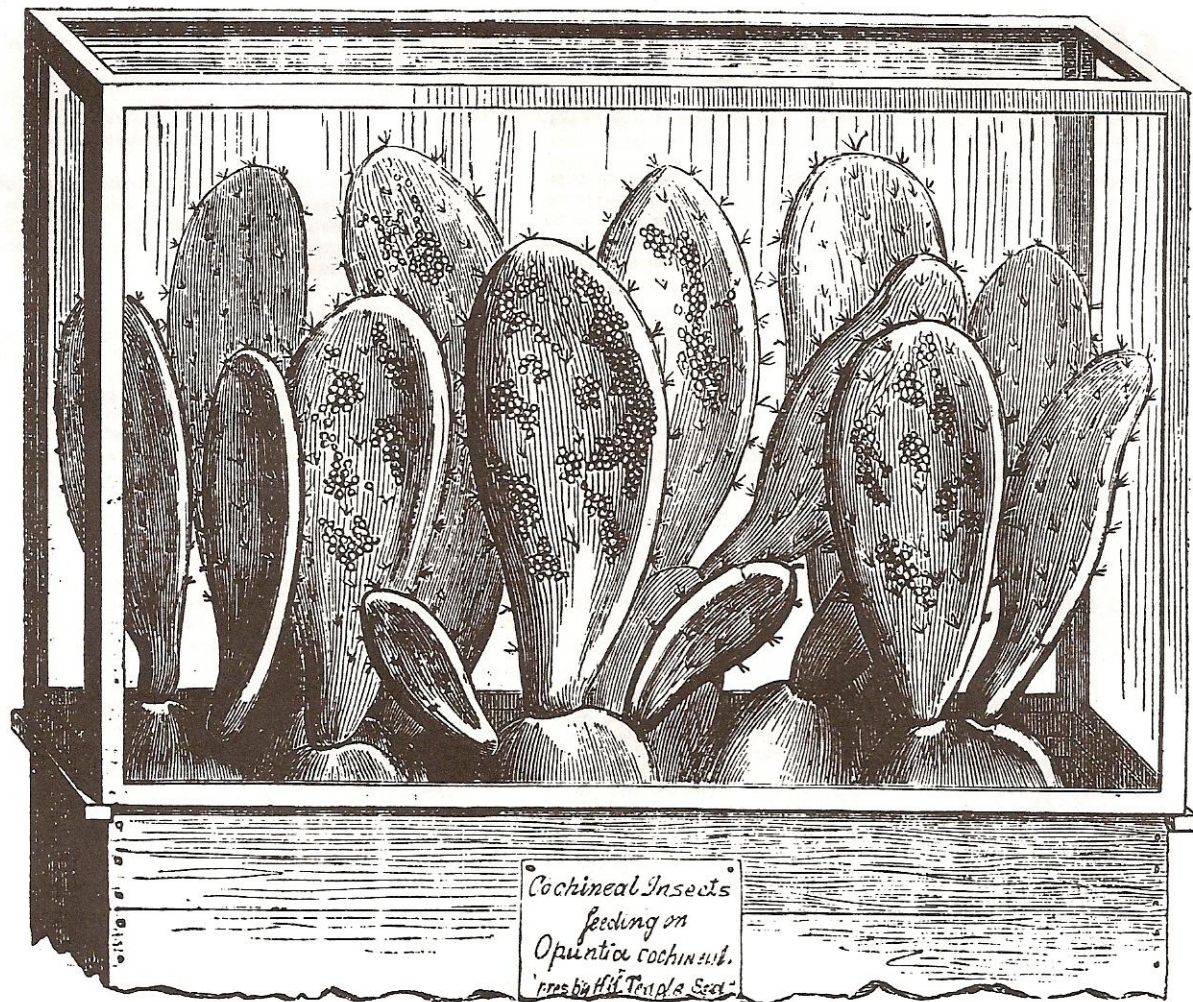


OPUNTIA 33



Cochineal Insects
feeding on
Opuntia cochineata.
'one half in. Triple Seed'

OPUNTIA #33

May 1997

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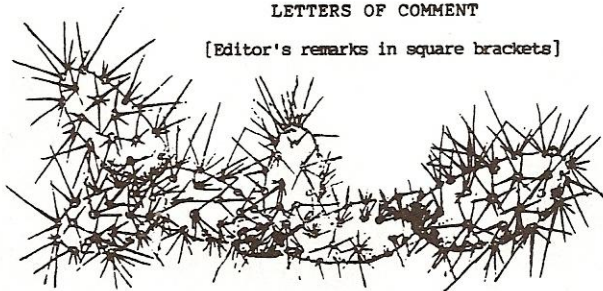
ART CREDIT: An unknown engraver did the cover for an article "Cochineal insects at the Royal Botanic Gardens", published in the September 19, 1868 issue of ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS. The engraving depicts a terrarium of opuntias with cochineal insects feeding on the pads. After the insects had enjoyed a life of luxury, they came to an abrupt end, as crushing the insects produced a red dye. Nowadays it's all done with vats of chemicals and piping in some German factory; the insects, as with so many humans, are out on the pogeys.

Elsewhere in this and subsequent issues, you'll find a beaver with an attitude, a.k.a. the Toronto in 2003 mascot. Drawn by Athena Jarvis for that WorldCon bid. It should be noted that Opuntia humifusa grows in southern Ontario.

Of course, there are many species of opuntis in Cancun. As against that however, one need never worry about being attacked by toucans in Toronto. I have reason to believe that there are no beavers in Cancun as they dislike toucans stealing their breakfast cereal.

LETTERS OF COMMENT

[Editor's remarks in square brackets]



FROM: Teddy Harvia
701 Regency Drive
Hurst, Texas 76054-2307

1997-4-12

The Cancun in 2003 mascot is a keel-billed toucan.

I saw a demonstration of the hectograph at a past Minicon. The fan said that the process was usually so messy that it was best done naked.

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

1997-3-23

Garth Spencer continues to amaze me for the amount of detail he has been able to dig out about the past of Canadian fandom. Better yet, he is getting most of it from primary sources, not from the memories of things that occurred decades ago by older fans. I hope he someday manages to get it all organized and published as a book.

FROM: Joseph Major
1409 Christy Avenue
Louisville, Kentucky 40204-2040

1997-4-22

The article explaining various points of early copying methods is interesting. Now we understand the "indelible purple stain" of Ghughuism (and hekto ink). As for the various digressions on copying methods, Holmesians will recall "The Naval Treaty" where a crucial treaty has to be copies by hand. Virginia Heinlein recalls using the damp-paper copy (she calls it the "wet-paper copy") method on page 209 of GRUMBLES FROM THE GRAVE.

It seems that if Paul Valcour wanted to call PineKone 2 a "PRIVATE CON", none of anyone else's business, he should have also been required to cover the loss himself. I would think PineKone would have had a chairman or president. What did this person do or not do about the financial problems? It seems odd that a treasurer should have more authority than a chairman.

Fear of financial catastrophe was what induced first the struggle against WSFS, Inc., on the grounds that one bankrupt WorldCon would throw the entire WorldCon concept into the hands of a creditor, and then for incorporated individual WorldCons, to keep one bankrupt WorldCon from throwing the entire concept into the hands of a creditor. MidAmeriCon had a little fantasy about precisely that happening.

FROM: Lloyd Penney
1706 - 24 Eva Road
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2

1997-5-4

Further history of Ottawa fandom. For a while, Ottawa fandom was confused as to what a 'dead dog party' was. They saw it as a private party for the committee, and made sure that convention members were not

invited. It took a while to show them that such an event was traditionally for all to relax, consume the remaining con suite supplies, if any, and squeeze out the last drops of good times before the con shut down or the hotel enforced the convention contract and asked the con to leave the premises on time as agreed.

PineKone II was a stressful time. Yvonne and I had joined their concomm to run their Green Room. When the repayment to Ad Astra of the loan to PineKone came about, Ad Astra waived the interest to be charged, and received its \$3500 back. Mike Skeet used the term 'usurious' to describe the interest rate agreed to by both sides, which I think came to 5% per annum, which would have netted Ad Astra \$10 to \$12. The Ad Astra committee saw this loan as an opportunity to extend the conditions of incorporation outside our geographical boundaries and help out friends elsewhere, not as an opportunity to cash in.

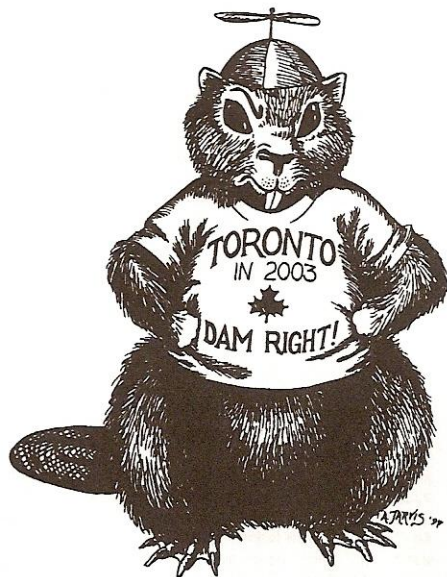
I ALSO HEARD FROM: Sheryl Birkhead, Chester Cuthbert, John Held Jr, Geri Sullivan, Buck Coulson

(For the benefit of my non-SF readers, Toronto is bidding for the 2003 World Science Fiction Convention. A WorldCon site is voted upon by attendees who cough up the voting fee at the WorldCon three years previous. For example, at the Winnipeg WorldCon in 1994, voters chose San Antonio as the 1997 site. Like the Olympic Games, bids must start up several years in advance to have any hope. Most of the campaigning is done at SF con parties and through fanzines.)

The last time I checked the Web, the announced competition against Toronto for the 2003 slot were Berlin, Minneapolis, Cancun, and Paris. Birmingham seems to have dropped its bid or at least is keeping a very low profile. The Paris bid is part of a series of annual bids for a Disney theme park locations, and looks like a hoax bid.

Canada has hosted three WorldCons. Toronto was host in 1948 and 1973, and Winnipeg in 1994.

Pre-supporting memberships are C\$20.03/US\$15, made payable to "Toronto in '03" at the address given to the right.



Toronto in '03
Box 3, Station A
Toronto, Ontario
Canada, M5W 1A2

Dutch Elm Disease got its popular name from the belief that it originated in the Netherlands. First official notice of the disease was in 1921, although everyone agrees that it was present and noted several years prior. The delay in publishing studies of the disease was due to World War One. DED began its initial spread during the 1910s, as early as 1912, arising from an initial source somewhere in Belgium circa 1900 to 1905 (Holmes 1990). The first few scattered dead trees were not conspicuous, and their deaths would probably be blamed on a variety of causes. Just as the number of dead trees began to increase to the point where they would have been noticed, World War One began. Even those who had the time or energy to notice such things would have presumed the dead trees were caused by the fighting, not microbes. The sudden abundance of dead elms caused by war also boosted the bark beetle populations living in them. The actual disease is caused by a fungus that plugs up the arteries of the elms and causes the branches above to die of drought. But the fungus is spread by bark beetles which feed on inner bark and thus come into contact with the fungi in diseased elms and spread it into new trees.

By the 1920s, the number of dead elms in the Netherlands caused enough people to believe that the disease had spread out from there, and thus the name of Dutch Elm Disease. A scientific paper published by a Dutch phytopathologist in 1922 correctly identified the start of the disease in Belgium, but the obscure periodical and a misleading title of publication meant that it was overlooked for nearly seventy years (Holmes 1990). DED is popularly supposed to have been introduced from China, but this is doubtful. It could be a rare chance meeting of a fungus newly introduced into a Belgium port making contact with a hitherto harmless bark beetle capable of spreading the fungus. Or, it could be a mutated fungus that suddenly became virulent.

No one knows for certain. Finding the answer means locating the homeland of the fungus, determining how it spread, and discovering its connection with bark beetles. After a century, the trail has been obscured.

Fossil Plagues.

Fungi and bacteria are the oldest of fossil species, dating back to the beginnings of life several billion years ago. It is therefore not surprising that they co-evolved as parasites when plants developed the arborescent habit. In studying fossil remains obviously decayed by pathogens, one must determine if the microbe caused a disease and thus the death of the plant, or if it was a saprophyte which came across the dying or dead plant and took advantage of the opportunity. This requires careful forensic analysis to see if the pathogen spread through the plant as a disease would, or if the spread was random and did not go through specific tissues or some other logical progression. If the fossil pathogen is confined to one type of tissue or organ of a plant, then this is an indicator that the microbe caused a disease and did not simply colonize a dying plant at random.

There are some examples known. In the middle Eocene of British Columbia are permineralized flowers of an undescribed species which have been infected by a smut fungus (Currah and Stockey 1991). The specimens show distorted anthers infiltrated by a fungus, which replaced the pollen of the flower with its spores. The spores would have been spread by insect pollinators from one flower to the next in the same manner as pollen.

The oldest tree plague reported as such is from the late Triassic of Arizona (Creber and Ash 1990). Petrified Forest National Park has a widespread layer of fossilized trees showing evidence of attack by a type of fungus similar to modern pocket rot fungi. These trees are found only in one thin stratum over a wide area, which

suggests that the fungi attacked them in a short time and spread quickly.

A more recent plague has been documented from the middle Holocene of eastern North America (Allison et al 1986), when the pollen record shows a 75% decline of the eastern hemlock Tsuga canadensis within eight years. This occurred circa 4850 years Before Present, over a wide geographical area and different climatic zones. Recovery of the hemlock populations took about 500 years, and pre-decline levels were not returned to until after 1900 years. It took this long for either the hemlock to develop resistance to the unknown pathogen or for the pathogen to attenuate and become less virulent as it adapted to its host. This suggests that both DED and chestnut blight will fade away, although this will take millenia. Millenia, that is, in the absence of human intervention, such as breeding resistant cultivars or producing a cure for the diseases.

It should be noted that pathogens seldom, if ever, completely wipe out their host species. This would be to their evolutionary disadvantage, for obvious reasons, although a pathogen that travels via two or more species concurrently might not notice as long as one species is still available. There is an evolutionary trend for diseases to settle into co-existence with their hosts. Pathogens feed off their host and use them as habitat and propagation, but not so harshly as to eliminate their food supply, habitat, and means of transmission. A detailed consideration of disease ecology, a.k.a. epidemiology, can be seen in Anderson (1991).

Fossil Pests.

The fossil record is sparse but does show connections between animal life and plants which hosted them. They are not necessarily pest-host relationships; they may be symbiotic. Leaf mines are fairly obvious in looking at fossil leaf imprints, chewing insects may have

snipped out pieces of leaves (leaving toothmarks on the edge of the cut), or galls may have been fossilized. As an example, leaves from the middle Eocene of south Australia show evidence of mites living in them (O'Dowd et al 1991). Using biogeographic evidence, Moran (1989) has suggested that the gall aphid Melaphis rhois has been parasitic on sumacs since at least the Eocene. This aphid has a complex life cycle, alternating hosts and generations between sumacs and mosses. This indicates that once a pest and host have reached equilibrium, they can maintain it for long periods of time. The aphid/sumac relationship appears to be at least 48,000,000 years old.

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THE CHILDREN OF CRONOS:
Fandom in Ottawa
(Part IV)

compiled by Garth Spencer

NOTICE: a fanhistory article like this is in the nature of a draft; comments and corrections are expected and encouraged. GS

(This version dated December 6, 1996.)

Straightening out CUFF

In early 1991 Sandi McLaughlin asked Duncan MacGregor, who was visiting Winnipeg, to find some (any) information on the Canadian Unity Fan Fund. John Mansfield, chair of the ConAdian bid, told MacGregor that he himself was just as uninformed at the time.

MacGregor's article in the March 1991 *Statement* said that Paul Valcour was involved with the "CUFF awards" (sic), and the Winnipeg Worldcon bid. He suggested that Paul might delegate some of the work. If Paul Valcour had too much on his plate, suggesting he delegate some work was a constructive suggestion.

As MacGregor wrote in April *Statement*, Paul Valcour had started to advertise CUFF after his trip to Calgary, but ran into financial problems:

The expenses of the westward trip, as well as leftover expenses from PineKone II, prevented him from doing much campaigning on its behalf. A bigger problem was the lack of suitable conventions where CUFF could be advertised. ... Very little money, therefore, came into CUFF. Given these circumstances, the 'nomination deadline' of 4th

February that Paul set was probably overoptimistic. That deadline was publicized in several places ... One person was nominated during this period by John Mansfield ... The nominee later changed her mind and withdrew; there are therefore no nominees for the CUFF award at present. Worse, there is also not much money in the fund. ... Thus, as it was before, CUFF is on hold until next year at least.

(Duncan MacGregor, *Ottawa SF Statement* #170, April 1991)

Lloyd Penney pointed out in the April issue that OSFS #169 did, in fact, carry a note on the Winnipeg CUFF candidate. The CUFF financial report did not come to OSFS by deadline.

Bizarre Bazaar II

A new regular event, Bizarre Bazaar (spelling varies), appeared in 1990. After the 1991 event, Sandi Marie McLaughlin wrote in the May 1991 *Statement*:

Today we are recovering from Bizarre Bizarre 2 [sic] and are wondering if Maplecon/OFI will survive. We can only guess at what went wrong. We can only hope that Sunday's meeting with the Board of Directors will make the difference. I know that the sales for us were down, and if it hadn't been for the last minute addition of some soft drinks as a selling item we would not have had much revenue. If this was the case with Maplecon's revenue the future does not look good.

This is an obvious case in point where key people are relied upon so heavily that when they are unable to continue to function at previous levels the

absence of their contribution is sorely felt. I remember about 2 years after Pat and I pulled out of Maplecon, I was confronted by sources loosely connected to the con with accusations that, by pulling out, I was responsible for the decline in Maplecon's reputation. This is a two edged sword. It is a compliment that your presence was that effective, but on the other side, the blame attached to quitting is not a fair burden to carry. I am sure that Janet is feeling this sword keenly right now. One person does not a committee make, and the other members left should not allow themselves to become so slack that they are reduced to ineffectiveness.

(S.M. McLaughlin, *Ottawa SF Statement*, May 1991)

Lisa Van der Linden found it incumbent on her to scotch some rumours after Bizarre Bazaar (sic).

'Bizarre Bazaar lost money'? No! BBII made a profit of over \$500. What is true is that we did not get the turnout of people that we wanted. May 4th was a beautiful, warm, sunny Saturday ...

There was a Capital Con just a week or two before, so a lot of our potential customers had had their fix and were tapped out. Capital Cons are held at different times of the year with no discernible pattern. When we planned BBII we had no idea when it would be held.

There were also a lot of other bazaars, markets and funding raising [sic] events going on in Ottawa that day. ...

'Bizarre Bazaar II was mismanaged by the committee'? No! Everything ran smoothly. The setup, the breakdown, the coordination of duties all were done nearly flawlessly. And that security team was one of the best organized I have seen in a long time. BBII's problem: Low attendance!! We had a team working on publicity. All newspapers, radio stations and TV stations were contacted. One radio station even interviewed André Lieven. Sandwich boards were set out on Bank Street with signs ... Flyers were distributed ...

'Chairman André Lieven lost Maplecon's hotel because he was too busy attending other conventions and couldn't be reached'? This is one of my favourite rumours because anyone who knows me, knows I LOVE taking shots at André. This rumour, however, is completely unfounded. I can't even imagine how it got started. ... Janet Hetherington is hotel liaison.

This rumour is doubly unwarranted when I think of the work he did to straighten out a potential mess BBII had with Glebe Community Centre just before May 4th (its mistakes, not ours).

(Lisa Van der Linden, *Ottawa SF Statement*, June 1991)

Further towards straightening out information, Duncan MacGregor wrote in June that the next upcoming convention would be held Oct. 25-27 at Minto Place, which had previously hosted Convalescence.

O'Conada Maplecon 91

This con was going to be called O'Conada, not Maplecon, and would be scaled down; membership was to be capped at 300, and there would be no space provided for gaming. Janet Hetherington wrote to prompt the name change.

Sharon Full wrote in August in opposition to the name change. "Why change something which, I feel, doesn't need to be changed?" she asked. In the event, the name was changed back to "Maplecon 91", or "Maplecon 12".

It seems that the name-change attempt was part of an effort to give Maplecon a new look, since it will be a smaller convention now, rather than the big extravaganza it has been in the past. If that is the case, all that is needed is an 'Announcement from the Chairman' on the flyers and in the progress reports (all of them).

(Sharon Full, *Ottawa SF Statement*, August 1991)

(I am still asking for Duncan MacGregor's conreport. Did it appear in OSFS Nov. 1991, or thereabouts? Was it in fact about Maplecon?)

Lloyd Penney commented on Maplecon 12 in the December *Statement*:

... there was a slight pall cast over the con because of the death of Gene Roddenberry the night before the con started, but it wasn't enough to kill the good times had by all. When we drove to Ottawa, we brought up Ad Astra's frozen leftover hotdogs for the consuite and David Friend ... We did a few panels, a workshop, and we were the auctioneers

with Greg Hagglund at the art auction. The only negatives I could see were communication problems with some of the committee, and some staffing problems in the consuite, but other than that, things seemed to go fairly smoothly.
(Lloyd Penney, *Ottawa SF Statement* #174, December 1991)

Can*Con

Can*Con (the "Conference on Canadian Content in Speculative Literature") was founded in 1992. As Farrell McGovern writes:

Jim and I started talking about putting the "book" back in Ottawa SF Cons...and thus was started CAN-CON. Starting with the first CAN-CON in 1991, Jim and I have been running these things, and in our view, paying back to Fandom some of what we have gotten out of it... We have had the cream of the crop of Canadian SF&F Authors as our guests...think of great Canadian Authors who live in Canada, and with the exception of William Gibson, and Spider Robinson, we have probably had them as guests. That means Guy Gavriel Kay, Judith Merril, Donald Kingsbury, Karen Wehrstein, Shirley Meier, Tanya Huff, Dave Duncan, Charles de Lint, S. M. Stirling, are some of the ones that come off the top of my head. That is in addition to non-Canadians who come up from the States to attend ...

(Farrell McGovern, e-mail, Sept. 14, 1996)

As Jim Botte writes:

This "conference" was started in Ottawa as a more *book-oriented* gathering of people who enjoy speculative fiction. It featured an ambitious mixture of workshops, seminars, readings, interviews, panels, and pure entertainment aimed at everyone from the casual reader to the professional writer. The first one happened in 1992 and featured Guy Gavriel Kay as the Guest of Honour. After the first year, it was decided that a legal entity needed to be created as an umbrella for related activities. This was the genesis of the Society for Canadian Content in Speculative Arts and Literature Inc. ... It was under this umbrella that *The Journal of Canadian Content in Speculative Literature* was created as an autonomous entity.

(*NorthWords* guidelines, October 1994)

As reported in *Warp* (autumn 1992),

Can*Con, billed as a "conference on Canadian content in speculative literature," was held May 22 through 24, and by all accounts was very much enjoyed by those in attendance. Problem was, that constituted only some 50 or 60 people. The con lost about \$1000, but planners are encouraged by the good reviews they've received (including a favourable piece in *The Ottawa Citizen*) and are already at work on next year's Can*Con. Dwayne Bruce, who pinch-hit for Chair James Botte when Botte moved to France shortly before the con, says that Can*Con hopes to recoup this year's losses and

firmly establish a sercon [sic] on Canadian sf/f literature in the nation's capital. ...

(*Warp*, autumn 1992, pp. 25-26)

There is an alternative perception circulating around that the same people who suggested PineKone inspired Jim Botte to begin Can*Con; that Can*Con is PineKone by another name. The Society for Canadian Content in Speculative Literature is a different group of fans than the Maplecon vets.

CAN-CON usually has only a few attendees from Ottawa Fandom simply because I co-founded it and help run it, yet we pull in people from all over Canada and the US.

... [John Mansfield] slagged CAN-CON, a book-oriented SF Con I co-founded, saying that it would die because it was non-inclusive (i.e., no media or gaming). He said that about 3 years ago, and we are still going! <grin>

(Farrell McGovern, e-mail, ca. Sept. 14, 1996)

Maplecon 13

The plans for Maplecon 13, scheduled for the 1992 Hallowe'en weekend, were proceeding smoothly up to the fall, except that its Author GoH wasn't confirmed even as late as the beginning of September. Fan Guest was Keith Braithwaite, president of MonSFFA.

(*Warp*, autumn 1992, pp. 25-26)

Sylvain St. Pierre reported in *Warp*:

Any con that manages to reach number 13 can't possibly be half bad, and when it starts on the eve of Hallowe'en, you know you're in for a treat.

Maplecon (held in Ottawa) has seriously scaled down its operations since the days when it greeted over 800 people, and personally, I like it a lot more this way. The last attendance figure I was quoted hovered around 250, which is just the right size if you want to mix the best features of a relaxicon with the hearty fare of a traditional convention.

The Chimo Hotel was very close to the train station, and I strongly recommend that mode of travel for those who want to go to Ottawa from Montreal. There is a large shopping mall across the street from the hotel with a bus that can reach the downtown area in about 15 minutes - two very useful features.

The guests were entertaining, the panels pleasantly informal, and many of the attendees had met but two weeks ago at Con-cept '92. The dealers' room was a bit crowded but offered many incredible bargains, like a leather-bound edition of the Foundation trilogy for one dollar! Of special interest was the model display, an idea the organizers admitted having taken from us (Con-cept) with impressive results. The facilities for the masquerade were not very convenient, but that did not stop anybody from having fun. The special buffet was very good, if monotonous, and the con suite food had a familiar look to anybody who had managed to get a peek at the Con-cept '92 con suite

before it was closed down (Maplecon bought some of Con-cept's con suite supplies).

The Fan Guest of Honour was local son Keith Braithwaite, and he gave a good account of himself, voicing his concerns over the fragmentation of, and feuding within, fandom, and talking about how much more fun it is to explore a variety of interests. In summary, a very pleasant convention where one could feel much more a participant than a mere spectator ...

(Sylvain St. Pierre)

(Editor's note: Most of the reviews of Maplecon 13 that we've come across have been positive, but it seems that the con didn't pull the attendance numbers it needed to break even. Sylvain mentions the figure of 250 that he heard. We've heard that between 300 and 350 people were there, but the con-com were expecting more and had budgeted based upon those expectations. The con lost money ... Instead, we may see another Convalescence relaxicon in Ottawa this fall.)

(*Warp* #22, Dec. 1992/Jan. 1993)

Maplecon 13, as reported in the March-April 1993 *Con-TRACT*, lost money due to low attendance and neglecting to factor PST and GST (provincial and federal tax) into the budget.

New Cons

A Creation Con was held March 27-28, 1993 at the Westin Hotel in Ottawa, featuring Marina Sirtis.

This was the same weekend as Knight March 1 was held in Cobourg, Ontario, and K&L Production was held in

Pointe-Claire, near Montreal. Creation Cons are basically little more than large dealers' rooms. These "professional" cons (a misuse of the adjective, in my opinion) are to all appearances designed to make money for the organizers, at the expense of the attendees and the dealers alike. I mention the other cons that weekend in view of the fact that Creation Cons have deliberately been scheduled on the same weekend as fan-run conventions in the same town.

CanGames 93, an Ottawa gaming con, was scheduled for July 30-Aug 2.

Can*Con 93 was scheduled for May 14-16, at the Delta Ottawa, featuring Karen Wehrstein, Shirley Meier, and Robert Sawyer. *Con-TRACT* stated that Cancon "is really the 1993 Conference on Canadian Content in Speculative Fiction. Should be worth a grant or two ..." Can*Con also lost money the second year it was held. Its 1993 attendance was 75.

(*Warp*, autumn 1992, pp. 25-26)

(*Con-TRACT*, Jan-Feb. 1993)

Maplecon 14

Maplecon 14 was scheduled for Oct. 22-24, 1993 at the Chimo Hotel. John Mansfield reported that Maplecon in 93

will NOT be held on the traditional Hallowe'en weekend in 1993. They hope this will bring in more attendees ... which also means that Ontario/Quebec 'regional' SF cons (ConCept & Maplecon) are to be held within 5 days and 3 hours travelling time of each other ...

(*Con-TRACT*, Jan-Feb 93)

Klingon Public Relations

The Klingon Assault Group/Kanada ran into lack of responsiveness when they offered volunteer services to Ottawa Charities. The Ottawa Food Bank required a contract for a quota of food, to accept their food donations. The Rape Crisis Centre failed to get back to KAG after their many offers; KAG Kanada was planning an April benefit car wash, but the Rape Crisis Centre was apparently unenthusiastic about a donation from an "Assault" Group.

(*Ottawa SF Statement*, August 1993)

Is the Worldcon Going to Hull?

One James Haroldson, representing some unnamed clients called "Volunteer Program Consultants", sent a letter and flyer to OSFS proposing to hold the 2000 *and* 2001 Worldcons in the Ottawa area.

This is technically possible, because for Worldcon bidding purposes, North America is divided into three zones, from which bids are eligible in rotation; and the boundary between two zones runs between Ottawa and Hull. As Haroldson's letter was later quoted in *File 770*, "The end result is something that a Worldcon has never had before ... Site CONTINUITY."

Apparently, this concept was first flown at Ad Astra 13. Haroldson's letter admitted, "There seems to be an overwhelming sense of skepticism to this proposal." Mike Glycer commented, "Doubtless somebody made the mistake of giving one [flyer] to Mike Glicksohn."

Given the current contact between Ottawa, Hull and Quebec fans, you wonder if they are in any shape to entertain a Worldcon bid. A 1994 *SF Convention Register* listed this (these?) Worldcon bid(s) as a hoax bid.

Hoax or not, a flyer for "Continuity 2000-2001" appeared at ConAdian in 1994, advertising "a Worldcon that lasts 370 days!" Return address given was 146A Woodridge Cres., Nepean, ON K2B 7S9.

(Ottawa SF Statement, August 1993)

(SF Convention Register, July-August 1994)

(File 770:99)

Can*Con 94

Can*Con 94 was scheduled for May 13-15, 1994 at the Talisman Hotel in Ottawa, with GoH S.M. Stirling. Cancon's 1994 breakeven was a realistic 80.

NorthWords

Something called *The Journal of Canadian Content in Speculative Literature* was launched at Ad Astra, the Toronto summer convention, in 1993; since subscription cheques were payable to Can*Con, one could infer a connection with the committee. Andrew Porter (in *SF Chronicle*) described the magazine as "simply dedicated to publishing and reviewing Canadian SF and fantasy. The second issue, cover dated Fall/Winter 1993, contains columns, fiction, poetry and interviews with a very definite Canadian slant."

Under the Ozone Hole reported in spring 1994 that the *Journal* was holding a writing contest, soliciting hard-SF stories by April 15th at least 1500 words long, featuring either Jupiter or Mars, with a SASE and short author bio. A series of free *Journal*-sponsored writer workshops at the Emerald Plaza library branch were also mentioned; James Botte, the *Journal* editor, was given as the information contact.

The *Journal* was retitled in mid-1994; "Bowling to popular pressure, we held a contest to rename the magazine something a

little less daunting. An artist from Toronto by the name of Maureen Raïke won with *NorthWords*."

NorthWords literature reads, "As it says on our front covers, it features 'Great Stories, News, Reviews, Articles, Essays, Interviews, and Poetry by Canadians, with a distinctive Canadian slant, or of general interest to everyone who reads or writes speculative literature'. The idea was to provide a vehicle for fostering Canadian writers and artists by providing them with an outlet ..." One might infer that the founders had heard little about *On Spec* or the Tesseract line, or they just felt that more publication outlets were needed.

(*NorthWords* guidelines, October 1994)

James Botte presented the winning bid at ConAdian for Can*Con to host the 1995 Aurora Awards. Can*Con 95 (May 12 to 14, 1995) hosted the Aurora Awards for Canadian SF & Fantasy.)

A new (small?) con was held in May this year, Relapse, for Sherlockians; write to [26076 Robertson Rd. #72?], Nepean, ON K2H 5Y8. Joe Casey reported on it in the April '94 *OSF Statement*.

(*Con-TRACT* 6:4, Jul/Aug 94 or *SF Con Register* Summer 94)

As Barry Alder and Sheila Currie-Alder described it, the last year "[was] one of quiet and recouping". The one-day minicon was described as very successful, and the coming fall's relaxicon was described as well under way. Barry Alder said that he had tried to improve relationships with other fan organizations in Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto, resulting in considerable support. "The [one?] are where we have experienced a downturn is that of membership ... I believe that this may be the result of not having a

con last fall and I hope that this situation will improve this coming year," he wrote. Sheila Currie-Alder wrote that the financial statement shows "we're doing better than last year, but we are still far from secure." A lot of work on new bylaws was performed by Marc Donovan, Joe Casey, Dawn Atwood-Ouellette, and Sheila Currie-Alder.

(*Ottawa SF Statement* #203, May 1994)

By this time, Ottawa Fandom Inc. had an entirely new executive. Maplecon was suspended for 1994; instead, OFI held "ConCinnity" at the Journey's End on Oct. 28-30, 1994. GoHs were Bernie Reischl (a model builder) and Larry "The Doctor" Stewart; features included an SF modelling contest, chocolate, dealers, workshops ... etc., etc.

(*Ottawa SF Statement* #205, July 1994)

As Farrell McGovern experiences it,

We [Can*Con] have ... received the animosity of most of Ottawa Fandom who blame us for killing off Maplecon (it was already dead, and was a *de facto* Media con anyways), and competing against Concinnity, which being a follow-on to Maplecon, was not the same market we were after...We were a convention of The Book, and they were Media, with a slight Book presence. Totally different markets...but still they paint us as the "Great Evil", and refuse to attend CAN-CON. Many of the same people also deny that I had any involvement with APAplexy...and thus I think that the term "revisionism" is relevant here.

(Farrell McGovern, e-mail, Sept. 14, 1996)

The Ottawa SF Society continued to hold Sunday afternoon meetings once a month at the Churchill Avenue Fire Hall, featuring guest speakers. Slightly discounted memberships were available to those living more than 45 km. from the city.

(*Science Fiction Chronicle*, May 1994)

The Lyngarde Writer's Group also met regularly, at Hildegard Henderson's, and the Woodroffe and Emerald Plaza SF Reading Groups, and at public libraries. Who Cares parties continued to be held, and APAplexy and the *OSF Statement* continue to publish.

Other contemporary Ottawa groups, which the *OSF Statement* reports, are Ottawa Mensa (André Soulière, 111 des Sorbiers, Hull, Que. J8Y 6S4) and Klingon Assault Group Kanada (c/o MCapt. Makin vestai-Cheghjihtah, 20 - 380 Somerset St. W., Ottawa, ON K2P 0K1).

Janet Hetherington and Ronn Sutton collaborated on a comic strip, "Jannie Weezie", which ran in the *Ottawa Citizen* until June 1994.

1995 Events

1995 conventions in Ottawa included:

- February: Quadcon, Ottawa, ON. SF & fantasy. c/o The Fractal Laboratories Quadrangle, 2610 Draper Ave. #53, Ottawa, ON K2H 8X8. Tel. (613) 783-8085 (Farrell) or 596-4108 (Jim or Jean).
- May: Can*Con 95, Ottawa, ON. (Spelling of title varies. Can-Con is putatively a litcrit, Canadian Content sort of SF con. Some of the same people as the organizers were involved with *Northwind*, a forthcoming fiction & nonfiction magazine.) Site:

Talisman Hotel. GoH: Dave Duncan (Calgary fantasy author). Memberships \$15. - July: Cangames, Ottawa, ON. A gaming con with family-oriented activities.

(*Under the Ozone Hole* July 1994;
Con-TRACT 6:4 & 5, Jul/Aug & Sept/Oct 1994;
& *SF Con Register* Summer 1994)

Did You Say Can*Con Was Still Going?

A minor argument occurred via e-mail last fall. Can*Con is suspended through 1996, but Farrell McGovern maintains that Can*Con is still going. To this John Mansfield replied,

Which is a suprise to many of the SF Canada people who talked to me at Canvention/Wcon. More than one said that after loosing money for three years, they said that this had been your last year. Don't tell me that your money requests to Ottawa fandom worked...:-o! Or did Canada Council come through with another Grant???

(John Mansfield, e-mail, Sept. 1996)

Farrell replied,

It is because we care about what we are doing, and we are not into it for the money. All we want to do is give back what we have recieved from fandom over the years, from friends to community, and I even include my life. When I was 17 and kicked out to live on the street, kind people like Bink, Frank, and a number of the old Ottawa fandom took me in.

(Farrell McGovern, e-mail, Sept. 1996)

It may also be a factor that a group in London, Ontario have incorporated as Can-Con Inc. and want to sue the Ottawa organizers. The Can*Con organizers did not incorporate under that name. Presumably one has a choice to put money into a convention, or into defending a legal action, but not both at once.

1996 Events

The next 1996 conventions in Ottawa will be CanGames XX (Oct. 4-6), a wargaming con, and Concinnity 96 (Oct. 25-27) at the Comfort Inn by Journey's End, 222 Hearst Way, Kanata, ON. A relaxicon with GoHs Lloyd and Yvonne Penney, and Larry Stewart. Featuring a dance, model contest and talk.

(*Con-TRACT* 6:5, Sept.-Oct. 1996)

APAplexy/APAWhatever is now available from CM Elizabeth Holden, at 2385 Carling Ave. #111, Ottawa, ON K2B 7G9. This general-interest hexaweekly; specifies a copy count of 32; 25 members; and a minac of 2pp/2 issues. Dues are \$10/year + postage/photocopy account; there is an open roster, 30 people max; no waitlist. Spec copies are free when they are available; no back issues are currently available. Often this APA contains a short story, a review or critique, and some poems; it includes CHOCOLAPA, a cooking apa.

APArition continues to appear from George A.S. Park; he can be contacted at 677 Smyth Rd., Ottawa, ON K1G 1N7, tel (613) 526-2147.

(*New Moon Directory*, 1996/97)

Michael McKenny is still editing *Bardic Runes*; *Bardic Runes* #8, dated 1994, was a 64-page word-processed digest, with fiction and art from Maritime and Midwest writers and artists. *Bardic*

Runes can be obtained at \$4 each, \$10 for 3 issues, from Michael McKenny, 424 Cambridge St. S., Ottawa, ON K1S 4H5.

Conclusions

Ottawa fans have had some fun, and some distinctive activities and ideas. Ottawa fans have also had some of the problems of other fan communities, and some problems all their own.

- Several times fans kept seeing things so differently they could not work together successfully. In order to carry through a project, a group has to have a few basic agreements as to what they are aiming at, and the group has to observe a few guidelines in order to get there. If it is not clear who is evaluating things wrongly, it is clear when people are working at cross-purposes.

- On the occasion of PineKone II, OSFS members seem to have had very conflicting impressions of how to conduct a convention. Duelling evaluations, as happens repeatedly in fandom. It appears that two kinds of conventions are being held, representing at least two kinds of fandom.

One evaluation is that, since PineKone was set up without incorporation, it was as it were Valcour's private property (the term they're actually looking for is "sole proprietorship"); and that therefore, he owed no financial accounting to anybody. I have a problem with this; it's another misconception of what a con is and how to take care of business. This evaluation ignores the fact that, if PineKone was so poorly-run that out-of-towners noticed, future attendance at any Ottawa cons could suffer.

If a chair's responsibility to answer to the rest of the concom is limited, the concom's reciprocal responsibility to the chair is similarly limited.

Unless they're unincorporated, in which case everyone is liable. There is a concept in law, "lack of due diligence", which could get cons into trouble if they knew – or ought to have known – that a Situation was developing, but did nothing about it.

In fact, though, the chair's accountability is *not* minimal. Even at the level of when the chairs and the beer and the video equipment is coming and where it has to go, the concom has to get information from the chair, if they are really expected to get their jobs done!

Another Ottawa evaluation, and one I have difficulty with, is the idea that sometimes you have to refuse to talk about issues in order to let them heal. This always smells of self-deceit to me, no matter that it may in fact be the best solution to some personalities in some situations. If the only way to deal with conflicts and disputes is not to face them ... how much "healing" have you got?

If you don't establish the facts of a situation, misinformation will get spread around instead.

The amazing thing is that with such fundamentals in dispute, clubs, and conventions, and fanactivity still carry on.

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