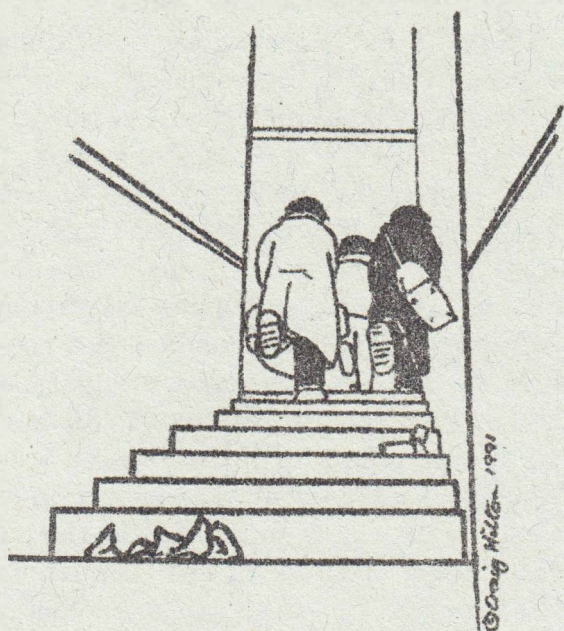


dealer where the car was. He told me it was downstairs.

Before signing anything (I'm not stupid), I persuaded the junior operative to take me down first and show me the car I was about to shell out for. Not the Fiat, for some reason, but a Very Roadworthy Ford Cortina. There was no carpark, by the way, just opportunistic street parking in the much sought-after Hendon central business district, and so there we found it. In a narrow crook of a back street, there it was -- our sorry little Cortina.

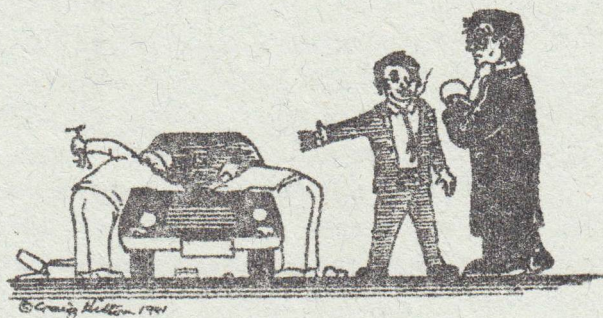
And it wouldn't start.

I discovered this by asking the dealer to demonstrate it before he could run away. Nothing. Undaunted in the face of adversity, he collared one of the mechanics to arrange a new battery. "A five minute job," he promised.



Upstairs we went to sign the papers. Cringe, dear readers, cringe. But don't be too hard in your condemnation of my dealings. Just imagine the scene -- you're flustered, anxious, most of the morning has just ticked by, Oxford is looking ever more dis-

tant, and you've been assured that with the new battery the car definitely will start. So like a punter I paid my money and took my chance.



Down we went again. The new battery (he nervously explained from around the corner) was installed, but being exceedingly conscientious, the mechanics had decided to do the spark plugs as well. This fact seemed to be corroborated by the sight of said mechanics tying the car to a repair vehicle with an old piece of rope.

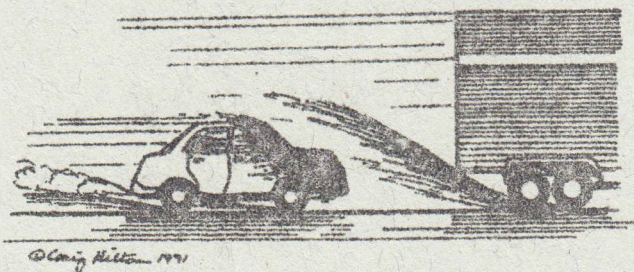
Back upstairs we staggered, at my polite request, to obtain the keys to that very, very reliable Fiat instead. Downstairs again, and the dealer fought a vicious battle to finally beat the very, very reliable Fiat into life. What a nice man -- he would amend the paperwork accordingly later. "He's new in the game," the mechanic had confided. "He doesn't know anything about cars." I told myself that he'd get on, though. Forensic pathology is a booming science.

So Julia and I climbed in and were on our way. It was my first venture into suburban London traffic, in an unfamiliar car with a dodgy accelerator and a fogged-up windscreen, looking out either side for a petrol station. (This was the company's special drive-'em-away-empty policy.) A quick fill-up and we continued, and however bad this part was, the real horror was finding ourselves on the M40 motorway.

What a car! To call it the Fiat Worse Than Death, actually, would be to give death a bad name. It was dirty inside and out, the



doors wouldn't lock, the clutch slipped, the hand brake wouldn't work, and the left rear window slid down if you hit it. As vehicles were in front of me, a fine mist of mud slowly caked itself on the windscreen until it became mostly black and opaque. The wipers sort of smeared it about a bit. At fifty miles per hour, all I could do was to keep pointed straight and thank God for intermittent rain. The fifty mile journey was the longest I can ever remember having gone between heartbeats.



Julia and I spent two splendid hours in Oxford. We had lunch at the Chequers pub refectory, a lovely, cosy rabbit warren off an unseen alleyway that catered to the latest of two centuries of students. Mushroom omelette, chips, salad, and half a pint of bitters. When the sun broke through, there were blue skies and a brief spell of warm weather. It unfolded for us a vision of beauty, a city of ornate, ancient buildings glowing in the liquid afternoon sunshine, of streets and spires, of hazy clouds, of lawns and roofs, emerald and white. It was the Oxford that lived in my dreams, the Oxford of Tolkien, the verdigris Oxford with the dull copper sun.

Then came the drive back. All the way, I fumed and cursed the name of the Lawless Hire Car Service, especially whenever the car stalled and would only restart under threat of torture. I would trade the Fatal Fiat for the Cadeveric Cortina and be done with it.

So I negotiated my way back to Hendon, drove around the block a few times, located a parking space and nosed into it. The Fiat stalled. I started it again and tried to angle

it a bit better. It stalled again, still sticking out. Stalled and died.

That was the last sign of life ever to be seen from the dreaded machine. That day, I swapped the Fiat for the Cortina just to get home, and the next day I returned the Cortina and haggled back my money (less one day's hire).

I won't laden you with the catalogue of woes of the equally dreadful Cortina. Suffice it to say I was well rid of them both. And I'm not known as a very forthright man, but when it came to the showdown with the Lawsuit Hire Car Company, I stood my ground and took no more talk of 'five minute jobs.'

I have no doubt that the Lawbending Hire Car Service and Part-Time Sardine Packaging Company will live on. There'll always be brave folk willing to lay their lives on the line the line for the saving of fifteen pounds a week in rental. A middle-aged German couple seemed to say it all. They were asking whether, if they picked up any parking tickets along the way, they could flee the country. They wanted a cheap car and a cheap holiday, and you can bet your bottom traveler's cheque that they'd get the cheap they deserved.

As for my style of cheap, dear reader, I know my false economy dumped me into a predicament that I wished at the time had never happened. But invite me around some evening, and I'll show you just how many times I can dine out on it. ♦♦





☞ Here's another article by an Australian fan, this time set in Australia. The writer, Ian Gunn, is perhaps better known as a fan artist, having won the Ditmar Award at the most recent Australian NatCon. Automobile trips and fannish travel in general continues to be the source of amusing fanzine articles; we've run a number of articles on these topics in previous issues, but this one is a little more epic than most others we've read. Anyway, this article also gives us the impression that Australian fandom has its regional sub-fandoms, just like here in the States -- something we're hoping to check out first-hand a couple of years from now.



You want mechanical breakdown stories? Hoo boy! Have I got a story for you...

Australia is a big country, and it also has two National Conventions each year; one for the 'Media' fans and one for the 'Lit' fans. In 1989, the two Natcons were a week and a continent apart. The Mediacon, Conspire, was held in Canberra the week before Easter while the Litcon, Swancon, was in sunny Perth at the opposite end of the country. For those unfamiliar with Austral geography, that's roughly the same distance apart as London and Moscow.

What the hell, we said, let's go to both.

\*\*\*\*\*

The bold adventurers on this expedition consisted of James "Jocko" Allen, Danny Heap, and my good self. The vehicle in question was an elderly white Toyota Hiace belonging to Danny's ex-girlfriend's father. When I saw the straight, upright seats, the dulled paintwork, the odd rusty patches, the

lack of seatbelts, and the decomposing ceiling insulation, I expressed my doubts.

I was then told something which I have since learnt to categorize along with phrases such as, "He won't bite you," "This won't hurt a bit," and "The cheque's in the mail."

"Don't worry," I was told. "It may not look like much, but mechanically it's quite good."

If they ever make a film of this story, they would insert the ominously dramatic chord here.

\*\*\*\*\*

With Alan Stewart along for the ride, we headed north from Melbourne and into New South Wales. We were aiming for Griffith, a notorious country town famous for producing wine and other, less legal, drugs. Karen Pender lived there, caught in a Catch 22 situation (unable to get a job in this dump and, through unemployment, too poor to shift elsewhere) and we were giving her a lift to Conspire.



Forty minutes out of town we hit roadworks. Minutes later, the roadworks hit us, in the form of a large stone thrown up by a passing car. Much to our surprise, the rock shot straight through our windscreen.

After knocking out the shattered glass, we continued in a vehicle which had now taken on the acoustic quality of the inside of a steel drum. Evening was approaching and the insects were emerging from the irrigation ditches, so we wore handkerchiefs across our mouths like a gang of crazed banditos. Karen was quite surprised when we finally arrived at her flat, waving to her out of the front of the van.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next day, we managed to pick up a plastic emergency windscreen, which we taped to the front of the van, then proceeded to our nation's capital. After booking in at the con hotel, we headed off to get a new, laminated windscreen fitted.

The con was quite good. Lots of friends to meet again, and we had a good time huckstering -- our cardboard 'Die Trekkie Die' rubber band shooting gallery was met with mixed reaction. I missed out on the Media award for best fan artist, but the con that James and Karen were involved in won the right to be Media Natcon the next year. By night, with all four guys crashed in the same room, Jocko entertained us with his super-sonic snoring (it rattles windows and causes dogs to bark two miles away). He would start out quietly, but get progressively louder and louder with each snore. Then, just when you thought it was impossible for a human being to snore any louder, he would pause... and let out a rip-roaring snore that sounded like a jet flying past. This would almost, but not quite, wake him up; he would sigh and mumble and then start over again. Sometimes he would talk in his sleep, and Danny would delight in holding bizarre conversations with him.

Jocko (asleep): "I can't find it."

Danny (awake): "Er... well, don't worry about it, James."

Jocko: "But I am worried about it."

Danny: "Well, look. It's my turn to drive, so go back to sleep and we'll both look for it later."

Jocko: "Oh, alright... Snore..."



After the con we said farewell to Alan (he was smart enough to fly to Perth) and drove Karen back to Griffith. We suspected our tyres wouldn't make it across Nullarbor, so we called at a local service station to get them replaced. We discovered that since Melbourne, they had worn down to the metal. This did not inspire confidence. We had also lost the cap where the oil goes in, so that had to be replaced, too.

Meanwhile, we had purchased an orange and red toy dragon from the local Salvation Army shop which we dubbed Hazel after someone we'd had, shall we say, unpleasant dealings with. We spreadeagled the dragon on the front of the van, tying it on with fishing line, and, bidding Karen farewell, the three of us headed west.

Night saw us in the Adelaide Hills where we stopped at a camping ground, hiring a caravan to sleep in. It had been a long drive, but we had much, much farther to go. We discussed our policy on picking up hitchhikers. We'd be heading to some pretty re-



mote and inhospitable areas. We'd all heard tales of cars being stolen and stripped, of rip-off artists posing as hitchhikers or stranded drivers.

Eventually, we decided that we would only pick up hitch-hikers if they were female, good-looking, and Swedish. We considered ourselves to be reasonably safe from harm if this were the case.

\* \* \* \* \*

We passed through the industrial Port Augusta and were amazed at the size of the car wrecking yard on the outskirts of town. Little did we know that we would become more familiar with this place later. Dramatic chord.

There was occasional traffic as we passed the enchanting mining town of Iron Knob. Apparently some sports car club was having an Easter rally across the country, so we were frequently overtaken by Austin Healy convertibles. We saw no hitch-hikers, Swedish or otherwise.

The Nullarbor Plain is a very dry, very flat desert. The name is, allegedly, Latin for 'No Trees', but it's not the sandy, desolate condition of dunes you see in Foreign Legion films. It's a limestone plain supporting a tough ecosystem of scrubby saltbush -- little shrubs that have difficulty growing more than a foot high.



Two hundred kilometers from the nearest side track, we stopped to put up a sign

that said 'GARAGE SALE →'. That should confuse the mundanes, we thought.

We parked on the edge of a cliff overlooking the Great Australian Bight. Magnificent rugged drop down to a raging blue ocean. Danny received an important lesson in life when he had to answer a call of nature: never piss into an updraft without a hat.

\* \* \* \* \*

The next day we saw no Swedish hitch-hikers either, just lots more sports cars. We were getting tired and irritable, and sick of driving this dull, straight road. It was getting dark fast, we still had miles to go before Norseman, and the kangaroos were coming out. If you've ever seen what damage a car can receive by hitting a kangaroo, you know it's dangerous. Usually the kangaroo survives. Usually the car does not. Imagine a human-sized animal that is almost all muscle and has a habit of leaping at you out of nowhere, and you'll get the idea. So we drove carefully.

I knew Danny was tired when he asked me to take over driving, because he said that the road looked as if it was melting. Seconds later he was asleep, having fist-clenching nightmares while sitting bolt upright.

I drove. I got bored. There was no other traffic; everything was dark. I put on a tape, and made the van dance to the Time Warp. Just a jump to the left (indicator on), then a step to the right (other indicator). Put your hands on your hips (beep beep) and bring your knees in tight (headlights off and on), and it's the pelvic thrust (accelerator, accelerator...). Jocko began snoring from the back seat. Very loudly. We were slowly going mad.

What a relief to see the Norseman Fruit Fly Quarantine Station, even if they did confiscate our 'Die Trekkie Die' shooting



gallery (it was made from an old apple box and could harbour fly eggs). We booked into a motel and slept through Jocko's snoring.

\* \* \* \* \*

By morning we were on our way, Swedenless, to Widgiemooltha. (Yes, that really is its name.) It's practically a ghost town since the salt mine closed, but my hillbilly (plain-billy?) pen-friend Jan of the Nullarbor lives there with her husband and goats. We called in for coffee.

Off to Perth, and we noticed that the radiator was leaking. We fixed it with a can of Bars Leak and, discovering that the radiator cap was of a different pressure rating than to the radiator, replaced it with a new one. Yes, that's right, another ominous piece of music here, folks.

While we were mooching around, we discovered some orange and white bunting from a used car yard. It had fallen onto a vacant lot, and although it was sixty feet long, we decided it would make an excellent decoration for the van. Any car dealer who decorates his premises with such ghastly coloured streamers deserves to have some of it taken away. We liberated it discreetly. The next day, we were a majestic sight as we drove through the Good Friday streets of Perth in our dusty, dirty old Hiace, with a Residents tape blaring, Hazel on the front, and sixty feet of brightly coloured streamers thundering around our roof rack.

\* \* \* \* \*

Swancon was a fun convention, although not many people knew us. As NatCon, it played host to the annual Ditmar Awards, considered by many to be serious and important, but not by us. Danny and Jocko, under the joint pseudonym of Jacob Blake, had produced a fanzine called *Get Stuffed* designed solely for winning a Ditmar. Most of its editorial content consisted of urging readers to vote for it. They had made the final ballot, and I, along with the zine's other car-

toonists, had got onto the Best Fan Artist ballot.

We really were genuinely surprised when we won, even though we'd been saying we would all along. It was a bemused Bob Shaw who presented the awards only to see Danny stick his Ditmar down his pants.

\* \* \* \* \*

With the con over and our 'DITMARS ON BOARD' sign in the back window, we headed home. We spotted two hitchhikers outside Widgiemooltha. They were neither female, good-looking, nor Swedish, but in a fit of euphoria we cast our sexist fantasies aside and gave them a lift anyway. We called in on Jan and then dropped them off in Norseman. Jan later sent me a newscutting that said two guys "...wanted for questioning by the police..." were last seen boarding a white van containing three other men near Widgiemooltha. Hmmm.

Next morning we left Norseman and half an hour later discovered that the radiator had developed a huge leak.

Apparently, the new radiator cap had allowed the thing to reach the pressure it was supposed to, but after all these years, the radiator wasn't strong enough to handle it. Fortunately, we had plenty of water on hand -- you don't attempt the Nullarbor without it. We turned the Hiace around and the rest of the day was spent filling up the radiator, driving as far as we could before it overheated, coasting with the engine off, and waiting around for it to cool down.

The van spent the next two days being repaired, while we spent the time being bored. Apart from getting drunk, there was nothing to do in Norseman, and none of us drink. One evening, Jocko and I returned to our cabin to tell Danny we'd discovered the best sushi bar in town.

"In Norseman?" Danny asked.

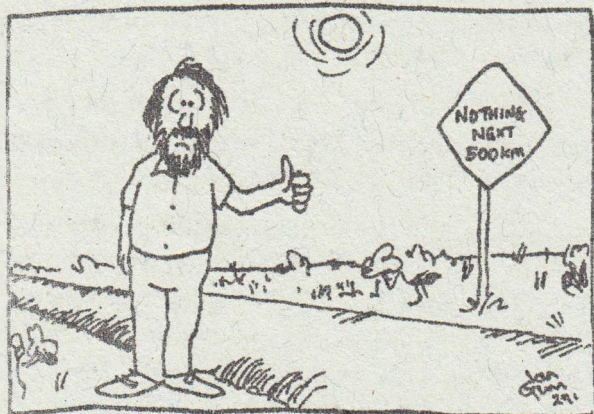


"Well, actually, it was a Fish and Chip shop, but they didn't cook it much..."

\* \* \* \* \*

Eventually on the road again, we picked up a male, non-Swedish hitcher at Nullarbor. He was carrying a car axle back to his own vehicle which had broken down at the next town.

Seven kilometers later, the engine started making a horrendous banging noise loud enough to wake the dead. We stopped, because the engine was beneath the front seats and we didn't want it exploding beneath us. Jocko said the big end had gone. I, being totally mechanically ignorant, assumed this to be so, and offered to hitch back to the Nullarbor Roadhouse to get help.



Our passenger decided to continue hitching towards the next town. The first car along stopped, but, when he picked up his replacement axle they spun their wheels and fled. Strange how an axle wrapped in a sweater looks like a shotgun.

Eventually I got a lift back to Nullarbor, only to find that there was not a tow truck nor mechanic to be found; they just sold fuel and hamburgers. I phoned the Royal Automobile Club of South Australia. Yes, they could tow us to Ceduna, and the first ten kilometers were free. The rest would cost us a few thousand dollars. Oh. I decided to ask

the other guys. They'd probably be more willing to dump the thing.

Hitching back to them proved difficult. The Austin Healy club seemed to have a monopoly on what little traffic flow there was, and each car had two seats, both occupied. Eventually, two guys in a semi-trailer, with a smaller trailer behind, picked me up. I explained our dilemma. The driver's eyes lit up with little green dollar signs.

"How much would you pay me," quoth he, "if I took you and your van to Port Augusta?" I did some quick calculations; Port Augusta was a lot farther on than Ceduna, our scheduled stop for that night, and driving that far would cost us plenty just in fuel, even if the van was working.

"Er... a hundred bucks?"

With the van on the small trailer, Jocko in the cab with the other two truckers and Danny and I in the dusty gloom of the truck itself, we were moving again.

It felt like a great weight lifted from our shoulders. We no longer had to worry about driving; we couldn't even see the road. Danny and I snoozed on hessian sacks and relaxed in the cool darkness, sipping lemonade. Jocko, meanwhile, was getting white line fever in the cab and was seriously toying with the idea of quitting his job as a library technician so he could drive trucks for a living. The truck had been to Perth with someone's entire household furniture, plus car (hence the trailer) and the only freight the drivers could get to bring back were five cartons for a house in Ceduna. The door rolled back to dazzling sunlight and we helped carry the stuff in. The little old lady who lived in the house was quite startled that each box had its own person carrying it. What service!

It was late at night when we pulled into the Port Augusta truckstop, unloaded our heap, and staggered off to find a cheap motel.



\* \* \* \* \*

The wreckers yard was closed for the weekend, but we moved to a cabin at the local campsite to save money. I withdrew the maximum the automatic teller machine would allow, and we generally mooched around town waiting for Monday. We found that we could actually drive the van around, though you could hear us coming five minutes before we arrived. With Hazel now blackened by diesel fumes from the semi, and mud and dust caked all over the bodywork, we made quite a head-turning sight. Jocko claimed that you didn't need a Porsche to impress people, just tie a fifty-cent second-hand soft toy on your radiator grille and everybody waves to you.

By this time, though, Jocko regarded the van with such an intense personal hatred that he would have quite cheerfully set fire to it. He insisted on driving, foot to the floor, even though he was sitting right on top of the roaring engine. Danny and I, more cowardly, kept to the back seat as far away from any potential explosion as possible.

When the wreckers yard opened, they offered to sell us a reconditioned engine, taking ours in exchange, but it would take a few days to install it. Jocko and I both had jobs to get back to, so leaving Danny with the cabin, a good deal of the luggage and enough food and money to see him through, we bid him farewell, said we'd see him at the Melbourne Science Fiction Club the following Friday, and got a lift into town where we purchased tickets on the overnight bus to Melbourne.

When the bus arrived, several passengers got off, including two young ladies with blond hair and finely-tanned complexions which you only achieve after several generations of bounding around fjords in bracingly cold weather. Jocko and I stared at each other. Could it be? As the tourists passed us, we turned to see. Sure enough, embla-

zoned on the back of each pack was a large light blue flag with a yellow cross on it. The legendary Swedish hitch-hikers were not a myth after all.

"Should we introduce ourselves and tell them where the campsite is, so they'll go and meet Danny?"

"Nah. Let him fend for himself. We've got a bus to catch."

\* \* \* \* \*

POSTSCRIPT: Two years later.

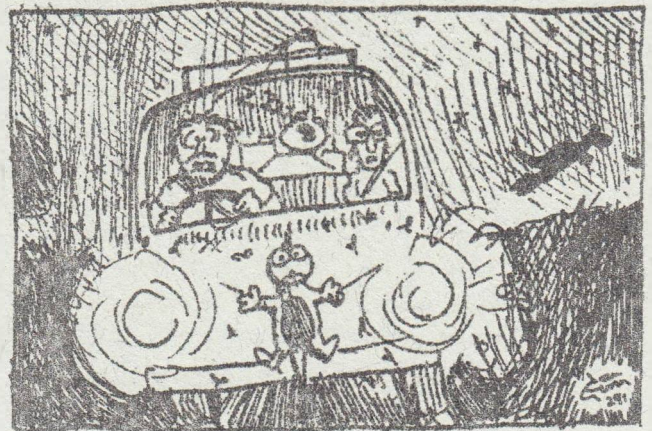
James "Jocko" Allen has had his nose operated on, and no longer snores. Much.

Hazel, now cleaned back to her original slightly shabby condition, is in the possession of Danny Heap.

Karen Pender has escaped from the mundane horror town of Griffith, moved to Melbourne and set up house with the author, changing her surname to Pender-Gunn.

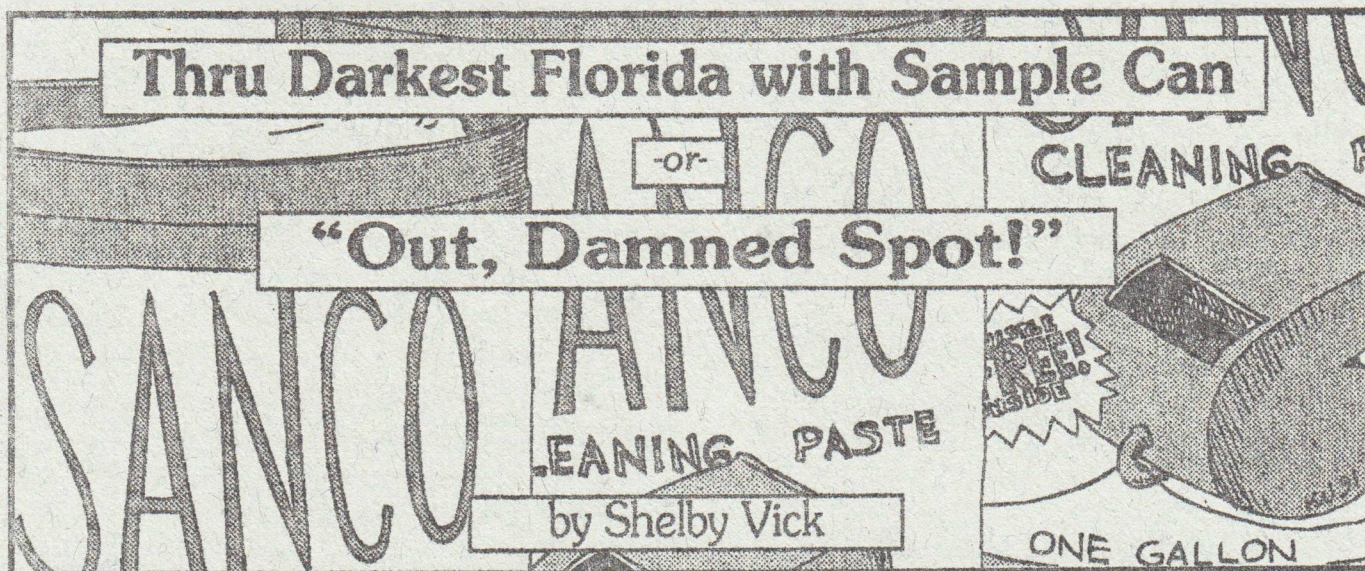
Strangely enough, very few interstate conventions have been attended by these people of late, and ones planned for the future involve air travel.

The Toyota Hiace is now in the possession of another Melbourne fan, along with its new windscreen, new tyres, new radiator, and new engine. The differential's been playing up lately, though. ➡





∞ The upcoming Orlando Worldcon in September will afford attendees the chance of meeting the legendary Walter A. Willis, one of the most reknown and best-liked fans of the 1950s. The 1992 Worldcon will be the 40th anniversary of his first epic visit to North America and the 1952 Worldcon. Another fan from the 1950s who will be in Orlando this coming September is Shelby Vick, who besides being well-known himself to fans of that era, was mainly responsible for convincing Willis to make the trip, and organized fund-raising efforts for it. The resulting "WAW With the Crew in '52" campaign was inspiration for the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund (TAFF), which exists to this day. The following article by Shelby is a remembrance of those days...



Once upon a time there was a cleaning paste named Sanco.

Once upon a time there was a fan named Shelby Vick.

When these two merged, one by-product was the creation of a new chapter in fan history.

Sanco was a cleaning paste my parents manufactured and sold throughout South Georgia, South Alabama, and Florida. Mostly Florida. We cooked the stuff up in a 50 gallon can, added enough food coloring to make it pink, then poured it into gallon syrup cans where it hardened to a paste. We slapped labels we designed and had printed on the cans, boxed 12 to the case, loaded our truck (actually an old car cut off behind the front seats, the rear converted to a small stake-walled flatbed) and hit the road.

In those days, paint wasn't as dirt-resistant as it is now. Nearly every front door

had grime on it where hands touched as people went in and out. Sample can in hand, I'd go up, knock on the door, and usually be greeted by the lady of the house. Taking a prepared cloth off the top of my open sample can, I'd introduce myself and take a swipe at the dirt, which would quickly disappear. (Of course, I'd leave a dramatic dirty spot beneath where I'd cleaned, for contrast.) Sometimes I'd be invited in to demonstrate Sanco on some stubborn kitchen grease or whatever. It usually resulted in a sale; one can for \$1, three for \$2.50. Since it didn't cost \$5 to manufacture a case (cost of cans and labels and box included) there was a tidy profit.

We usually sold the county school board several cases as we traveled about, and other businesses would buy caselots, as well as several cans to most service stations (after showing that our product was also good for cleaning greasy hands and white sidewall



tires). Depending on the size of a town, we'd be there either several days or several weeks. Or, in the Tampa-St. Pete area, several months.

What, you ask, does this have to do with fandom? Well, I had lots of spare time. In cheap motel rooms I'd read the latest pro-zine, or any fanzines that had caught up with me thru the postal forwarding process, plus letters from fans I had contacted one way or another. I had a portable typer my folks had given me for graduation, plus a ream of canary second sheets, and I'd answer letters or work on stories. I even had the typer on my lap as we traveled about, so I could type as my father drove.

Did I do much? Best way to answer that is to flash forward. Back in Lynn Haven after an eight month tour of Florida, a letter showed up addressed simply to "Shelby Vick, Tampa, Fla." On the envelope an unknown postman had noted, "Try Lynn Haven, Fla."

Nuf said.

While in the Tampa-St. Pete area, I visited someone I had met thru the mails, a great gal name of Felice Perew. Later, she married Joe Rolfe and Joe and Felice Rolfe moved to California. In between, by mail, she introduced me to Suzanne Ross. (At first I thought she was called Suzy and she went along with it for a while, then calmly explained that 'Suzy' was the name for a cow. Since she is definitely no cow, from then on she was and is Suzanne.) She and I corresponded for many years, and eventually met and married. Sanco thus made *personal* history.

Fan history?

For one thing, we made one trip to Savannah, Ga., where I was privileged to be the first fan to see, in person, that Lee Hoffman was actually Hoffwoman, leading to my introduction of LeeH to a suitably astounded Bob Tucker at the Nolacon.

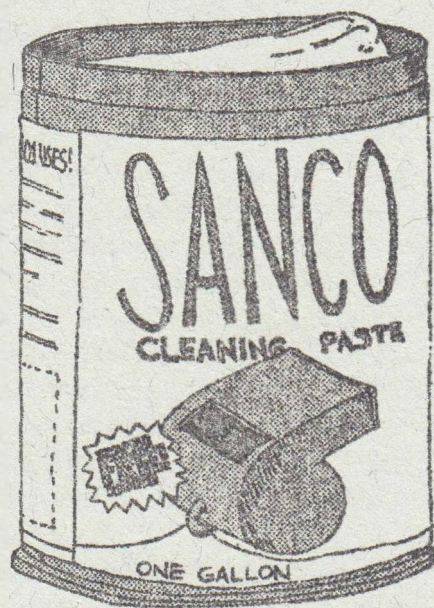
The Other? While on the road I was smitten with the insane delusion that I could organize a drive to bring Walt Willis over for the next Worldcon. It fizzled, because there was only a matter of months before Nolacon, but I was so fired up that I saw my failure as only a faulty step in the right direction.

At this juncture I should own up to the fact that my life, to that point, had been filled with projects hastily started and eventually abandoned. I felt that I had never seen anything thru, and wondered if I ever could. Then and there, I decided that this was going to be different; for once in my life, I was going to show that I could complete something.

Well, I succeeded. It nearly worked Walt Willis into an early grave (for the thousandth time, Walt: sorry about that!) but WAW With The Crew made it in '52.

Now for the first time it is revealed: The Willis Campaign and the TAFF Fund and my marriage to Suzanne can trace their origin back to a can of soap paste named Sanco.

And they lived zappily every after... ♦♦





As we mentioned earlier, 1992 is the 40th anniversary of Walt Willis's first visit to North America. He celebrated that trip with two memorable trip reports: "Willis Discovers America" which was written before the trip, and "The Harp Stateside" after he returned home. Both of these were compiled some years ago in the mammoth 28th issue of Richard Bergeron's fanzine, *War-hoon*, which contains over 600 pages of Willis's fan writings. Included in this collection is an annotated series of excerpts from letters Walt received called "I Remember Me", which was billed by Bergeron as "...a revelation of high fannish secrets, low fannish secrets, gossip, eavesdroppings, skeletons, skeleton keys, opened letters, and glimpses into machiavellian machinations..." Starting in this issue, Walt continues the series, beginning with a look back at the fannish year of 1953.

# I Remember Me



by  
Walt  
Willis

I remember 1953, but dimly. That was the year after I went to America for the first time, in a trip that proved to be the precursor of TAFF, but all I could say about that is in the report I wrote, which has taken the place of actual memories. The only original document that has survived from 1953 is the following letter from Robert Bloch, which I obviously thought worth preserving. I still do, and I reproduce it here in the hope that it will be as much help to you as it was to me. It's on the note paper of the Gustav Marx advertising agency in Milwaukee, where Bloch worked before he went to Hollywood. There's no date on it, but it obviously originates from early 1952 or late 1951...

Your apologies and explanations are accepted but are entirely unnecessary.

So are your fears about the Convention.

Perhaps I had better explain a few things to you about conventions. The first explanation is that I am a timid and retiring soul. I go through agonies every time I am called upon to make a speech. So I never go to conventions unless I am sure they are going to let me speak.

This is not as paradoxical as it may sound, paradoxical as it may seem. It's not even doxical.

You see, Conventions are filled with, roughly, two kinds of people -- and for the sake of argument we will temporarily classify fans as people, though I have my doubts and even some anatomical research to prove otherwise.

There's Class A (the type who carries a ray gun and drops bags of hot



water out of hotel windows) and Class B (the type that watches this activity and writes it up for fan magazines, meanwhile commenting on the horror of it all).

Class A has a lot of fun at the Con, and Class B has a lot of fun gloating about it afterward.

Now this puts me on the spot. By temperament I'm a Class B, but I don't have a fan magazine, and by profession I must diplomatically temper my remarks; not hypocritically, but merely through courtesy.

And I cannot be Class A, because I'm a pro and too many people are watching. Also it doesn't express the true me, because there are laws and stuff. And also, in some hotels, not enough hot water.

But I'm on the spot, as I say, because I'm a pro, and pros are expected to do something besides play poker and drink and talk to other pros.

So I figure the easiest thing to do is make a speech. You make a speech, people remember you did something, and your duties are automatically fulfilled -- anything else you occupy your time with during a Con is forgotten as long as you've spoken. It's official, then.

Now, how can I make a speech, being shy?

Well, I haven't any trouble writing speeches. So that part is simple. Same goes for you.

And when it comes to delivery... here's the gimmick... I merely PRE-TEND I AM READING SOMEONE ELSE'S STUFF.

I go into their character and let fly.

I commend this viewpoint to you.

I might also point out that from what I have seen, you won't be facing

any terrific elocutionary competition. Some of them are pretty long, and some are pretty loud, but they're all amateurs.

And the crowd is on YOUR side. You have a reputation as a wit (what with stealing my stuff, that is) and so anything you say will be automatically accepted as funny. And if you slap it to them, they'll thereafter let you alone to be yourself during the remainder of the Convention.

So have no fears. My only additional advice is this -- avoid subtlety. The spoken word is not the written word, and the *mot juste* is for the small audience. When you face them *en masse* the effects must be broad and burlesqued.

Enough of advice. I am looking forward to seeing you at the Con... I will bring my wife, and she has never seen a live Irishman in person, but I anticipate no great adverse reaction. We will have to get together. I have no idea how I'm going to recognise you, but imagine you'll be the one between Lee Hoffman and Shelby Vick. (There is some remark about Christ being between two thieves which I could work in here, but won't.)

As for me, I am short, fat, fair-haired, and walk with a pronounced stoop, named Tucker. And I shall be walking faster in anticipation of our meeting.

I'd say hello to Madeleine, but since I am fairly confident that she reads your letters to you aloud, that is unnecessary.

Hoping you are the same...

The speechifying, such as it was, went off pretty well. I remember defending crud-zines, on the grounds that what is worth doing is worth doing badly. Years later I found that this proposition should have been



attributed to G. K. Chesterton, and welcome this opportunity to apologise for the unconscious plagiarism.

Altogether, I was fairly pleased with how the trip had gone, and plunged right into a report. A large section containing the report of the convention was sent off within a few weeks, and I started on the second half, which contained a report of the cross-country trip by car to Los Angeles, via Utah, with the Ackermans, Rog Phillips and Mari Wolf, and back to New York via Kansas (Manly Banister), Florida (Shelby Vick), and Georgia (Lee Hoffman). Lee Hoffman wanted to split the con report between two issues of *Quandry*, but I pleaded with her to keep it together, and she published it as a double issue of *Quandry*. That must have been towards the end of 1952. A piece about being back in Ireland had already been published in Shelby Vick's *Confusion*, and the first two installments of the postcon travelogue appeared in the issues of *Confusion* dated May 1953 and February 1954. Meanwhile, Lee Hoffman had bought a horse, Kehli, and entrusted the future of *Q* to local fan Charles Wells. This development was noted in the Oblique House Christmas Card for 1953...

There is a knock at the door.

BOB SHAW: I hope that's Little Mother with the samovar. Who's there?

VOICE: An Agent of the Galactic Federation, with tea.

BOB: It's Madeleine all right. Open the door, someone.

Enter Madeleine with a tray. As they sit drinking their tea, the sweet sound of childish voices raised in song is wafted through the open window.

WALT: Do you feel a waft from that window?

JAMES WHITE: Yes, it almost sounds like childish voices raised in plaintive sound.

WALT, looking out: So it is. Why, it's Seventh Fandom. Listen.

CHILDISH VOICES:

Good King Charles Wells looked out.  
He surely was a grand homme.

(JAMES: This must be a French window.)

He watched Lee Hoffman gallop past  
And founded Seventh Fandom.

(BOB: Has anyone here seen Kehli?)

Hari Silverberg has said

That cycles run in fandom.

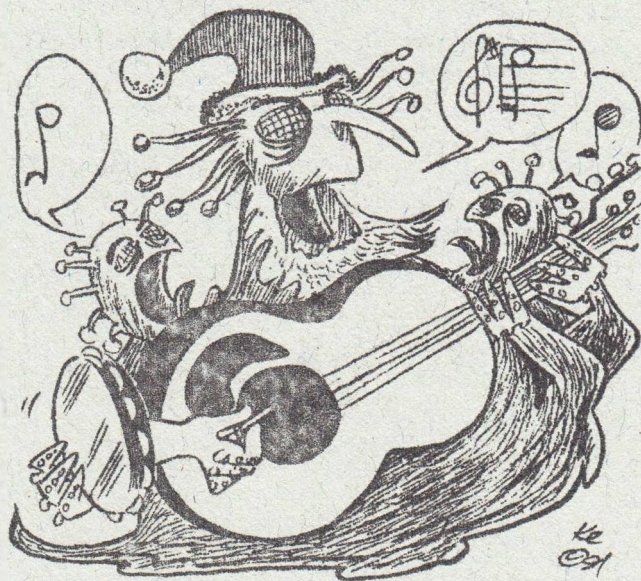
But surely Q's one isn't dead

That cycle was a tandem.

WALT, pleased: Why, I think they want me to accompany them on The Harp.

BOB: Are you going to?

WALT: Yes, in the new *Oops!al*. Let's all try to be Big Wheels in this new cycle.



My correspondence file for 1953 is thick, but largely taken up with explanations for not answering letters. These were of a varied and picturesque nature, like the belated reply to a long letter from Vernon McCain...

I'd just finished stapling *Hyphen* and *Slant* last February and was reading the things when a wave of nausea and weakness swept over me. Ghod, I thought, they can't be as bad as all that, and I started to send a few



out, starting with Zimmerman this time instead of Ackerman by way of redeeming the balance in favour of the unfortunates at the end of the alphabet. I'd got to somewhere along the 'W's when I had to go to bed. The doctor came up, gave me some sulfa pills, and went to bed himself with the same type of flu. The second doctor came up and then retired to a dugout, sending a nurse daily into the area with penicillin injections. I tried mailing out a few from my death bed. They remonstrated with me, but I told them I was thinking of my pals. A clear case of cerebral palsy. Actually, it was pneumonia, and to cut a dull story short, I was off fanac for about eight weeks. As a matter of fact, the damned mailing isn't finished yet, because after I was able to get up I started learning to drive on my father-in-law's car so we could go down to Shannon to meet Bea Mahaffey and drive her round Ireland before taking her over to the London Convention. So altogether, I've been out of fandom since the end of February. Meanwhile, it seems that something calling itself Seventh Fandom has arisen and I'm now relegated to the status of a legend. I thought of taking up the post permanently -- the work isn't hard and the hours are good -- but I've got so many things I want to do yet that I think I'll postpone it for a decade or so. All I'm wondering is whether I should represent my second fannish existence as a...er...recrudescence of 6th Fandom or as a harbinger of 8th Fandom. Anyhow, look out for my reappearance on the fannish scene. You can recognise me by the reincarnation in my button-hole.

In 1953, I also heard from:

Eric Frank Russell, Vince Clarke, **Harlan Ellison**... "Whether you are aware of it or not, you dirty low down sneaking slob, I've been holding up my annual since February on the promise of an article from you..." ☞ Come now Harlan, I'll have to speak to you like a Dutch Uncle. Luik Mynheer, you can't expect me to believe you've been holding an

annish on account of me, especially as I didn't promise you anything definite...

Eric Bentcliffe, Eric Frank Russell, Fred C. Brown, Charles Wells, Jim Harmon, Les Cole, James Rattigan, Joel Nydahl, Pete Campbell, Vic Waldrop, Don Cantin (Invention), Grayson & Grayson, Wrai Ballard, Ken Slater, Vernon McCain, Ethel Lindsay, Bryan Berry, Ken Potter, Bob Johnson, Dick Ryan, Henry Oden, **Groff Conklin**... "To me, the idea of a personal letter like *Quandry*, to which all friends contribute their own madness, whether or not it deals with science fiction, is genuinely delightful. Science fiction is not a be-all and end-all. People are. If a little more of this lovely intercommunicating nonsense on a strongly intelligent, imaginative, humorous, screwball base could be built up in this world, we might (I say might) have a little less animosity between nations and a little more peacefulness -- and fun."

Joseph Semenovitch, Harry Turner, Charles Wells, Mack Reynolds, **Dave Ish**... "I no longer worry about Harlan. We have, due to some unexplainable but binding force, become the best of friends." ☞ Don't you find most fmz today are rather dull? I think you and I will have to do something about this. Anyway, I mean to get right back into fandom this autumn and see if I can help to keep the old 51/52 type fandom from perishing altogether. It's funny how we all went into semi-retirement at once. Lee with her horse, me with pneumonia, Max Keasler with whatever it was, and now Shelby with polio. The Golden Age seems to be withering away, but there's no reason why it shouldn't come back as long as there's some of us left. Bloch and Tucker are as keen as ever, and so are we over here.

EJ Carnell, Ray Palmer, Pete Taylor, Hal Shapiro, Herbert Warren, International Fantasy Awards Committee, Peter Hamilton, Paul Enever, Paul Mittlebuscher, Bert Campbell, Bryan Berry, Karen Kruse, Charles Duncombe, Fred Robinson, City Lights, Don Ford, Dick Ryan, Nigel Cadell, Colin Parsons, Paul Enever, Andrew Harris, Bob Stew-



art, Redd Boggs, Shelby Vick, Paul Enever, Dave Cohen, Pete Taylor, Joel Nydahl, Harry Turner, Rich Elsberry, **Horace Gold**... "You were no disappointment to me. Remember that I move among writers and fans, and am used to finding poets' souls in truckdrivers' bodies and vice versa, or discovering that someone who is hilarious socially goes wooden on the typewriter and the other way around. You are one hell of a nice guy by mail and an armadillo in person. I'm the same by mail and a terrier in person. Your armor goaded me into a yelping hunt with muzzle and claws to find the chinks, and my ferreting made you pull into a tighter ball. Internally, we felt alarm and frustration and fear that we were not measuring up. Hell, we don't have to measure up: we're already there with each other."

Bill Morse, Lyle Kessler, Groff Conklin, Leo J. Harding, HP Sanderson, Tony Thorne, Archie Mercer, Mike Rosenblum, Pete Campbell, Terry Jeeves, EF Russell, Mike Tealby, Gregg Calkins, Bert Campbell, Robert Bloch, Forry Ackerman, FL Smith, **Walter Gilhings**... "While I'm writing, I must take the opportunity to thank you, as I should have at the time, for the rather pertinent things you said, or questions you asked, in some fanzine or other, following the Convention at which I bowed myself out (?) so ungracefully"...

LE Bartle, Maurice A. Weekly, Norman Wansborough, Dean A. Grennell, William Rotsler, Redd Boggs, Don Ford, Rory Faulkner, William F. Temple, Marie-Louise Share, Richard Eney, Kenneth G. Hall, Stuart MacKenzie, George L. Charters, Dean Grennell, Bob Kvanbeck, Ted K. Wagner, DR Smith, Don J. Nardizzi, **Addie Huddleston**... "I am very proud of my complete file of *Slant*"...

David Rike, Sid Gale, Claude R. Hall, Julian Parr, John D. Roles, **Max Keasler**... "Rising from the grave is always such a try, but here I am. Obviously wondering whatever happened to 'Good Ole Max' (tell Madeleine she no longer has to wear black), I shall tell. I'm one of Uncle Sam's Blue Boys -- yes, a sail-

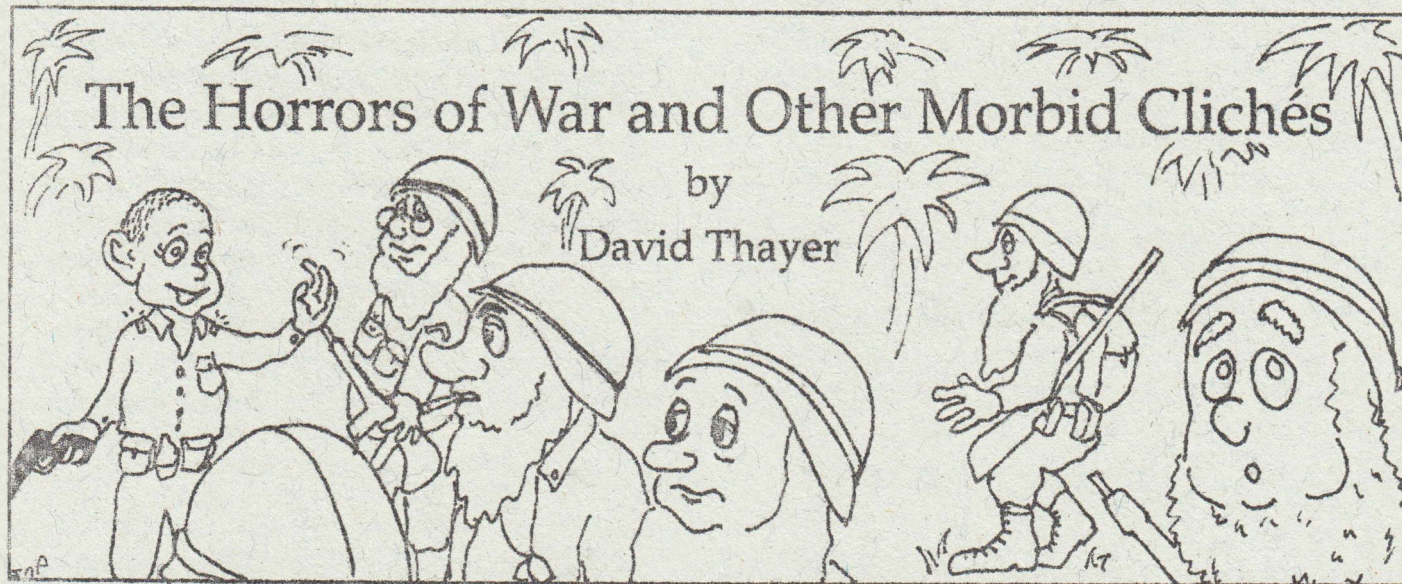
or. I wanted to wait until I got permanent station before dipping back into channel of activity in fandom. Thanks a million for faithfully sending *Hyphen* without receiving any acknowledgement. I'm reading them now and will comment later on." 🐉 Max!!! Am I glad to hear from you! There was me thinking you were fannishly dead, nothing more than a source of interlineations in other people's fanzines, and shedding a silent tear over your memory, while telling everyone 'but you should have been in fandom when Keasler was there' ... By the way, did you ever know I called at your frathouse in St. Louis on the day you were supposed to be back at school? I got a ticket with a six hour stop-off in St. Louis, and made my way to the address you gave me. There was no one there, so I waited a while on the porch, and then went in to look round for some fannish mail. Couldn't find any, had a wash and shave and went out again on the porch. After a while I gave up waiting, went downtown again for something to eat and went to a movie house showing burlesque queens. One of them with an Irish name wasn't bad. Look, we have a U.S. naval base here in Londonderry, just a couple of hours away. Just run along to the Admiral and tell him you want posted (as a first class mail) to Londonderry. What a fan group we could have then. It'd be bigger than when Battle Creek, Michigan, moved to California... 🐉

-- To Be Continued --

☞ Editorial Annotations: The Christmas poem was originally published by Tom Whitmore in *A Fan's Christmas in Ireland*. Also, many of the names listed by Walt in this article might not be familiar to contemporary fans, but Walt's 'I Also Heard Froms' is a veritable Who's Who of 1950s fandom. Unfortunately, too many of them, like Vernon McCain and Max Keasler, are no longer with us. Others have been inactive or only semi-active for decades; one of the things we're trying to do is to coax some of them back to activity in *Mimosa* and other fanzines... 🐉



☞ We send *Mimosa* to a lot of places, but not to Asia (well, there is actually one recipient: a Canadian who resides in Australia, and is currently doing relief work in Pakistan). Possibly because of this, we have yet to publish, until now, any fanzine articles that have an Asian locale. We now break personal new ground with an article about one of the most inhospitable locales in all of Asia, Vietnam of the early 1970s. The writer, better known as a fan artist (under a slightly different name), has most recently been awarded a Hugo in the fan artist category.



I've never killed anyone, at least no one I know of. In Vietnam though, I came close several times, the closest one night when I briefly confused fantasy with reality. But that was months after I arrived, months after my initial fear had turned into a blasé attitude toward life and death, at least that of others. It was an accepted survival technique.

Unlike the beloved GIs of earlier eras and the characters in war fictions, few of the soldiers I knew in Vietnam had endearing nicknames (Rock, Killer, Animal, Goldbrick) that succinctly captured their personalities. With staggered tours of duty of only a year, we weren't with each other long enough to bestow many nicknames. Most went simply by their last name (Nolan, Dietz, Padilla) or rank (PS4, Sarge, LT). We did have a few nicknames though, like Broadway Beak, Marvin the ARVN Killer, and Snow White.

Broadway Beak was the company RTO (radio/telephone operator), a slight New York Jets fan from New Jersey. He had a large

nose and one of those unpronounceable Eastern European surnames with seemingly randomly placed consonants and virtually no vowels. One day during a discussion of the upcoming football season he remarked that Joe Namath, the New York Jets quarterback, was his hero for having won the recent Super Bowl.

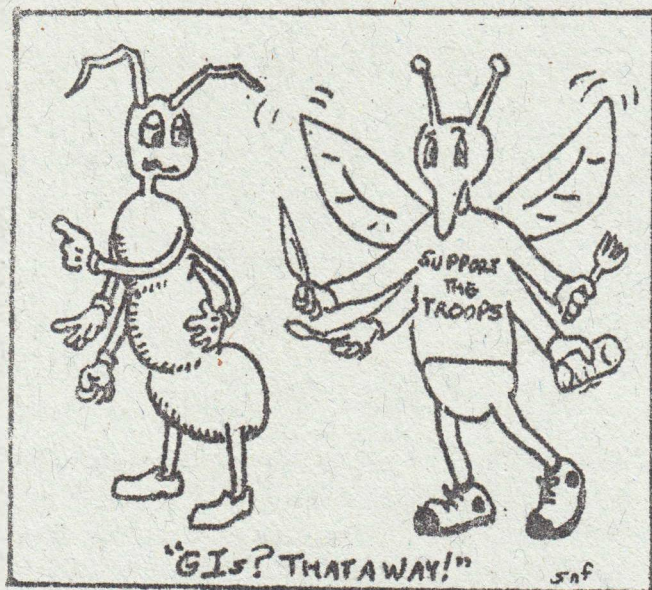
Namath earned millions throwing a football up and down an open field. We earned a fraction of that humping rifles through dense jungle. Bad knees exempted Namath from playing war. A lack of physical defects tagged us for the deadly game. A buddy remarked, "The only thing you have in common with Broadway Joe is your beak." An irony of the capitalist system I mused. Ever after he was Broadway Beak.

When later I ran into another soldier who went by the name Broadway, I immediately assumed it too was a nickname. I was surprised to discover it was his real last name. He was a cowboy from Oklahoma and



somehow on him the name lacked the glamour.

Marvin the ARVN Killer was a husky machine-gunner. One of the few creature comforts we grunts had in the field was our air mattresses. (We lived with numerous creatures, mosquitoes, leeches, horseflies, ants, but few comforts.) Those whose mattresses thorns or shrapnel had punctured or over-inflation had ripped a seam suffered. The ground was hard.



But one of the hardships was having to inflate the mattress after humping miles through the jungle with 70 pounds or more of equipment. What little breath we had left we wanted to save for more important tasks, such as talking about what we'd rather be doing, uttering profanities, even breathing. Marvin came to our rescue. A combination of heredity and a life of outdoor living had blessed him with a powerful set of lungs. To supplement his meager private's income, meager even with combat pay, he inflated other guys' mattresses. He often finished in less than a minute. Merely watching him perform was worth the dollar we paid.

Like the rest of us, Marvin was not fearless, but he more than made up for his fear with firepower. In the field he carried inordinate amounts of belted ammunition for his M-60 machine gun. One night he opened

up. When the platoon leader sensed that the M-60 was the only weapon firing he ordered Marvin to cease fire, fearing that he might hit my squad which was out on ambush. We wondered at the shooting, but it was not in our direction, and we had confusion of our own (but that's another story).

Marvin finally stopped, but only when the weapon jammed and after several hundred rounds. He swore, literally, that someone had shot at him, but no one else had heard. The other grunts laughed at him for letting the echoes of distant artillery in the jungle spook him. The LT fumed until dawn when daylight revealed that the M-60 had jammed on a link broken and twisted by an AK-47 round. Awe turned into respect when they found a blood trail leading off into the jungle.

Marvin was his real first name. ARVN (rhymes with Marvin) was the acronym for Army of the Republic of (South) Vietnam. Individual soldiers we called ARVN's. They were our allies, although we often wondered. Differences in language and culture and their uncanny resemblance to the VC (Viet Cong) sometimes lead to clashes, always in the rear because we never saw them in the field.

After one encounter, a GI joked, "Let Marvin kill them." Ever after he was Marvin the ARVN Killer. New guys, confused by the long nickname, sometimes naively dropped the Killer at the end. Old-timers quickly corrected the breach of etiquette before it reached Marvin's ears.

Finally we had Snow White, me. Unlike Broadway Beak and Marvin the ARVN Killer, I gave myself my nickname, and before my first exploits. Name changes were a personal tradition with me. In the sixth grade, when my family moved from Texas to Ohio, I switched from my first to my middle name. In my age group in Texas, David seemed the popular name, there being six in my class. I yearned to be unique. In Ohio I was the only Mike. At the first parent-teacher conference, my mom wondered who the



Mike was my teacher was talking about. What had happened to her David?

Shortly before high school we moved to Oklahoma. There I encountered numerous other Mikes and I again became just another name in the crowd. In college, away from family, last names took precedence over first names and I became Thayer. I was unique again. My second year an upperclassman, because of my pale complexion, started calling me Spook, after the 'Wizard of Id' character. It was my first firsthand experience with a nickname. I accepted it, not that I had much choice.

When I dropped out of college and went into the Army, I reverted to Thayer, sort of. For 16 weeks, 8 basic training, 8 advanced infantry training, I was simply one of countless other privates. Around drill sergeants with a penchant for yelling at anything that moved, being just one of the crowd had its advantages. The final week of training, we received our orders. I learned that David Thayer was going to Vietnam.

My buddy Kramer suggested that if I didn't want to go, I should send Snowball, the name one of the juvenile wiseguys in our training company had nicknamed me because of my close-cropped blond hair. Kramer had a way with names. The first words out of his mouth when I met him were that his name spelled "remark" backwards (my first experience with the possibilities in rearranging the letters of one's name). I never saw Kramer again. We went separate ways to Vietnam.

I didn't like the name Snowball, with its negative connotations (such as "Snowball's chance in Hell of surviving"), but Kramer started me thinking. When I reached my ultimate unit in the field, I, with my penchant for literary allusions, had mutated it into Snow White. Subconsciously perhaps, I thought that a nickname might protect David Thayer from getting hurt in Vietnam. One look at my pale complexion, blond hair, and blue eyes, and my new buddies asked no questions.

They did, however, challenge me to name the seven dwarves to prove my identity. "Sleepy, Sneezy, Grumpy, Doc, Dopey, Happy," I said. "That's only six." I easily remembered the five ending in "y" and Doc, the nickname of every 18-year-old medic trusted to save lives under fire. I kept forgetting Bashful. For weeks I struggled memorizing his name and recalling it on command.



Finally after a couple of months in the field, I could name the dwarves in my sleep. At the base camp PX, I had a Vietnamese seamstress sew me a name tag with my nickname for my jungle fatigues. She faithfully copied my handwriting, totally ignorant I'm sure of the Grimm fairy tale that had inspired it.

Later a Lt. Whiteknight (his real name) joined our unit, only serving to reinforce the naturalness of a PFC called Snow White. He was short and thin, a typical new bumbling and inexperienced officer, hardly the dashing character his name implied. My face had tanned and my hair, dirty and disheveled, at least between infrequent showers, had grown.

One hazard of my nickname occurred several weeks after my arrival, when my mail from home finally caught up with me. I had failed to tell my family and girlfriend. The



company mail clerk had no idea who David Thayer was and was on the verge of returning my mail. Only Broadway Beak saved my family the trauma of having their letters to me returned "Addressee Unknown." He remembered seeing the name David Thayer on orders at the same time Snow White arrived and put two and two together.



On one mission my platoon by chance ended up on a hilltop firebase in the middle of a broad valley, while the other platoons in the company humped through the jungle below us. Tom Dietz, the other token blond-haired, blue-eyed grunt in the platoon (everyone else seemed to be an ethnic minority, black, hispanic, Indian, Italian, Irish with black or brown hair and dark eyes), and I were assigned to one of the guard towers.

Our tower was a 12x12-foot box on stilts overlooking the strands of barbed wire on the perimeter, a structure any kid would have been thrilled to have in his backyard except for the dry, rock-hard sandbags lining the walls and floor and covering the roof. Waist-high windows looked out on all sides. A crude ladder of 2-by-4s led from the ground to the open door in the back.

Another of the few creature comforts available to us was the radio, although it was not government issue and the Army frowned on its use on patrol. It provided our one

real-time contact with the World back home. We listened almost exclusively to Armed Forces Radio (Radio Hanoi was amusing, but the continuous propaganda breaks between songs got old quick and the local Vietnamese stations were just so much gibberish to us).

By popular demand (of the majority of lower enlisted and drafted GIs in Southeast Asia, who didn't want to be there anyway), the stations played mostly rock-and-roll music. It reflected our rebellious attitude. Armed Forces Radio could slant the news, but it could not distort the music (it was already distorted). I still remember hearing "War" by Edwin Starr for the first time on a mountain ridge overlooking the South China Sea. "War, uh, what is it good for? Absolutely nothing!" "Yes!"

On Sundays, the station played an hour of classical music, in deference to Gen. Creighton Abrams, Commanding General, a connoisseur of such finer things. Even that brief interlude was enough to drive some of us to thoughts of wasting not only the albums and D.J., but the general himself. In the summer of 1970, the station was playing songs like "Mamma Told Me Not To Come" by Three Dog Night ("What are all these questions they're asking me?") and "Spirit in the Sky" by Norman Greenbaum ("When I die and they lay me to rest, I'm going to go to the place that's the best.")

One night shortly after dark, Dietz and I sat with our backs to the wall just outside the door of the tower. My M-16 rifle and an M-76 grenade launcher leaned against the front wall, the business end of the tower. Bandoleers of ammunition in magazines and a vest of grenades hung from nails above the weapons. A breeze stirred the air around us but failed to dissipate the heat.

We listened to the black transistor radio I'd brought from home until the music stopped. The announcer told us to stand by for "Mystery Theater". We were both disappointed. We wondered whom they thought they were trying to scare. I had first watch



and Dietz started to rise to go crash for a while when the crash of thunder followed by strands of heavy organ music stopped him. A sinister voice intoned that the story for the night was "Frankenstein." Dietz stayed.



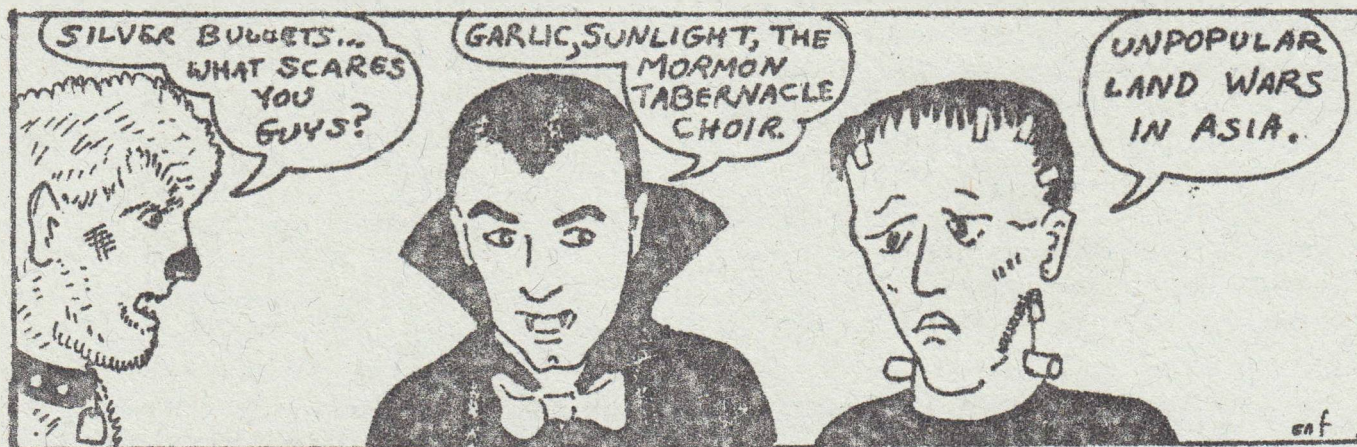
We huddled together to hear the narrator better, momentarily forgetting where we were. We shifted our weight on the hard floor to get more comfortable but in vain. Then at a dramatic moment in the story, with the monster standing in a doorway, the tower grew darker. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a tall figure filling the doorway. Dietz and I had incorporated footsteps up the ladder into the narrative on the radio.

Sweat trickled down my face and my heart pounded in my throat. My mind leaped to the weapons out of reach at the front of the tower, but I was too terrified to move. If Dietz and I had had them in hand we would have blown the intruder away.

Someone on the radio let out a scream my own voice refused to make. The figure noticing us at last, looked down. "What are you guys doing on the floor?" our LT asked, breaking the spell. His helmet and flak jacket made him look larger than life. I turned off the radio and Dietz and I stood and mumbled some inane explanation. Skeptical, the LT ordered us to keep our eyes open and backed out of the tower and down the ladder.

After he'd left, Dietz worried about getting caught goofing off on guard duty. "What are they going to do to us?" I asked. "Send us to Vietnam?" He laughed at how mistaken identity had brought us within a hairtrigger of blowing our own platoon leader away. Only the mental lapse of leaving our weapons beyond arms' reach had saved him. "They would have blamed it on friendly fire," I joked. "Yeah," Dietz agreed. "With friends like us, who needs enemies?"

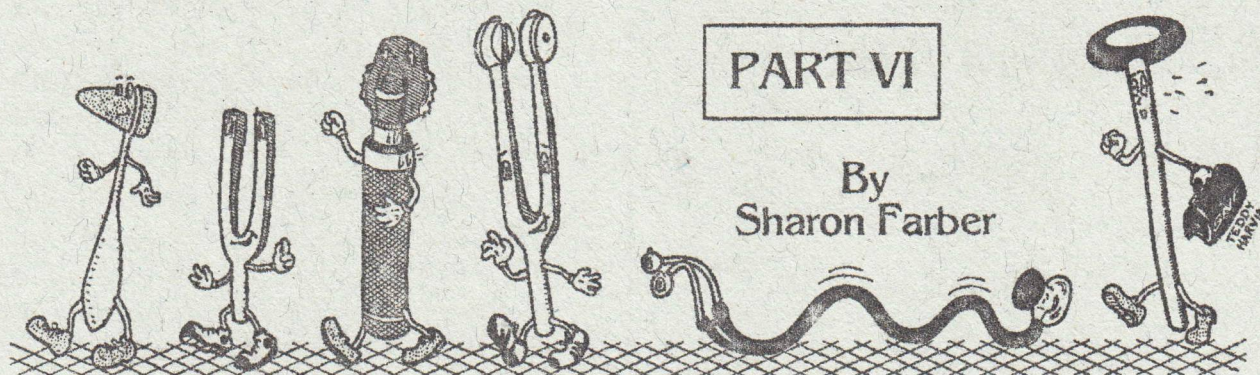
Combat is often marked by weeks of boredom broken by moments of sheer terror. Sometimes it takes real veterans to tell the difference. ♦♦





☞ There's no particular theme for this issue, but we do seem to be focusing on stories from fandoms near and remote. This leads us inevitably back to Chattanooga, where we started this fanzine about a decade ago. People sometimes ask us if we miss Chattanooga and southern fandom. The answer is yes, but mainly because we no longer get to see friends like Sharon Farber, except at distracting places like a Worldcon. We're happy to report that Sharon has recently become a home-owner, is still writing and selling first-rate science fiction stories, and somehow still has enough time to send us amusing anecdotal fanzine articles like the following.

## Tales of Adventure and Medical Life



One of the unique aspects of medical education is the way that it takes middle-class sheltered scholars, and introduces them to the sort of people that most of us only get to see on *Cops!* and *America's Most Wanted*.

Yes, I'm talking about those sterling citizens who Arlo Guthrie called "mother rapers, father stabbers, father rapers." Doctors in training call them patients.

Since you were supposed to be polite and friendly to all your patients -- or equally dour and snarly to all your patients -- it was best to greet all news of malefaction with a bland expression. (This is where all those years of watching *Star Trek* paid off. I do a great Spock eyebrow.) And the drug dealers, prostitutes, and felons at least had one advantage over the more humdrum alcoholics, addicts and loiterers -- they had jobs. Sort of.

After finishing my first two weeks of third year on neurology at City Hospital, I went up to the academic hospital for two weeks of (theoretically) more abstruse, academic, and civilized neurology. That first

night, about two a.m., I was writing a history and physical. A nurse sat nearby, charting. We could hear some patient mumbling deliriously in the room across from the nurses' station. As we quietly worked, the words became more distinct.

"I didn't do it. Don't arrest me, officer. I didn't kill that man."

I looked up from my note. The nurse looked up from her chart.

"Johnny did it. I didn't do it. Johnny did."

I looked at the nurse. The nurse looked me. The patient kept talking.

We went back to work.

#

I was a bit more experienced but no less jaded three years later. Summer was not a good time to be the neurology resident at City Hospital. Not only was it hot and for the most part not air-conditioned, but it was also the time of the heaviest patient load. Maybe people pass out or fall or commit senseless acts of violence during the winter --



but they must do it indoors, where they can recover or die without the inconvenience of hospitalization.

All night, every night, the emergency room hosted meetings of the Knife and Gun Club, and the prevailing theory amongst E.R. docs seemed to be that anyone hit in the head, no matter how trivially, should have the pleasure of a neurology consultation.

(There was also an actual policy, enforced only by the laziest E.R. moonlighters, that no one could be shipped across the street to the mental hospital until cleared by neuro. I remember stumbling down the stairs at three a.m. one night -- this policy was generally remembered about the time all sane individuals are in Stage IV sleep -- and lurching into a cubicle to stare at a completely healthy young woman who smiled hopefully as I entered.

"Why are you here?" I asked.

"My sister has multiple personalities."

"Well, do you?"

She sighed. "No," she said. Very sadly.

I'm still not sure why she was there -- or why I was there, either. But back to the war zone.)

After a while, you got to be a connoisseur of certain forms of violence. Bricks, for instance. I've never met a victim of a brick who didn't need neurosurgery to raise a depressed skull fracture. Krazy Kat, take notice.

When I inherited the City Hospital service, there was a patient about to go home following neurosurgery for the aftereffects of a brick. As he was thanking the doctors, he kept interjecting, "I'm gonna get me the guy that got me."

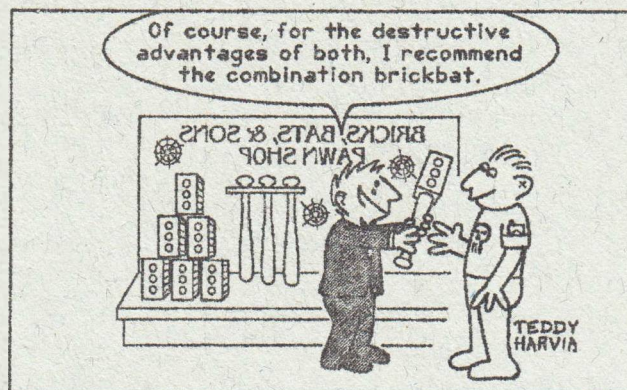
After hearing it a half-dozen times, I began to get perturbed. Senseless acts of violence, after all, meant more work for me. "Sir," I said, "we've been pretty good to you here, and I think you owe us something. So if you feel that you absolutely must get the

guy that got you, please don't get him in the head. Or if you do, then please do it outside the city limits."

The interns nodded their approval -- let County hospital suffer for once -- but my chief resident was less than pleased.

(My attitude was not unique. One of the junior attendings told me that there used to be a motorcycle shop across the street from the neuro ICU. One day two rival biker factions decided to have a shootout. This physician, then a first-year resident, claimed that he and his fellows stood at the ICU window, ignoring the hail of bullets and shouting, "Don't aim for the head!")

Baseball bats were a more popular weapon than bricks, but less effective. They infrequently seemed to do substantial permanent neurologic damage, but they could transform a face into a swollen mess that reminded me of an over-ripe plum.



I remember treating an unfortunate woman, so treated by her boyfriend. Then I went to the next E.R. cubicle to check a guy who claimed he'd just walked in the door and said, "Hi honey, I'm home," when his wife, evidently fed up by years of abuse, shot him in the forehead. With the incredible blind dumb luck that will never strike anyone nice, the bullet entered at the forehead, skimmed along the skull, and flew out near the ear, doing no real damage whatsoever.

The boyfriend with the bat wandered by the room, recognized the gunshot victim, and shouted, "Hey, man!" They were brothers.



Obviously a family that knew who to treat women.

#

Relatives of felons who live and die by the sword must not have day jobs, because they tend to call real late at night and ask questions like, "How's he doing?" and "How could this happen to such a nice boy?" The mother of a lad shot in a drug war always called at midnight for a progress report.

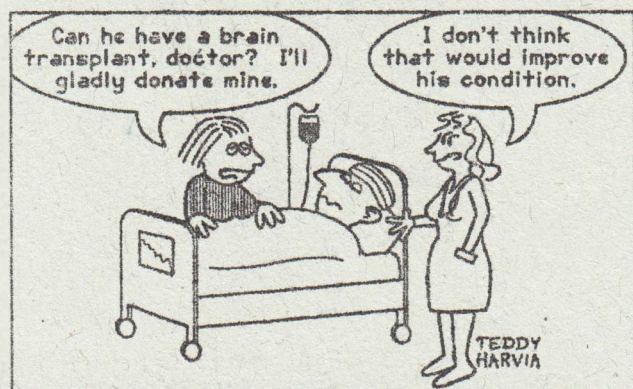
"I don't think he's going to get any better, ma'am. There's been a lot of brain damage," I explained, not for the first time.

"Oh," she said. Long silence. "Can he have a transplant?"

"No, sorry."

Another long, disappointed silence. Then, "Why does God allow this to happen?"

I'm not at my best after midnight. Especially when confronted with questions of theology.



#

Another patient with relatives who just couldn't understand his bad luck was Floyd (name changed to protect the guilty). "It's just not fair. Why did it happen to him?" an aunt once asked. Floyd taught me a lot, primarily about bad luck (his, not mine), but also about the transformation of a casual comment into legend.

On the neurology service, Floyd was not often called by name. He was usually referred to as "Farber's Folly."

This occurred when I was chief resident at Regional Hospital, the successor to City. They let second-year residents be neurology chief at Regional, on the theory that the incredibly myopic are perfectly capable of leading the blind.

The on-call neurologist was asked to see Floyd, who was in *status epilepticus* (having continuous seizures) on a surgery ward. His abdominal infection had resulted in brain abscesses. I came by the next day and found him still having seizures. (It turned out they hadn't quite followed our resident's suggestions, and once we did, he was seizure free. Too later for me, though.)

"You have to take him on your service," the surgery chief resident said.

"No way; he's a disaster," I said. Floyd was paraplegic, with every complication of his paralysis that you could imagine. His legs had been amputated because of pressure sores. His bladder was surgically diverted to drain into his intestines, due to kidney damage from frequent urinary tract infections. He had constant infections, this latest one leading to brain damage. He was obviously doomed to be a chronic player, to languish indefinitely -- and troublingly -- on whichever service he landed.

"Please. We can't handle him," replied the surgeon. And then he begged, an awesome sight, as surgeons are, of course, God. "Look," he finally said. "Just take him till he stops seizing, and then we'll take him back."

That sounded logical. He was in *status epilepticus*, after all, and this way I wouldn't have to walk over to the surg ward all the time. "You'll take him back?"

"I promise."

So, Floyd came to our ward. A couple days later, when I tried to return him, the surgeon refused. It seemed that the very next day after we made our bargain, surgery chief residents had rotated, and the new chief felt no need to honor his predecessor's



promises. If Zeus promises rain, need Odin comply?

At which point I had a sinking feeling, only made worse when my team began to refer to Floyd as "Farber's Folly."

(I must state that I was extremely angry. I had thought chiefs from the same institution should behave honorably toward each other. After all, my treaty with the medicine chief at Regional -- a chief from a different program entirely, and thus with every reason to engage in mutual hostilities and patient dumping -- resulted in a year of relative peace between the medicine and neurology services. Of course, creation of The Farber-Hopkins Treaty Determining Disposition of Alcoholics From the Emergency Room had been facilitated by my possessing an embarrassing Polaroid of the medicine chief in the Ugly Tie Contest during our internship.)

Poor Floyd took root upon our floor. He was now unable to communicate or comprehend but was very skilled at pulling out central lines with his teeth. (Kids, don't try this at home.) He also became famous throughout the hospital for chewing a hole in his flotation bed, something we had not thought possible.

One day we were outside his room, on rounds, when the med rotator spoke up.

"Floyd was my patient two years ago, at City." And he told us the whole sad story.

Floyd had evidently become paraplegic after being shot by the police while committing a felony. When our rotator first met him, before all the complications of poorly managed paralysis set in, Floyd had been vigorous and active.

"In fact, he even tried to rob a drugstore in his wheelchair but got caught."

At which point someone -- and memory is imperfect, but I strongly believe it was me -- said, "Well, maybe we should get him a lawyer. Because if the drugstore'd had proper wheelchair access, he might have succeeded." We snickered a bit and got on with rounds.

Eventually I rotated away and forgot all about Floyd, except that the next neuro chief complained how long it took to get him home.

The next year, as I was sitting on one of the medical wards at Regional, I glanced up at the chart rack and saw a familiar name.

"Floyd?"

A medical intern said, "You know him?" and eagerly filled me in. It seemed that the family had soon given up trying to care for him, and no nursing home would take him, as he was tragic, unpleasant, indigent, and a lot of work. So they dropped Floyd off at the hospital, where he appeared to be a permanent fixture. In order to prevent nurses from quitting, he was rotated to a different medicine ward every six weeks.

"And you know the amazing part of it?" asked the intern, leaning in confidentially. "He got shot by the cops, robbing something, and then went out and tried to rob a grocery store in his wheelchair. And when they caught him, he sued the store for improper wheelchair access!"



The intern beamed as my jaw dropped in astonishment -- not at the story, but because my joke about Floyd had become incorporated into his official medical history, and my wiseass comment would forever after skew his physicians' opinions.

Oops.

I mean, if a joke is going to be that good, shouldn't you at least get paid for it? ➡



☾ From Chattanooga, it's back home to Maryland. Even after three years of living here, it still doesn't seem like we've been here all that long. But, as of *Mimosa 11*, we've now published more issues of this fanzine from Maryland than we managed to do in Tennessee. The following article is from Sheryl Birkhead, who besides being the first friend we made after moving north, is also a fan artist, fan writer, and... veterinarian.



Seeing Sharon Farber's account of the patient who managed to undo every therapeutic avenue known to man brought back memories of a patient I met while in fourth year veterinary school (small animal rotation).

Before I get to that, I think I ought to fill you in on some information. The veterinarian is a general specialist -- we are expected to be a surgeon, dermatologist, neurologist, and \*\*\*\*\* (you name it). The specialties exist, just as in human medicine, but the 'normal' veterinary office does not employ specialists and many owners do not want to pay the specialist's fee. There are several other differences between veterinarians and RDs (real doctors), but education cost is not one of them. Also, our patients don't talk (which is a mixed blessing -- at least they can't talk back to us, either) and we are expected to deal with multiple species. The closest human physician to a veterinarian is probably the pediatrician, until you talk about equine practitioners -- the babies they deal with are just a bit larger than the human counterpart!

But back to Wolf...

On rotation, a group of seniors in veterinary school works through a specialty together. Each has his or her own cases, but they work as a group between rounds, treatments, and so on. In this respect, Wolf was not "my" case, but all seven of us on Small Animal Surgery together came to view him as a group project.

Big dogs are subject to a variety of hip problems and, depending on the size and age of the dog, may be treated in a variety of ways. Wolf was (as you may have already guessed) a wolf cross, the other parts being German Shepherd (or Alsatian, depending on your upbringing) and Husky. He weighed in at about 200 pounds. Luckily, he was truly a sweetie of the canine world, otherwise he'd have eaten most of us for lunch.

Wolf, at a mature 4½ years, had been diagnosed as having progressive degenerative disease in both hips. The veterinarian had referred him to our teaching hospital, realizing the treatment of choice (if the owners would go for it and the cost involved) would be to re-do hips by some method -- one at a time. Unfortunately, it turned out that his maturity and other factors dictated that one hip socket be destroyed (letting the body



create a "false joint") and maybe the other one could undergo a replacement. Obviously we would only work with one hip at a time, trying to leave him with at least one good leg to stand on (no, don't blame me for that one -- the surgeon involved loved using it).

So, Wolf's right hip was, essentially, removed and he started long term physical therapy. Now, that sounds simple on paper -- but think about it. You have a BIG dog who can't walk, can't talk, and is in a lot of pain --- what do you do? The student who was assigned to Wolf's case, Elizabeth, had to work longer hours than the rest of us simply to stay even -- it meant cleaning up a lot of messes (remember, Wolf was a BIG dog!) and asking for a lot of help. Wolf had to be "walked" twice a day, which meant having the help of two or more students to roll towels under his rump and lift him -- helping with the rear, while he tried his best on the front end. Remember, I said we were lucky he had a good temperament; think how it must have felt to get all this rolling around -- without benefit of painkillers!

This went on for several weeks. Each of us helped in turn, depending on how heavy our own case loads were. The rotation was drawing to an end and Wolf was still with us. By now, he was developing pressure sores, despite turning (and we tried to rest his bad hip as much as possible). He was also really getting *bored*. He had learned how to drag himself around the cage area but he was so big that he would not fit into any of the cages, so he had a corner of the patient area marked off for his own -- which meant that as he learned how to get around, we all had to learn how to dodge portions of his anatomy as we worked with our own patients.

Elizabeth was at her wits end (luckily it was almost the end of the rotation and then Wolf would be someone else's worry...) because Wolf had begun chewing up anything not nailed down -- he was really bored! Anything -- blankets, foam pads, papers -- was fair game if it was within tooth/paw reach.

We'd go in and sit with him while writing cases, just to keep him company. We'd leave a radio on, have the ICU students drop over to see him on the hour; we'd do any and everything we could think of to keep him mind off the hip and his teeth away from it so we didn't have to listen to him howl.

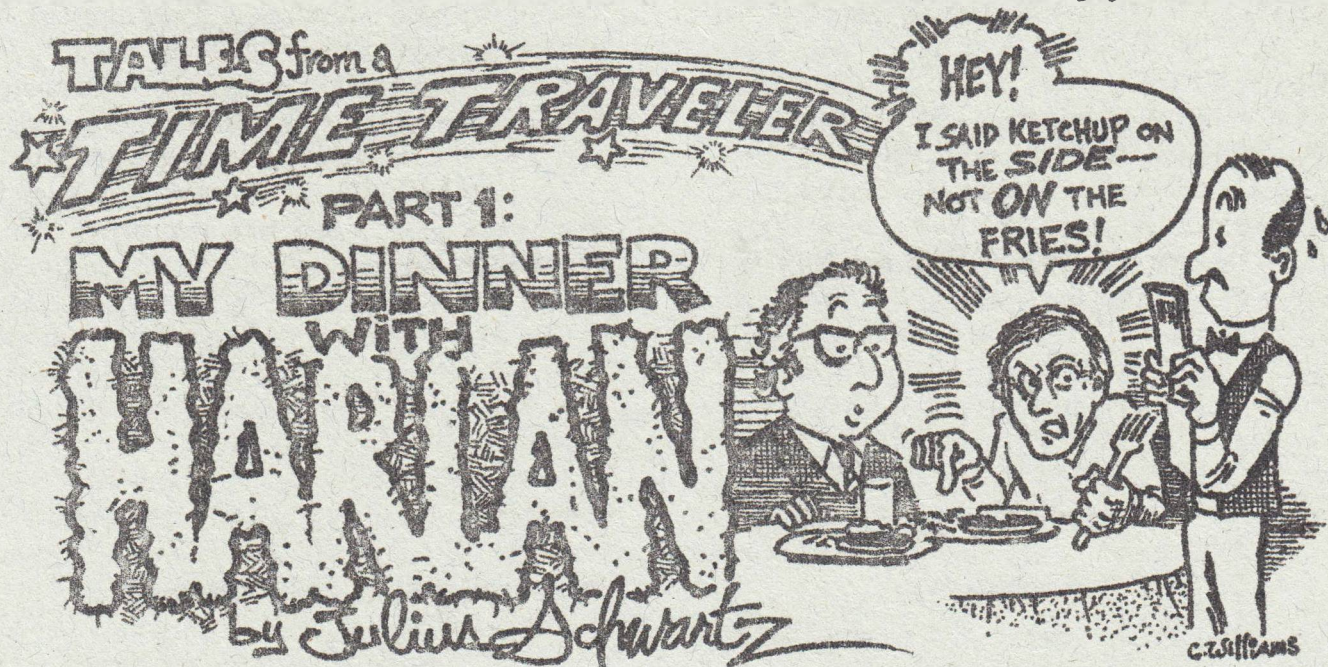
Eventually we came up with a better idea. I willingly admit that I was not the one to come up with it, but I have to say I helped. The large animal service was particularly proud of their equine neo-natal unit and they about popped a gasket when they came in to find a 'small' animal lounging happily on their brand new foal water bed. We thought this was great -- Wolf had people bustling around, loads of new smells to think over, and (best of all) it was relatively easy to turn him. Perhaps his sores would heal now. Except for the large animal surgeons (who hit the ceiling, but we figured by the time the paperwork was done and Wolf was somehow gotten back to the small animal ward, we would be off the rotation), everyone seemed pleased by the whole thing.



How blissfully unaware the uninformed can be. This one's for you Sharon -- on our last day of rotation a screaming, foaming at the mouth large animal surgeon descended upon us during rounds -- but no one cracked and admitted being the perpetrator. (I didn't know there were so many colorful epithets for one poor(?) dog.) Wolf had chewed a hole in their environmentally controlled, thermostatically regulated... water bed. Where there's a will, there's a way -- and ingenuity doesn't lie solely with the human species! ♦♦



☞ We end this excursion through fandoms near and remote back where we started, in New York State, for a visit with Julius Schwartz. Julie should really need no introduction, as he has been active in the science fiction field since the early 1930s, when he and Mort Weisinger published the first science fiction fan magazine, *The Time Traveler*. We're happy to report that he has been talked into writing his autobiography, which will be published under the title of *Memoirs of a Time Traveler*. The following was transcribed from an audiotape kindly provided by Toni Weisskopf, which was recorded during a dinner engagement several months ago. The first article we've gleaned from that tape is, appropriately enough, about other friendly dinner engagements...



It's tough for me to do a Robert Bloch story because for a recent World Fantasy Convention, I wrote two pages of reminiscences about Robert Bloch that was printed in the program book. So how about a Robert Bloch story in conjunction with Harlan Ellison...

On one of my trips to California, I didn't have enough time to have dinner separately, one night with Harlan and another with Bloch. Instead, I suggested we all eat together, and we agreed on the Brown Derby.

When I arrived, there was Harlan Ellison and his wife Susan, Robert Bloch and his wife Elly; I was with Lisa Feerick, who was advertising coordinator for Davis Publications. As we were having dinner, this very attractive young lady came in, and as she passed our table, she screamed, "Oh, my god! It's Harlan Ellison and Robert Bloch! And Julie Schwartz, all having dinner together!"

I'm a reporter from *USA Today*. I'd like to take your picture and do an article about you!"

As she took our picture, Harlan started snickering, then began laughing louder and louder.

"Harlan, what the hell are you laughing about," I asked?

He said, "I can't keep it in any longer! That's my secretary; I put her up to it!"

All during that dinner Harlan and Robert Bloch were cracking jokes fast and furiously back and forth at each other. Everytime Bloch told a gag, Harlan did a rim shot, like in vaudeville, on the table. Ba-da-bing. Each time Bob finished, he leaned back and looked up at the ceiling. When I asked him why, he said, "That's how I think up a new gag."



"C'mon," I said, "that's not the reason. You have all your jokes written up there!"

Speaking of dining, Harlan is a self-styled, self-proclaimed gourmet. On one occasion, after the World Science Fiction Convention in Anaheim in 1984, he invited me and about a dozen others to have dinner with him at the Pacific Diner, an expensive restaurant where the diner may select the steak of his choice.

When we got there, Harlan said, "Julie, I'm very knowledgeable about steaks. I'll pick out a well-marbled porterhouse for you."

"No, no," I protested. "I'll pick out my own steak. How about *this* one?"

"Oh, very good," he approved. "Nice marbling."

So we all sat down at the table, while Harlan kept telling us what a steak perfectionist he is. Then, the waiter came over: "Mr. Ellison, how would you like to have your steak tonight? The usual way?"

And Harlan said, "But of course. **Very... well... done.**"

At that, I jumped to my feet, pointed a finger at him and said, "Mr. Gourmet Ellison, I refuse to have dinner at the same table if you eat your steaks very well done!"

After a while I calmed down and resumed my seat. But as the waiter was about to leave, Harlan pointed a finger at him and said, "Waiter, don't forget the *bottle of ketchup.*" Ba-da-bing.

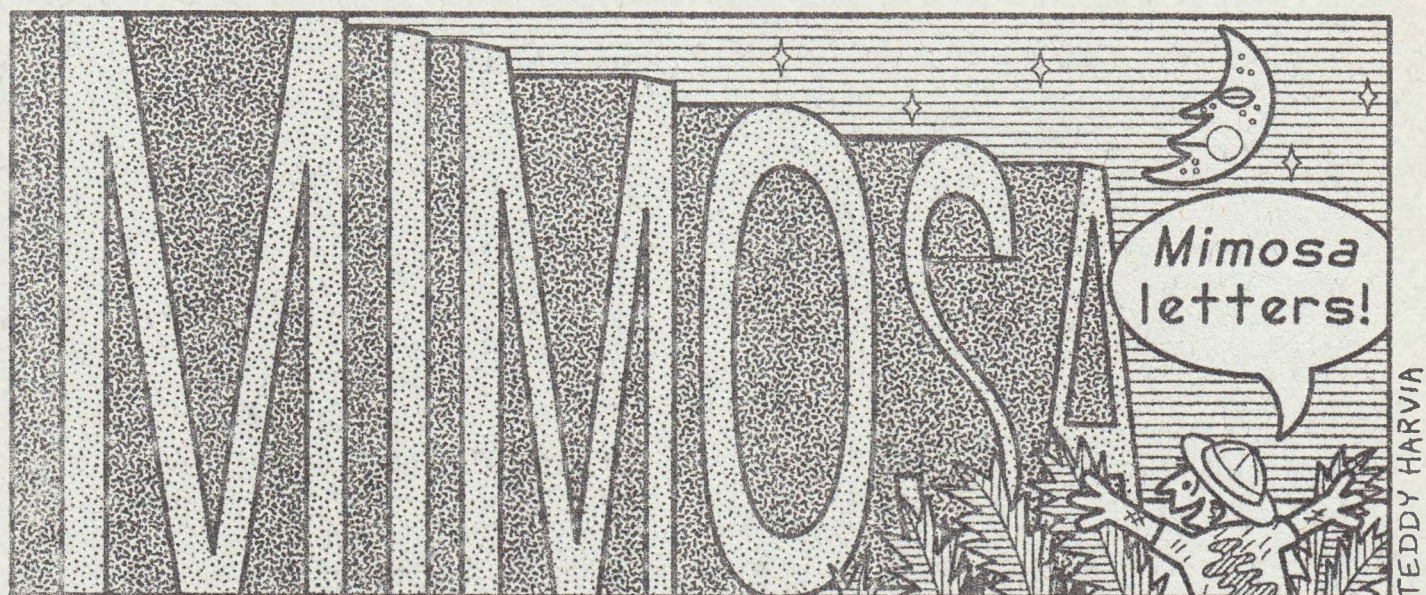
(P.S.-- Harlan did the inviting, but DC Comics picked up the bill!) ♦♦

## Artist Credits

Sheryl Birkhead - pages 3; 5  
Kurt Erichsen - pages 30; 32  
Sharon Farber - pages 35; 36; 37; 38; 39  
Sharon Farber & Teddy Harvia - page 40  
Alexis Gilliland - page 47; 53  
Ian Gunn - pages 22; 23; 24; 26; 27  
Teddy Harvia - pages 7; 41; 42; 43; 48  
Craig Hilton - pages 18; 19; 20; 21  
Alan Hutchinson - pages 14; 15; 16; 17  
Eddie Jones & Dave Kyle - page 13  
Joe Mayhew - pages 8; 10  
Peggy Ranson - page 2  
Diana Stein - pages 44; 45; 58  
Steve Stiles - front & back covers  
Steve Stiles & William Rotsler - page 51  
Charlie Williams - page 46  
Kip Williams - pages 28; 29







☞ Thanks once again to everyone who sent us a letter of comment or a fanzine in trade. We continue to be gratified by the sizable amount of mail we get in return for *Mimosa*. In fact, the reason for our change of address is because we wanted to keep a large-sized mailbox for all the fanzines and letters we receive; the Germantown Post Office recently moved to a new location and downsized our old postal box.

We're starting to detect a subtle shift in the content of many of the LoCs we're getting -- our lettercol is beginning to be as much a topic for comments as the essays and articles we publish, as you will see in the next dozen or so pages. We'll have to see where this leads in future issues. Meanwhile, leading off are comments on Kip Williams' *Mimosa* 10 front and back covers.

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Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, Michigan 48224

I confess I'm not sure what that machine is in the foreground of your front cover. It sort of looks like a heavy duty stapler but like none I've ever seen. Of course, the mimeo in the background -- if that is a mimeo in the background -- doesn't look quite like any I've seen before, either.

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

A nice, solid issue of *Mimosa*, this tenth effort. I especially liked the cover, which gave me the feeling I was facing massive mimeograph repairs even though there wasn't a mimeo in sight.

Anyway, I truly enjoyed Dave Kyle's "Sex in Fandom" article. Maybe the best thing to do with this theme is have someone write a different article each mailing detailing 'sex in fandom' by decade. I'm sure it would paint an interesting picture of how fandom and our society has changed.

☞ We'd have to make sure first that our mimeo wouldn't melt down.

---

Curt Phillips, Route 7, Box 357, Abingdon, Virginia 24210

The Kip Williams covers are neat. You don't often get to see an old Tucker-Tremaine heavy duty pneumatic gum stapler (Is that what you use to staple *Mimosa*? The staples don't seem to be at all chewy...) or that fine old Bloch & Decker rotary post-sared mimeo in the background. I'm not sure what sort of printing press is on the back cover, but I'm virtually certain that



Lynn Hickman has one just like it in his garage in Wauseon, Ohio.

Best item in the issue is Vinç Clarke's "Farewell, No.6... Perhaps". I hope you can coax more articles out of him. Dave Kyle's article on "Sex in Fandom" runs a close second, although I suspect he knows a lot more about the topic than he's related here. The twinkle in his eye fairly leaps off the page at you.

In your lettercol, Martin Morse Wooster mentions that Don Miller's fanzine collection was sold to a dealer in Pennsylvania. I can tell you that several years ago, I bought large lots of fanzines from a Pennsylvania dealer, many of which had Don Miller's name on them, so at least some of his stuff ended up in fannish hands. Ever since I bought those zines, I'd wondered who Don Miller was, but I never found out anything about him until I read these letters about him in *Mimosa*. You people serve fandom in ways you never expected.

Norm Metcalf, P.O. Box 1368, Boulder, Colorado 80306

David A. Kyle's off-the-cuff recollections about the exclusion of a fan at the 1964 Worldcon are erroneous. We didn't exclude him on the sole basis of molesting a two-year-old girl. There were several other incidents. And it was not done from dislike. The fan's reputation in such matters was begun by the fan himself, in a fan magazine postmailed to the January 1960 mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society. The fact that no legal charges were brought was not because he was innocent, but rather due to the reluctance of the various authorities to bring charges without the cooperation of the parents. One key set of parents changed their minds due to thinking that they'd harm their son due to the subsequent publicity. Another parent simply told the culprit that he'd kill him if he came around again. Several involved parents were 'Fanarchists' who were upset with us for informing the law.

But we felt that we'd had an obligation to the children whose parents either weren't aware of him or couldn't watch their children at all times.

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

Well, Dave Kyle has tried, but I think he will have failed with many of today's younger fans who won't believe in the essential innocence of people in the days of which he writes. When I came into fandom in the mid 1960s (I had a wasted youth; I had been reading science fiction for at least twenty years before I discovered fandom) there was still that essential innocence in spite of free love and hippies. The number of unattached female fans was still very small even then; you certainly didn't need to take your socks off to count them all up. We didn't make a great impact on fandom as a whole simply because we were so few in number.

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

I greatly enjoyed Dave Kyle's "Sex in Fandom" article, in spite of the fact that (as he warned) it was so much like the old *Planet Stories* -- title (or cover, in *Planet's* case) to titillate you, but simon-pure from there on.

Vince Clarke's "Farewell..." touched delicate memories of my original AB Dick mimeo that served so faithfully for so many years -- both in my business and in fandom. When I bought a Gestetner to replace it, I didn't throw Dick away or sell him off; I kept (and occasionally used) him for years thereafter. Nice bit of nostalgia.

Roger Waddington's letter sparked a response, concerning about what makes a fanzine a legend. I disagree... kind of. That is, in the days of *Slant*, *Hyphen*, and *Quandry*, many of us knew that those fanzines



were legends of their time. I also thought that *Rhodomagnetic Digest*, *Opus*, *Oops!*, and *confusion* (my own zine, for those thousands who don't remember) were legends, just not of quite as high caliber. What I'm trying to say is that it takes more than memory to make a legend; the zine has to be highly regarded by many in its own time. True, time adds gloss to the legend, but there has to have been something outstanding there to start with. (In the case of *confusion*, of course, the something was personal prejudice...)

There's just one basic ingredient for any successful fanzine and it's the same one that applies to successful magazines: the editor -- or editorial staff. Walt Willis has much more than just humor; he has great drive and high standards.

I've tried editing several types of fanzines over the years. My first was a one-shot postcard that went to a dozen or so people. There were some other abortive efforts, including *Wirez* -- which was really a round-robin letter more than a fanzine {{ ☞ ed. note: *Wirez* was an audio fanzine, reproduced using wire recorders }}. Since I wanted each wire respondent to have 15 minutes on an hour spool, I limited it to only five members. Then there was *confusion* (or *cf.* as it was sometimes known) that managed to attract more talent than I deserved, as a side effect of the Willis Fund. After *cf.* faded away, I tried a weekly fanzine, *Tired Feet*, that was both sides of one legal-size sheet, folded into four pages. Dunno how it succeeded, but I had some fun with it. In fact, 'fun' is my only measurement for success in fandom. I skip along the line between FIAWOL and FLJAGDH.

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

Dave Kyle's piece on women in fandom past was interesting, both for its indications

of how sexual attitudes have changed over the years and how the way women are thought of have changed (for the better), but also for the indication that when women did discover fandom they became truly involved in it. I was awestruck at the number of females Dave mentioned who went on to marry one or two famous writers/pros/fans. It's understandable, though: a great many years ago in my foolish youth, I remarked that I couldn't imagine marrying a non-fan and I imagine this has been a common attitude for longer than I've held it. And with so few women in fandom, I suppose it was only natural that many would marry several people active in the sf field in one way or the other.

Lester Boutillier's contribution {{ ☞ "Secret Sam" }} was fascinating in the same repellent sort of way that turning over rocks and watching disgustingly bloated white wriggly things is fascinating. One can't help but wonder what kept this psycho out of jail. Surely there are laws against carrying guns on buses or shooting rifles inside houses even in New Orleans. (Local fandom here has had only one such bizarre character, and he was a far greater danger to himself than to those around him. At his worst, he started his own science fictional political party and ran for mayor, rather than playing around with weapons, which I guess is some sort of capsule summary of the difference between Canadians and Americans.)

☞ Don Walsh is now reportedly living in Bangkok, Thailand, where he may or may not be involved in intelligence gathering activities. Go figure.

Similarly, two thoughts crossed my mind reading Joe Celko's article {{ ☞ "The Sanguine Swimming Pool" }}. One was that I didn't know any of the people mentioned. The second was that I'm glad I didn't know any of the people mentioned. I find petty vandalism and random destruction largely inexcusable, so I failed to see this particular piece of fanhistory amusing in any way. That the perpetrators even lacked the guts to

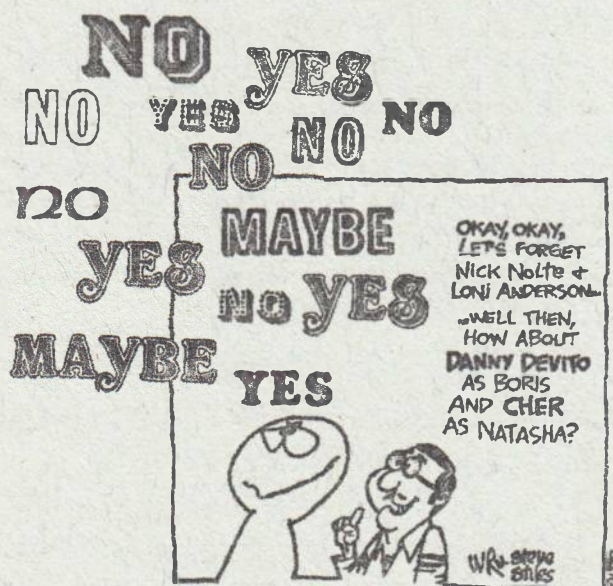


accept the responsibilities of their own actions made it even worse. I see no real difference between what this article was about and the actions of the thugs who've forced Rivercon to change venues by trashing the hotel. Vandalism ill becomes fannish attitudes, even when excused as youthful excess.

Concerning Walt Willis's letter -- well, if you won't ask, I guess I'll have to: Walt, what were you doing with a deserted piano in a forest in Utah? I'm sure there hangs a tale.

Also, it was fascinating to read a letter of comment from the publisher of *Aporrheta*. One trusts that a fanhistorical article has already been requested from this worthy gentleman and will be appearing in a future issue of *Mimosa*?

☞ We're working on it. As for the notorious crimson swimming pool incident, far be it for us to condone that type of behavior. We do point out, however, that episodes of that sort crop up all the time throughout fan history; a well-known example is the 'Midwestcon Door' incident (more on that next issue, for those who aren't familiar with it). It's only in recent years that fandom has changed its way of thinking of this type of behavior from 'colorful' to 'antisocial'.



Mark Linneman, 500 Laketower Drive #44, Lexington, Kentucky 40502

I started in fandom (as a very fringe fan) in 1964 and somehow date my interest in fan history from that point. That might be why Joe Celko's tale of the burgundy swimming pool appealed to me more than most of the other contributions. The pool story reminds me of a convention where the poor pool was subject to manifest abuse. It was drained on the last day of the convention simply because of the amount of alcohol in the water. (I'm now more careful not to spill any.)

Guy Lillian III, P.O. Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153

I like and salute *Mimosa*'s continuing emphasis on fan lore. Anecdotes such as Celko's dye-bombing the Ramada's swimming pool convey far more of the joy of our silly genre than do the endless political intrigues catalogued in *File 770*. Fans should always remember -- and take defiant pride in the fact -- that we have always been and will always be a klatsch of weird goofs to the world at large, and value our unique, sometimes absurd stories as the most fundamental expression of our subculture. Fandom is personality.

☞ We think so, too, even if there are better examples to point to as demonstration. Moving on to other topics, we also received a lot of comments about the fan history theme of *Mimosa* 10, particularly on Dick's opening comments about the upcoming new hardcover edition of Harry Warner, Jr.'s *A Wealth of Fable*. Here are some of them:

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

Congratulations on reprinting *A Wealth of Fable*. I'll certainly buy a copy when it's



published. But don't overestimate your print run. Most of the books Lichtman cites are hard to find because they didn't sell very well when they were first printed. Damon Knight's *The Futurians* had only one hard-cover edition and never made paperback. *The Way the Future Was* was published in paperback, but I believe it is now out of print (unlike Frederik Pohl's fictions). *The Immortal Storm* is in print, but from an obscure publisher that charges over \$25 for a trade paperback. Only *All Our Yesterdays* is in print at a reasonable price. Moreover, many fannish books don't sell very well. John-Henri Holmberg had to put most of his copies of the Laissez-Faire Books editions of *Fandom Harvest* on remainder because he could not sell them. The Mirage Press edition of *Fancylopedia II* is one of the rarest books I won, since only 178 copies were sold, making the reprint rarer than the original. Still, it's always nice when small publishers reprint classics I don't own. (What happened to the LACon-backed edition of *Fancylopedia III*?)

☞ The print run of the new edition of *A Wealth of Fable* will be about a thousand copies -- not too large, but easily enough so that everyone who wants a copy should be able to acquire one. As things stand now, the book will run to about 450 pages, including index, and will contain over 230 photographs. It will debut at the Orlando Worldcon this coming September, and the expected retail price per copy will be about \$20. As for *FancyIII*, we understand that it is still in the works, but that's all we know for sure. Incidentally, we've been told that only about 50 copies remain of *All Our Yesterdays*, before that book goes out of print. It's still available from Advent.

One name from the past that I was very surprised to read about in the Midwestcon nostalgia article {{☞ "The Further Adventures of Midwest Fandom" }} was that of Fred Chappell. Chappell is now an English professor at a North Carolina university, and is a

nationally-known poet and novelist. Because he frequently writes fantasies (mostly horror, including one Lovecraftian novel) he occasionally shows up on the short list of Mainstream Writers Who Cross the Genre Border and Know What They Are Doing. But until this article, I had no idea he was a fan. Does anyone know how active Chappell was in fandom?

☞ Lynn Hickman tells us that as a teenager, Chappell was pretty active as a fan. He joined Lynn's 'Little Monsters of America' club at the 1951 Nolacon (more on that maybe next issue, too), and also wrote and did artwork for fanzines. Chappell's fan activities wound down when he went to college at Duke University.

Concerning the letters column: I don't think there are that many teenage fans for many reasons, including many you cite. But one reason is that many larger cons are actively discouraging fans under the age of 18 from attending the con without a parent in attendance. While this is a necessary defense by cons, as many teenagers apparently show up at cons to drink beer and play radios loudly, what this means is that it's hard to discover fandom serendipitously. I found out about fandom when I heard about Discon II {{☞ ed. note: the 1974 Worldcon }} by accident. After paying \$10 at the door, I wandered around for several days, highly confused by the goings on, but having a fine time nonetheless. If I had tried the same thing today, I doubt I could afford to get in to a Worldcon at the door, and may well have been blocked because of age. My guess is that most new fans don't discover fandom until they are in their twenties because of financial and social changes.

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

I have a copy of *A Wealth of Fable* in a 3-ring binder, so a professionally printed version isn't all that necessary, but the addi-



tional information might well be interesting. The voting for the 1953 Worldcon site was very interesting for Indiana fans, though I hadn't met any of them at the time; Chicon II was the first science fiction convention I ever attended, and I didn't know anybody there. I was told about it afterwards. San Francisco and Philadelphia were the main contenders, but there were several others, and Ray Beam put in a bid for Indianapolis without telling any of the other Hoosier fans what he was doing. Since the other attending fans were all minors, they were mostly horrified, especially since Indianapolis kept getting enough votes to stay on the ballot as other cities dropped off. Finally it was down to Indianapolis, Philadelphia, and San Francisco, and the Hoosier fans were wondering if they could get away with lynching Ray, when they finally came in third and the name was removed. Ray tried to swing the Indiana vote to San Francisco and failed, partly because his fellow club members weren't speaking to him by then, and partly because the other voters, like me, voted for the city they might possibly get to.

-----  
 Rob Hansen, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB, United Kingdom

Just finished reading *Mimosa* 10, which arrived today, and found it very much to my taste. But then given my own hardly-secret interest in fanhistory that's not surprising.

I would certainly agree with Dick's statement that fanhistory research can be fascinating, but would point out that it can also be deeply frustrating and very hard work. You'll have doubtless have received *Then* #3 (the story of 1960s UK Fandom) by now, which at times looked like it would never get finished since I couldn't get hold of the 1960s fanzines that were vital to my research. Most of then came my way eventually, but that was down to providence rather than my efforts. Still, soon I'll start in on the story of 1970s UK Fandom, just about

my favorite period. (Yes, I think highly of 1950s UK Fandom -- but for my money it was even more fascinating in the 1970s. Peter Weston -- active since 1963 -- called the mid-1970 "the Golden Age of British Fandom." Unlike the 1950s it had virtually no transatlantic aspect to it and so remained almost unknown over there until years after it had passed.)

Some time back I toyed with the idea of a 'Fanhistoricon', one that was sercon about fandom. Y'know, people would prepare papers beforehand with radical re-interpretations of earlier events for presentation, or just very funny re-interpretations, (all of which would be printed in the post-con fanzine that would be sent to all members a few weeks after the con, of course). There would be exhibitions of classic convention memorabilia (T-shirts, mugs, badges, etc.), maybe even of classic duplicators, video documentaries by groups of fans about the fanhistory of their cities and the like. Then I woke up. It had all been a dream. The idea has possibilities, though.

☞ That idea has been independently conceived on this side of the Atlantic also, but is no further along. At any rate, your letter provides us the opportunity to applaud your work in preserving the history of British and Irish fandom. For those of you who aren't aware, Rob has already published three issues of *Then*, detailing 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s UK fandom, respectively. *Then* #2 gave Dick the motivation to get involved in the ongoing *A Wealth of Fable* project.





Vincent Clarke, 16 Wendover Way,  
Welling, Kent DA16 2BN, United  
Kingdom

Mimosa 10 is at hand. Fabulous stuff. After all these years one would have thought that the entire history of pre-1970s fandom had been told, but every page has something new -- fascinating. And yes, it is a hard fanzine to LoC... the obvious thing to do is to cap one of the anecdotes with another. I can't do that, not having been in Room 770, and I've always wondered why U.S. fans were against the WSFS running Cons when we Brit fanzine fans were always hoping that someone would do the job instead of us.

So I'll just comment on a passing remark that the '50s "seems just about everybody's favorite fannish era." It certainly is mine, and I think that in Britain at least, it was partly due to there being very few SF readers and even fewer fans, breeding a sort of comradeship and trust that you don't have now.

In 1958 the British SF Association was formed, a prime mover being one Dave Newman. He was elected Chairman, but gaffed within months. However, at the initial meeting setting up the organisation (still running), he was moved to tell how he first encountered fandom in the early '50s. This was caught on tape, and I transcribed it into an APAzine.

It was all due to Ron and Daphne Buckmaster; Ron at that time was a regular Army soldier stationed in barracks ('Married Quarters') in the London suburb of Woolwich with wife Daphne. Dave was also in the Army, as a conscript.

"There's a lot of things been blamed on the Buckmasters," said Dave on tape, "but blame this one on them as well. I was sitting on a train one night traveling from Charing Cross to Woolwich, coming back to Barracks late at night, about eleven o'clock. I'd just bought off a bookstall in Villiers Street all the current science fiction magazines they had -- three. There was an *Astounding*, an

*S-F Quarterly*, and a *New Worlds*. I was leafing through one of these and I saw this couple sitting opposite me, looking at me rather oddly, and I was sort of wondering whether I was properly dressed or not, 'cos they were thoroughly staring me out of countenance.

"When I got off the train at Woolwich, this fellow sort of marched up to me and said in a thoroughly aggressive tone of voice: 'Do you read much of that stuff?'

"So I, equally aggressive in turn, said, 'Yes I do, what of it?' you see? And he said, 'Well, so do we, we read a hell of a lot - er - you doing anything in particular just now?' Y'see bearing in mind that this was now a quarter past eleven at night, and I was thinking of my bed more than anything else.

"And I said, 'No, not really, I want to go to bed,' so they said, 'Well come up and have a cup of tea.' So I went up to Ron's Married Quarters, and we introduced ourselves on the way up... and I staggered out of Ron's flat carrying a suitcase full of hard-cover science fiction which I never knew existed -- things like *Venus Equilateral*, *Slan*, *Last & First Men* -- quite a few books like that plus the whole of the first two years of *Galaxy*, and this lot kept me going for approximately ten days. And then Ron & Daphne suggested that I should take a trip up to the White Horse one night to meet the gang, and I did, and from then on when duty permitted I never missed a weekly meeting for some two-and-a-half years..."

I reckon the above illustrated most of the virtues -- and perhaps the vices -- of '50s fanning. Instant comradeship, instant trust... those were different days.

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Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7, Canada

*Mimosa* was good reading as always, and, as always, is hard to LoC. The trouble with fanhistory articles is that there are only two ways to respond. One is the "I was



there and the following corrections should be noted." The other is "Nice reading, wish I could add something." I found this pattern amongst loccers when I devoted *Opuntia* #2 to Calgary fanhistory. It won't stop me from doing future fanhistories (that sounds like an oxymoron) and, I presume, won't stop *Mimosa* either.

I hope to publish more Canadian fanhistories in *Opuntia*, just to get something on the record. Some people criticize fanhistories as being biased personal account that don't tell the whole story, but all history is like that. Better to get something down on paper, and give future scholars a starting point from which to revise history. All history is personal opinion, which is why Americans are taught that Vietnam was the first war they lost, while Canadians are taught how we kicked Yankee Butt in the War of 1812 (the scorch marks of the burning of Washington can still be seen on some parts of the White House), and successfully repelled the invaders and prevented Manifest Destiny from exerting itself.

-----  
 Andy Hooper, 315 N. Ingersoll, Madison, Wisconsin 53703

I can empathize with Dick's sense of immersion in the history of fandom in the fifties. First, I bought a copy of *All Our Yesterdays*, and found it hard to put down after starting it. And secondly, I have been laboring on a similar project of my own on the history of Madison, and running it through the local APA. I spent three hours last night immersed in the particulars of the election of 1852 as contested in Madison, and then spent much of this morning at work mulling over whether or not the Civil War would have started in that year if Winfield Scott had been elected... another reason to hold Corflu in Madison in '93; time for the convention to return to a staunchly Whig locale once more!

I have enjoyed all of Dave Kyle's memoirs to date, though I am sad to say I

thought this was one of his weakest he has done for you; it rather wandered around, and I think that if one is going to report on scandal and shameful incidents in the past, it's best to tell the whole story, the fullest truth as the writer knows it. I am not a dedicated student of the Futurian era, so it is left to my imagination to fill in what Dave has left unsaid, and my imagination, at least, is more lurid than reality could match.

⇒ Dave did had more detail in his original draft of that article, but removed specific mention of certain names at our request. We felt that since this was a historical article rather than investigative journalism, adding names of alleged perpetrators didn't add anything to the events described. The events, rather than specific individuals, was really what the article was all about.

Sharon Farber's series {{⇒ "Tales of Adventure and Medical Life" }} has been marvelous from the beginning. They remind me of some of the stories my friend Dr. Bill Hoffman tells me about his days in the emergency room as psychiatric resident on call. I must get Bill to write one of those stories up someday... especially the one which ends with, "Well, did you know your batteries are dead?" Sharon's stories have the same sardonic tone, that delight and amuse and make one resolve to embrace self-immolation before hospitalization. I think she's right about her anecdotes falling short of the Journal's requirements, although I could see them appearing in some sort of bent, evil twin of *Reader's Digest*.

To me, though, the gem of the issue was Vince Clarke's piece. I just devoured my way through *Warhoon* 28 a few months ago, and to hear that the flatbed press that graced The Epicentre is still extant was quite exciting. I hope that if Vince really does decide to part with it that he will allow TAFF or some other fannish good work to auction it off.

I want to echo Irwin Hirsh's sentiments in the lettercol about your use of art in *Mi-*



*mosa*. I am continually impressed by the way you choose artists whose style complements the subject matter so perfectly. I'm starting to really like Joe Mayhew's style; on the other hand, Fred Karno will spend several years in purgatory for resurrecting that 'F. M. Busby' joke.

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

Ving is vastly amusing and informative in his memories of that mimeograph. I hadn't realized that a Gestetner was in use in British fandom as early as that 1917 model which he and Ken Bulmer acquired while in *The Epicentre*. There really should be a museum for fannish artifacts like good old No.6 and Red Boggs' Box 1111. If someone will establish such an institution, I'd be glad to bequeath my manual typewriter to it.

Joe Celko is right about Janie Lamb's good qualities as a fan and as a human being. I don't believe the National Fantasy Fan Federation which she served for so long has any sort of award or service named for her, which is a pity. I met her only once, but she made the con where our encounter occurred memorable for the way we felt like old friends after only a short time together.

In the letter section, your reply to Els Somers about the absence of teen-age fanzine fans started me to thinking. Maybe I've overlooked someone, but I can't think of any teenager who has published a regular, generally circulated fanzine since Dave D'Amassa was doing it three or four years ago, and he seems to have gaffiated completely in favor of a career in the theatre. The large local fan clubs that publish clubzines always seem to choose one of their older members to be editor. I suppose the high cost of publishing fanzines today is one reason why the old tradition of teenage editors has vanished; most fans can't afford to publish until they're old enough to have a regular job with a decent salary. But Mike Glicksohn refers to another probable strong factor, the unwill-

ingness of young fans to communicate through the written word today. We don't find many teenagers writing for the fanzines others publish or drawing for them, activities that aren't influenced by financial factors.

You must be the first fanzine editors to publish a loc from Sandy Sanderson in two or three decades. His musing on whether fan humor written decades ago would be funny to today's fans reminds me of my old idea that reprints of such things should always be accompanied by footnotes or explanations on separate pages to allusions that would otherwise be incomprehensible to those who weren't around at the time of original publication. It sounds pedantic, but it might help retain the humor. After all, when we hear how Gilbert's major general had sat a gee, we don't smile unless someone has informed us that it refers to his ability to make a good figure seated on a horse.

Finally, Nicki's analysis of the stages of con fandom {{∞ "Undetectable in the '90s" }} is undoubtedly accurate. But she doesn't explain why I never got past Stage One. It seems rather late in the game to make an effort to advance to Stage Two after so many years have elapsed.

-----

Steve Jeffery, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA, United Kingdom

Ving was fascinating, as usual, in his exploration of pre-Caxton technology pressed into fannish service. I was once frequently confused by references to A. B. Dick in fanzines, who I thought was some one suffering fan who used to duplicate everybody's zine, 'til somebody eventually sent me a copy of Ving's *Duplicating Without Tears*.

In response to Els Somers' letter, she's probably right about being one of the younger fanzine fans. I feel distinctly underage in my mid thirties at times. Teenage fans seem to have gravitated to gaming or music-related zines, outside of mainstream fanzine fandom. Most of the contributors to my *Inception*



'clubzine' seem to be in their teens or early twenties, but very few fans cross over to more traditional fanzine culture. As for them being a barbarian horde at the gates of trufandom, they're not really -- it's just the way they dress. Come to think of it, there are a few older fans who could give Genghis Khan pause for thought!

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

Concerning Els Somers' loc, and the lack of teenage fans... back when, you could float your last few bucks into printing, or hitching a ride to a con, with a fairly clean conscience because there were fewer worries, and more people to help you get by. Today, there's more peer pressure, more demand for the increased number of bucks today's teenager gets, and more demand and peer pressure to get those things that a teenager can't live without. Also, it's easier to communicate with others with computers, easier to just hang around, fewer Gestetners, and almost no one in fandom with enough interest to show them how it's done. Add to that the fact that today's teenager seems to have a lot less between the ears than yesterday's.

A familiar chord continues on in Janice Murray's letter. My fannish origins were in media sf, especially Trek, and it is extremely easy to discover fandom through that method. The fans I met when I moved to Toronto were media fans, con running fans, and apafans. There was no one out there who was vocal about fanzines, and so I never knew much about them. My other interests were in short story sf, in the form of anthologies, but when I attended conventions, I found a ton of gaming and comics, which have never interested me. I found in order to find a convention that suited my interests in the more concentrated form I wanted, I went to Trekcons. I tried to expand my interests, and that worked to some degree. Being on the convention management side of things now (this year was my tenth on the Ad Astra

committee), I know why there's the need to appeal to other interests at a convention. The widening of the appeal base means a widening of the income base, which is often necessary to afford the fancy hotel people demand and which con activities need.

-----  
George Flynn, P.O. Box 1069, Kendall Square Station, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142

In Irwin Hirsh's letter, his remarks on languages in Europe are interesting. I have a smattering of several European languages, but didn't get much chance to use them in my trip last year; usually, people responded in English as soon as I tried. (The weird part was when they addressed me in English before I said anything.) There was one challenging encounter, though. I was looking at a monument in The Hague when this couple asked me what the inscription said. Now, since I don't really read Dutch, and they spoke only French, the resulting conversation was interesting... I think they followed what I said, but God knows whether that corresponded to what the plaque said.

In response to Janice Murray, the coming trend seems to be small, tightly-focused, program-intensive cons. This is a Good Thing. I went to three of these in a row in the last two months (Fourth Street Fantasy Convention, Readercon, NECon), there are others springing up (including the one Janice is helping to found in Seattle), and of course Corflu and Ditto are specialized examples of the same sort of thing. Now if we can do better at attracting the right sort of people to them...

As for Nicki's closing comments, I've certainly never gone through Stage 4 (Burn-out) except fleetingly, and I'm not sure I've really made it out of Stage 3 (Organizing). This is probably why I get so few locs written. But Nicki, if you're Stage 6, then what are you doing on the Chicon committee?

☞ It's a long story...



Dave Gorecki, 9129 W. 167th Street,  
Orland Hills, Illinois 60577

Issue 10 has to be the most interesting confluence of articles yet. In your closing comments, I wonder whether con-oriented fans have a higher burnout rate than fanzine-oriented fans. The activities of the former seem to be more immediately time-intensive and possibly less rewarding; a good fanzine being forever, a good con but a memory.

Also, in answer to Harry Warner, Jr.'s letter {{ed. note: about Dave's visit to 1940s fan Jack Darrow}}, I did do a formal interview with Cliff Kornoelje / alias Jack Darrow, published in 1990 in the premiere (and, alas, only) issue of a Chicago area prozine entitled *14th Alternative*. Although it's rather hard to find, the good news is that Ray Beam is reprinting it in the upcoming issue of the First Fandom magazine. I don't know of any feedback the article received, something I was looking forward to; I remember seeing Fred Pohl reading the article intently at a con last year, just after the magazine came out. Anyway, I fully agree that it would be a coup to have Jack Darrow at a con.

-----  
Elaine Normandy, 9 Maxwell Lane,  
Plano, Texas 75094

This is the first LoC I have written in living memory, mine. I have written innumerable mailing comments for the APA to which I belong, but somehow loccing *Mimosa* seems different. With the APA, I know my audience, but with your fanzine, who knows? Perhaps you should include an aspiring letter writer's guide for inexperienced people like me.

I was somewhat bemused at Corflu when Dick explained he would rather receive LoCs than money. I had thought that contributions offsetting your production costs would be welcome, and I know that I certainly have more money than time these days.

Recent experience has taught me why LoCs are so highly valued. I write letters, and no one writes back! Either I am a worse correspondent than I thought, or my friends are stewing in guilt over my unanswered letters. Now I am beginning to feel guilty for inflicting correspondence on my poor, overwhelmed friends.

I enjoyed Sharon Farber's tales about medical life, no matter how much they deepened my already deep qualms about setting foot inside a hospital. I thought your method of linking the article to others in the issue was ingenious, and I do agree that Sharon Farber will be remembered as a fan humorist in years to come.

Also, I read with interest *Mimosa's* contribution to the ongoing debate why there are few new (especially fanzine) fans around these days. I don't remember having read anywhere about the effects of the decline in leisure time on fanzine activity. Both the number of women with employment outside the home and the proportion of people working as professionals with long hours has increased greatly in the past twenty years. More people working longer hours leads to less time and energy that can be devoted to leisure activities. A lot less time and energy remains for fanac, especially time-consuming fanac such as publishing.

⇒ There seems to be a lot of possible explanations. This next letter echoes many of them, and seems to be a microcosm of the State of Fandom Today.





Kristin Thorrud, Blomdahls väg 7,  
S-756 49 Uppsala, Sweden

I've been getting *Mimosa* from you and not given much in return, I'm afraid. You got two issues of my perzine in trade earlier on, but I have no longer time for making any zines. Gone are the days when I would live to make fanzines, to photocopy them in secret at some office or school after closing-time, to go to the post office with a lump in my throat, with a heavy bag full of envelopes. (Ah, excuse me for growing lyric...)

I'm starting to feel old. At the tender age of 26. I say that not because I feel it, but because I realize that international fandom is made up of people usually twice this age. And yet there are still very few fans in Norway/Sweden who have passed 35. It's not that fandom here is such a young phenomenon, because we had active fans here at least in the 60s. But I think people drop out of it. They 'grow up' and get straight.

I came into fandom myself when I was 17, via Tolkien fandom in Norway just when it was started (1981-82). (Just to avoid confusion, I am Norwegian, but I'm now living in Sweden.) I was very enthusiastic then, became a member of 'the council', helped to illustrate the club zine, arranged meetings. I left home to go to University at 18 and moved in with another fan. I got involved in SF fandom, made zines (I've edited three different zines, co-edited a few, and have been in an apa), arranged cons, etc... There were very few active female fans then -- I think we were only 2 or 3 altogether. Now there are quite a few.

I don't know when the 'great disillusionment' (or perhaps: 'the great sleep?') came in Scandinavian fandom. It came slowly, anyway, and on us all. Norwegian & Swedish fandom were finally tied together once and for all at the memorable Kringcon in 1988, the first purely fannish con on Norwegian soil. The circumstances were favourable, certainly -- a group of fans happened to live at the same student village in Oslo. We

organised the con approximately as a large party. We invented fannish games, and did other fun things. A lot of Swedish fans came. (Swedish fandom's traditions are largely imported from the U.S., by the way.) An outburst of fannish activity followed in the wake of that con. We had had contact before and had traded zines, but now everything sort of knit together more closely.

The peak of fannish activity was around that year and the previous one ('87-'88). A great lot of fanzines were, for example, published in connection with Conspiracy (Brighton in '87), and the years after, but by Con-fiction (Den Haag in '90) things had cooled down considerably.

And now Norwegian/Swedish fandom is stagnating. Nothing much happens, very few zines are published, and those that do appear are met with drowsy and cynical eyes. People hardly meet any longer; there's been feuds and unfriendliness. People don't care for anything anymore.

At cons, we all go around hoping for some miracle to happen (where did that 'old feeling' go?) -- those of us who still bother to go to cons. The neos are stepping in -- a new generation of teenagers who sit in the video room and consume films. The fan room is empty, the fanzine workshop isn't there, the art show is worse and worse organized. And nobody bothers to see it anyway.

I haven't received a Norwegian fanzine for more than a year, I think. There aren't any published. A few faithful Swedish serconists still try. An apa or two holds on with talons and beaks.

I look to international fandom for inspiration these days. The fanzines keep coming in from you people, seemingly unchanged. It's good to know that you're out there somewhere. I go to Worldcons (here in Europe is all I can afford) and hope to make new acquaintances, but hardly even seem to meet any of the people I trade with. Conspiracy saw the rise of many a fanzine, and a lot of



Norwegian fans 'discovered' international fandom there for the first time.

☞ Actually, this sounds pretty similar to the Chattanooga area fandom we were involved in in the late 1970s and early 1980s. There was also a three or four year 'golden age' period where many things were going on and everybody was having fun. Then feuds and unpleasantness broke out, and things were never the same afterwards. We expect that the same thing has happened in many other fan communities. Maybe it's time to have another Kringcon!

-----  
Dave Kyle, Route 4 'Skylee', Potsdam, New York 13676

Some background information on my article in *Mimosa 7* {{☞ "A Hugo Gernsback Author" }} has been requested by some readers. Here's my response: Rooting through some old boxes of fannish materials, I came across the original page proofs with editorial comment and illustration of my short story "Golden Nemesis", which was to have been published in Hugo Gernsback's *Wonder Stories* in 1936. The three faces in the illustrations published in *Mimosa 7* are parts of three illustrations for "Golden Nemesis". The top one was done by me in 1936 as a pen-and-ink rough, which I used as a guide for a finished drawing. The finished illustration was better than the rough (I hope) and was submitted to the editor with a letter expressing the hope it could be used. Whatever happened to my finished original, I don't know. I never got it back. Only that rough sketch remains today. When I later received the story page proofs and the art proof (all on magazine pulp paper), I was pleased to see -- my illustration! That is, for one brief, unrealistic moment I had thought that it was mine. However, in another moment I recognized the truth. The work was professional. Schneeman had done it, typically high in quality. After I had gone through an art school for training the follow-

ing year, I appreciated how amateurish mine must have been. Four years later, I redrew the original concept. Again the props and background were different, but that poor guy was still there, staring in the mirror, sticking that needle and the golden fluid into his brain! I have the original Kyle rough, the Schneeman page proof, and a *Stirring Science Stories* magazine page. (And almost no one knew, or even knows today, of my collaboration with Charles Schneeman.)

A question has also arisen concerning "The Great Exclusion Act of 1939", written by me and published in *Mimosa 6*. About that pamphlet -- who wrote the darn thing? I thought the answer was clear until I re-read my article. I claimed to have set it and published it in the family print shop, and assumed that it would be understood that I wrote it. But I didn't actually state the simple fact: yes, I wrote that 'purple prose' pamphlet -- I and I alone was responsible for the whole thing. No one in fandom, not even a Futurian, saw a copy until the "Warning!" was unexpectedly discovered before distribution. They never did get handed out to everyone as I had planned. A few copies were passed around with my personal plea that they be read, but my message was by then too late and smothered by events. I appealed from the convention floor to have the banned fans admitted (as did a few others, such as Leslie Perri, wife-to-be of Fred Pohl), but without success. Whatever happened to the hundreds of copies of that infamous yellow pamphlet? I'd like a copy to put in my archival papers at Syracuse University. One of the anti-Futurian leaders of the convention who collects such artifacts tells me that he has three copies and (*chortle-chortle*) I don't have a chance of a snowball in hell to get one from him. From someone else, I do have a copy on loan to me. However, I want one for myself. Locate one for me, and I'll pay good money for it! (And then any researcher will be able to examine the real thing at Syracuse University!)



## WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

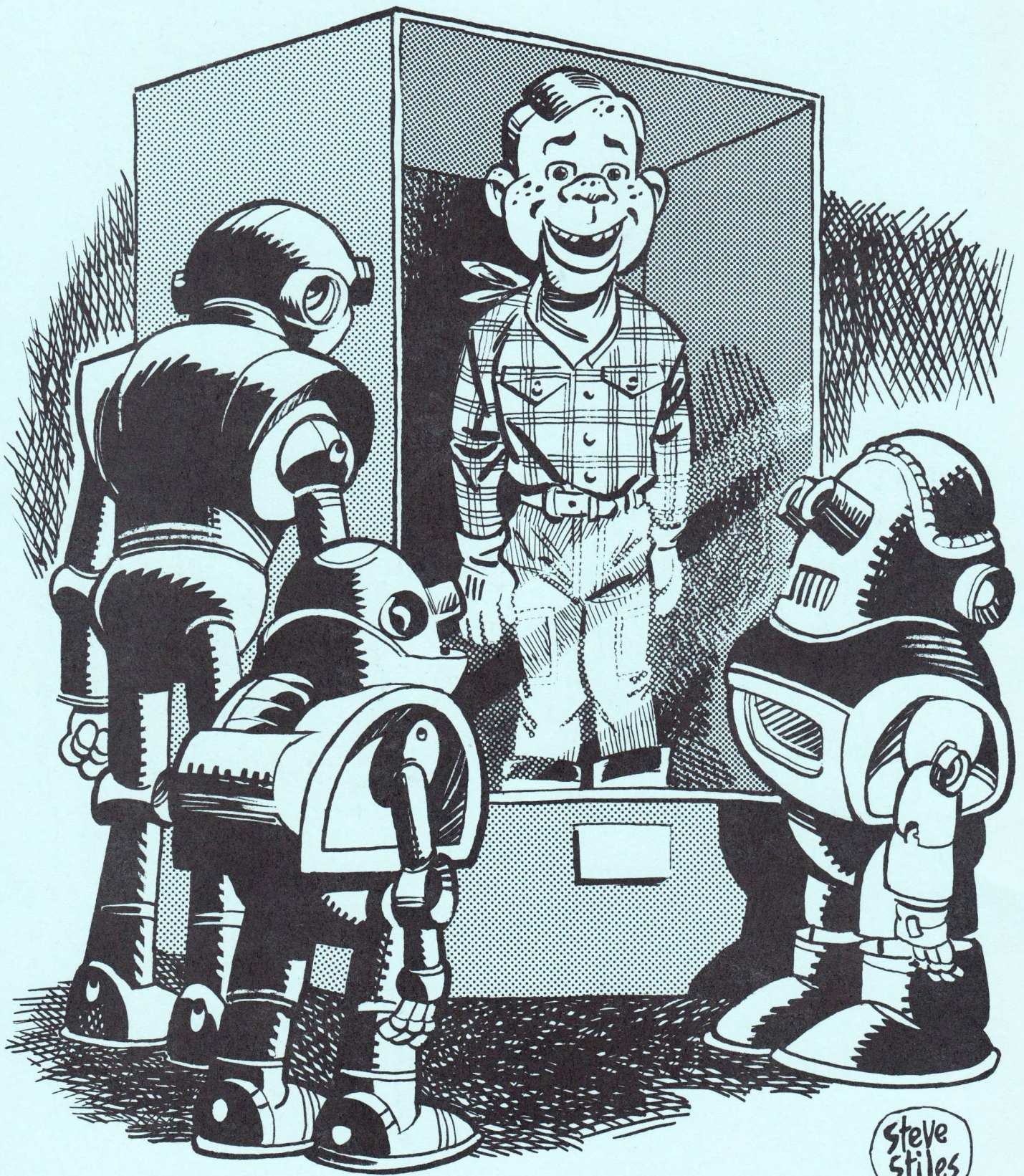
Harry Andruschak, John Berry, Lester Boutilier, Bill Bowers, Richard Brandt, Ned Brooks, Roger Caldwell, Tom Campbell, G. M. Carr, Ken Cheslin, Bill Danner, Carolyn Doyle, Tom Feller, Don Fitch, Penny Frier-son, Dean Grennell, Teddy Harvia, Eva Hau-ser, Craig Hilton, Arthur Hlavaty, Matthias Hofmann, Kim Huett, Alan Hutchinson, Ben Indick, Terry Jeeves, Ruth Judkowitz, R'y-kandar Korra'ti, Roy Lavender, Fred Lerner,

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