

THE OUTLANDER



Number 13



THE

OUTLANDER

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FILINGS FROM THE HUB

What follows are excerpts from the round-robin letters of Stan Woolston, Len Moffatt and Rick Sneary, who have long thought of themselves as the Hub of the Outlander Society.

Stan: March 15, 1955.

As a day-dreamer I quite often make up fiction. Usually I don't find myself a part of them--at least in any form I recognise. Usually there's no "hero" in the usual fictional sense; the story-line is just a plot-line, and when a character is a part of it it's usually so lightly sketched in that I can develop it slowly in future meditations. (Snort: that's a new word for daydreams, methinks.) Every once in awhile I go back over old story-ideas (mine or those I've absored from other wheres-) a Weinbaum situation, say, or a modified Lovecraftian abberation) and redo it a bit. This is an extension of my "rewriting" stories that I think have weak areas (such as endings that, I think, would be better with an idea that ties in the author's stuff better than he did himself.)

This mulling over ideas instead of acting on them by putting them on paper is only partly due to my inclination to spend too much time on fanac. Sometimes it is a sad and lonely thing to be a thing.

RICK: March 18, 1955.

Formula for paper "mache"... The basic stuff is the paste. It is flour and water, mixed into a white-sause. Maybe your Mother knows about that. Anyway, heres how. Heat water--acouple cups, or how soever much paste you need--to boiling. Mix flour slowly with about a half-cup of cold water. Slowly, so there are no lumps. Beat out if any form. -- Keep adding flour, till it is pretty thick. (Oh, about 8 or 10 tablespoons full. I don't know, and you have to learn by experence. I only did it once, and didn't have enough.) When ready, pour slowly into lightly boiling water, stirring all the while. Don't let it get lumpy. If you have done things right so far, the white "gravy-like" stuff will start to thicken, and become more jelly-like. Take it off, and keep stirring it slowly till it is cool enough to use. This keeps it from lumping. (If it is lumpy anyway, you can press the thing through a striner.) Now, you have the paste. Now, if it is a little to thick, you can always add a little more cool water, without trouble. This stuff has no presurveative in it, so it

keep to long. But I had some around for three or four days. If it gets a little dry, just add more water.

As for the rest. Well, you make your framework or armature out of wire, or what ever. Cover with strips of paper (I used news papers) coated with paste. When you have it all covered (usually untell you can't see light through the paper) let it dry. If in a hurry a oven works allright, if not to hot. --The actual paper mache is just a mixture of paper dust and paste (torn up bits of paper if you can't get paper dust.) Mix till it is about the consistency of clay. That you have to "feel" to know if it needs more or less paste. -- Cover over the model, and smooth down with a tool of somekind. Something flat and smooth, like a spoon. Rub on a slight covering of plain paste. This has the same effect as a "glases". Then, after it dries, sand off any rough spots. Watch out for stretching, as the paper dries. I had no trouble with cracking, but parts molded round, pulled flat. --- I would suggest, on your planed skull, you cover as mentioned, with strips, and let dry. Then build up the flat places with more small bits of paper, and dry. Ofcourse, the more wire you use in the armature, the fewer "flat" places you will get. I'd suggest heavy wire for a outline, and light wire to fill in.

STAN: March 26, 1955.

There's an art in thumbing a ride, you know. Some practitioners are deadpanners, other exude enthusiasm and charm. Some lift finger or thumb rigidly; others (me usually) goose the sky.

On entering the car, the technique is to Take it Easy. This is especially true if the driver is a woman and sole occupant. It is considered impolite to sit too close. Usually for the first ride with a woman it's best to hold onto a rope attached to a carhandel or bumper and slide on your soles behind the car.

Early-morning drivers may be silent joes or gabby gusses. Some have "lines"--and most start with weather disscussions. "It's cold outside," and variations, seem to be their opening thoughts, prestaging a delightful conversation about the arctic circle, life on Pluto and such talk. Ofcourse this doesn't always happen. In fact, so far it hasn't. A few drivers apparently pick you up because they want to discuss something. There may be a distinct art in discussing a family quarrel, for example; at least they pick strangers to do it with, then the hiker gets an earfull with a ride.

I still remember the slightly-inebriated Mexican who picked me up once; he sat silently for a while, then turned, looked at the nerrow collar of my coat, and asked if I was a "Father". I still wonder what he'd have confessed if I'd said yes.

WCK: June 1, 1955.

I like your poem Stan...

"Sing a song of supermen--
Len and Rick and me,
Grouped around THE WILLIS--
Will make fanhistory;
Sling a chocolate soda,
Pocket full of scotch,
That will be our coda--
This here is sure a botch."

Well, the last two lines, yes. The last can be changed to, "And we will always be top-notch." But what can you do for a coda?

LEN: July 3, 1955 (Westercon notes)

As the Program Booklet indicated this Westercon has a very light program, not at all crowded. They reversed the two afternoon items... had the business meeting at around 2:30. We skipped this, primarily because they were trying so hard to herd people into it, and I don't like to be herded. I looked in on it a couple of times and each time Les Cole was holding forth on some subject or other. Later I learned from Boucher that he was advocating a Relaiclan... a con with no program at all. Boucher was delighted with this idea which is hardly a new idea in fannish circles but apparently Boucher had never heard of it before or was so taken by it, that he included it in his discussion at the Bar, supporting the idea with the gusto he shows in all of his speechmaking and informal yakking. Real interesting person.-----

When Anna was coming out of the banquet room (after the panel, I think) she passed an elderly couple sitting in the lounge. They were obviously regular residents of the hotel. As she waked by, the man turned to the woman and said, "You see, some of them look allright!"-----

Quotecard #10- "I see it all now--the rocket pushed against Newton's third law of motion." Brennschluss..

At the banquet Van Vogt said he had been anti-Shaver because everyone else was; now thinks there was (and is) a place for Shaverism in stf. He thinks stf fans want to divide science fiction from reality. Shaverism was presented as reality, not fiction, so fans objected. Came dianetics, van joined the movement, and felt like Shaver or "like Palmer", because fans objected to something in a stf mag presented as reality. Same goes for Flying Saucers. He personally does not believe in Saucers--or Shaverism. A 2 to 1 ratio for him. That is two out of the three "real" things presented thru theais of stf, are not for him. Apparently, dianetics is still for him, and vice versa. Simon and Schuster asked his advice on publishing the Scully saucer book. Van Vogt said Don't Touch It. S&S rejected it, not necessarily because of van's opinion--there were probably others who said Nay also..Another publisher took the book, sold millions of copies. "This is how I broke Simon & Schuster", laughed Van....

STAN: June 29, 1955.

It must have been early morning when I had a nightmare-type dream, but without the pulse-tingling waking part. I guess I woke up, but not in a fit of suspense.

It was a sort of egocentric dream; it "started", as far as I remember, after I'd left Mother to hold down the house, prevent anyone running off with our valuables, etc. Apparently it was not the house, the same house as this, or atleast the neighborhood was changed a great deal. I planned to scout around the block; the old barn building I wanted to look in was too ramshackly, so I was afraid it would cave in on me (tho I knew it had many supplies I'd like to get before some other mauradrers did.) So I went into a hole-in-the-wall "store" ran by 2 woman. The older (with some gray hair) told me flatly that it would take \$16 even to SPEAK about any meat, so I passed her by (I wanted to buy a ham, and had a few hundrad bucks in my pocket). The younger woman (a wench) only had stuff like candles and pots, and I wasn't interested. She tryed to sell me a clay teapot, but when I said no she deliberately pushed it to the floor were the spout broke off. Then she calmly picked it up, and I expected her to demand I pay for it (the sum \$16 came to mind, but she hadn't stated what it would be.) But she only invited me to have a drink...The spout was bent off, and she tipped the spout up and a few drops must have trickled out, and she motioned me to drink from the teakettle, which I did. (Some dream, what?).....

...I wonder if some big disaster does arive, if inflation will come like that. That is, will the sence of property be so strong that paper money will retain its value in the minds of the people. In a way I think it might; money today has almost a religious significence for some folks, and in medium-size towns and smaller burgas I wouldn't doubt that monetary exchange might continue during any disaster. Ofcourse the persons with property to "sell" will probably demand more and more for the product, but if the people tend to find the price to dear the price would lessen. That's the law of supply and demand, and habit of using money is fairly strong.

RICK: Oct. 15, 1955 (From Las Vegas)

As for the nightspots. I haven't seen much of them. Actually I have been to them only once. One of the older of the Strip hotels. (Out here "Strip" means a stretch of highway leading into town from L.A. not a type of dance.) I didn't need a reservation, so it wasn't much. The Troy /a L.A. club/ was better. I have walked though a few others, mostly by daylight. I had a beer at the Dunes and talked over old times in Palm Springs with the bartender. Then bought a copy of the new BB book, The Girls from Plant 5, and went out by their pool and read for a while. If you look normal and like you belonged, you can go a lot of places. -- I have been in a number of places, but everyone is eather gambling or drinking, which doesn't leave much for me. A few of the local bars have no color. While the big floorshows are hard to see, and I don't drink enough to do anything there. If I could look sinister, or something, I could skulk around, but poo! I would be no good as a guide.

LEEN: July 7, 1955.

Where are the beers of yesteryears
And the fans who gathered around
The mimeograph--
And the fannish laugh,
Where can it be found?

Where are the pomes in LeZ and Vom
The columns in Spaceways too?
The Number One Face,
The Deglar disgrace--
Fans look young and new!

Here are the beers of current years
And the young fans gathered round
The Mimeograph--
And the fannish laugh
Still goes on, I've found.

Yes, they drink and they swear
And they smoke and they dare
To make passes at lasses
Who wear harliquin glasses
And join them in fanning
And risking the banning
By Postal Authorities
(And other minorities)
Of Fanzines intellectual
With the accent on sexual
Interlinations
And show impatience
With bluelaws and bigots
And all mental-midgets
Who take shots at random
At our ghetto called fandom
(Called ghetto by Boucher,
A man who's no slouch, sir!)

Yes, the fans are still with us
Tho young they may be
In our home of the knave
And the land of the spree!

STAN: Nov. 10, 1955

Perhaps designing wallpaper would be fun. I can imagine one wall with a nice motif of grinning skulls on posts, as used to decorate (or desecrate) some African chief's abode, interspersed with various hues of hairs in the properly cured method that the American Indians had for their trophies of the hunt. (Human version.) Maybe a witch's brew as inspired by that "Double, double, toil and trouble" rhyme might be nice for a while too.

Personally I think the best wall design

((concluded on page nine))

THIS ISLAND HOLLYWOOD

-by Len J. Moffatt

Hundreds of words have been written by fans and pros about "What's Wrong With Science Fiction Movies..." (This title is usually followed by a "?" or an "!" or both.) Most of the true blue science fictionists agree that most s-f films, and so called "s-f films", are poor, bad, lousy, stinko and rrrrullllp.

"Why?"--they cry--
"Why can't Hollywood produce a good s-f film? With all of the wonderful stories to choose from...the good stories...stories that would make magnificent movies...why do they continue to turn out BEM meets BBB junk? Is George Pal the only producer with a sincere interest in stf? It can't be the money. They spend thousands on extravagant musicals and super epics in Cinemascope and Technicolor. Sure, these pics make money--though occasionally one of them flops, and has to be double-billed with a good B.O. pic in order to get some of the \$\$\$\$ back--but an epic s-f film (SLAN, for instance) would make just as much money, and they wouldn't have to change the story or the settings. It would take a pile of dough to produce it, but if done properly (i.e., as we science fictionists think it should be done), it would make a bigger pile in return."

Well, maybe so. SLAN on film is one of my pet dreams too. UNIVERSE--using one gigantic set, the innards of the huge spacer--would also make a terrific movie. So why aren't stories like these--the accepted "classics" of the s-f mags--being filmed? There are many and varied answers.

Bill Meyers, in a recent issue of Science Fiction Parade, says it is the people in Hollywood. None of them are fans. And if they were fans, they still wouldn't be able to produce an s-f film that would be faithful to the author's original story--because it is the way the story is told by the writer that makes it a great story (or otherwise), and movie-making and story-writing are two different forms of communications. In filming the story, you lose the author's "touch"--unless you use continuous narration.

I don't agree with Bill, although there are individual stories which prove his point. On the other hand, there are a lot of s-f stories (as well as stories outside of the s-f field) which are interesting and exciting, not because they are well-written, but because of the plot itself.

He is partly right about the people who make movies though. Most of them aren't s-f enthusiasts. Too many of them are band-wagon jumpers. S-f type films (including fantasy and horror films) became popular, so they started guiding them out to cash in at the B.O.

Some time ago I had the pleasure of meeting the producer who made such films as "This Island Earth" and, more recently, "The Mole People"... Yes, it was a pleasure to meet him, for he proved to be a very interesting gentleman. In fact, the whole purpose of the evening was for us (a group of s-f writers and would-be writers) to meet this producer and discuss the s-f film situation. Some of us, no doubt, had hopes of interesting him in our wares, and at the least, here was a chance for some real science fictionists to tell a producer

THIS ISLAND HOLLYWOOD (continued)

exactly what we thought of his efforts and what he should do to better them. Well, we had our chance, and we made the most of it. But if Mr. Alland is typical of all Hollywood producers, then they all have one-track minds. It became obvious that Mr. Alland was there to tell us all about what he had done and what he was planning. This was his evening, not ours, and although we were invited to ask questions and make comments, to be frank and say what we thought, he turned out to be a hard man to convince. My wife, who is a persistent woman, finally managed to break through his barrier of "I'm right; your wrong", and got him to admit that maybe a couple of points in a film plot he was outlining were a bit on the shaky side.

Of course the whole trouble was that we too had the same attitude towards Mr. Alland. We were convinced that we were right, and that he was wrong, and he certainly wasn't going to change our minds. All of us were quite sincere in our convictions--and Mr. Alland, beyond the shadow of a doubt, was equally sincere in his beliefs regarding s-f movies.

Oh, we took him to task for all the ills that affect cornball films. "This Island Earth" was discussed, for instance. Why did you change the story, we asked. Why was the first part of the movie very much like Jones' original, and the last half so trite, typical of Hollywood plotting. Mr. Alland informed us that he personally wrote the last part of the picture.

"It was impossible to film the latter part of Mr. Jones' story," he told us. "Written by one of your own people, mind you. I had to re-write it, so it could be filmed."

But the monster, sir. Why bring in the corniest of all horror movie cliches? The monster chasing the girl--you surely didn't believe that was original, did you? "Oh, the mu-tant," snorted the producer, gestulating derisively. "I was told to put that in. I have to do what my bosses tell me. That was for the kiddies."

Outside of the "mu-tant", he seemed to think that "This Island Earth" was the greatest s-f film ever made. He derided the efforts of Pal and other s-f film makers. In some cases, he had some good points. We had to agree that not all of Pal's films, for instance, were top notch sfilms. And the way he related his version of "The Mole People"--this was some months before it was released--well, in spots it almost sounded great. Mr. Alland is concerned with man's eternal struggle for freedom. Man, his head bloody but unbowed, will always, somehow, manage to rise above the depths into which he has been pushed, and win through to freedom and decency. This is indeed a noble sentiment and I certainly share it with him. That is, I share the hope inherent in the idea. To him the predicament of the Mole People, who were slaves of the ruling class in the lost underground city, was similar to that of oppressed peoples found throughout all of our history. The slaves of olden days, the people in the concentration camps in World War II--all of the persons who have suffered and are suffering at the hands of power-mad bigots. This was the lesson "The Mole People" was to teach. No matter how much you oppress Man, he will--in the end--revolt against his oppressors, and if he does not succeed in his struggle for freedom, he will die gloriously fighting for it.

Now all of the reviews I have read and the comments I have heard about this picture were, for the most part, derogatory. Apparently the "message" got lost somewhere in the plotting. Never the less, I think that Mr. Alland was quite sincere in his belief in this film. The other projected films he outlined (with wonderful enthusiasm and gestulations) also contained this one basic element out of his philosophy. Man will find a Way.

So...what have we here?

A sincere man making what he believes are excellent s-f films. Sure, sometimes he

THIS ISLAND HOLLYWOOD (concluded)

has to put in things he doesn't like because the front office commands it, and certainly he has to work within a limited budget, but he is striving to make good pictures. Pictures with meaning, pictures with dramatic punch, pictures that will sell. But do the "science fiction people" like them? Hardly ever. They want to roam too far outward. They want to get off the planet and into deep, deep space. And you musn't do that! You've got to make films about earth people and not transport them too far from good old Mama Earth. If you do, you lose your audience. Your audience just won't identify with a superman or with futuristic people doing futuristic things. Keep it in the Here and Now...be fantastic, be pseudo-scientific...but keep it close to home, or the audience will walk out and go see a western.

Perhaps Mr. Alland is right. But I still thinks these pics could be made--and profitably. It's a matter of education, and the film makers have it within their power to educate the general public. Certainly they have tried--with "message" films, documentary movies, and so on. But methinx they aren't trying hard enough. They are too afraid to take a bolder step. If the tried and true makes money, stick with it. Why risk a million on a story like SLAN; how could you get the idea of telepathy across, for instance. Yes, that was one of the objections made about SLAN, not by Mr. Alland perhaps, but by some producer who was asked to consider it. You'd think they never heard of voices through a filter! That's all you need for telepathy. A filter and close-ups and good recording. When their lips are moving they're talking; when they're lips don't move but you hear their voices anyway, they're communicating telepathically.

But it would take a lot of money for the sets alone for SLAN. And you'd need good actors to get the idea of the characters across--and really good actors cost money. If it flopped, we'd lose our shirt. The public isn't ready for this sort of thing yet...

The public isn't ready! For years now the newspapers, the general magazines, TV, radio (and a few movies too) have been getting the public ready for space travel. Even the die-hards are beginning to accept the idea of an artificial satellite. Obviously, the thing to do is to keep on educating the public. Don't reach a certain point and say this is it--it makes money, leave us not change it. Do take the next step upward--and outward. And that, my friends, is one fan's view of the do's and don'ts in s-f film making. All I need is a couple of million bucks to prove I'm right.

-Len J. Moffatt

FILINGS FROM THE HUB (concluded)

is a mural, done on either a plaster wall so it could be painted over when it became boring, or painted on cloth and mounted on a sort of frame so it could be taken down and another put up after a while.

RICK: Dec.1, 1955

As for wallpaper, I am rather non-committed. I like plain walls of solid colors. But projected paterans or colors would be nice, if you could change to fit your mood. With the new "flat" transistor TV tubes, the possibility of such a thing isn't so far off. Think of the idea of closed circuit lines to scenic spots. Like now, people in the East could have one wall a TV picture of the beach at Miami. Snow out one window, palm trees the other "window".

SOUTH GATE IN 58'

In trying to stir up some interest in the old Outlander Society dream of South Gate in 58', I sent out a few letters asking for suggestions and advice. The following are some of the replies. I hope that my comments on them will bring you up to date on our progress.. -RS

JOHN TRIMBLE

18 Nov. 56.

I like the idea immensely, and think it's about time that something other than a metropolis get the Con. I think that you'll agree that 1) South Gate is no Metropolis, and 2) that it's the perfect "little city" to break the Monsters' hold on the SFWorldCon, no?

✓ Right you are John. I can just see the fans arriving, and pitching their tents in the Park. Drinking our pure well-water, (no liquor in the Park, ofcourse) and threading their way through picnickers and square-dancers to the Auditorium. No, seriously, in 1949 we really thought the Con might be held here, but the city didn't keep up with the growth of the SF Conventions. We will have to hold it in Los Angeles or Hollywood, because they have the only hotels large enough. We might lug a box of dirt down so the speakers can be standing in South Gate. rs✓

DONALD E. FORD

October 16, 56

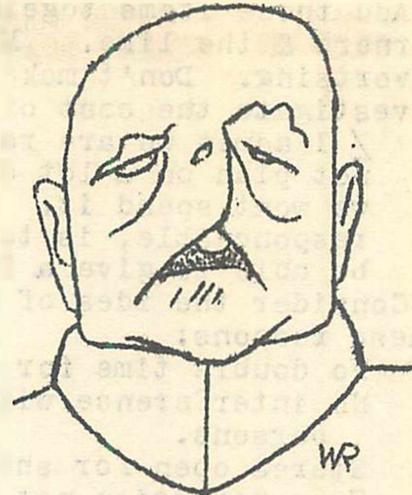
You have a good slogan & like modern day advertising it has been repeated over the years until fans will believe it. However, the time has now come for your group to do more than merely repeat this slogan. On the basis of what I've seen of past cons, convention bidding, smoke filled rooms, back stabbing, knees to the groin, in-fighting, and politicking, I would say that your group should now do the following.

1. Elect your convention Chairman, Tres, Sec'y, etc.
✓ Right. Chairlady of our Planning Committee, which will turn into the Con.Committee, is Anna Moffatt. I am to be Tres., and Forry Ackerman, Geo. Feilds & Lew Kovner are Sec'y-s.✓
2. Set up a Steering Committee to make final authority on all convention business. (Keep this fairly small as it will mean less arguments.)

✓ Right. Beside the above, Len Moffatt, Stan Woolston, Ron Ellis, Ted Johnston and (we hope) two more C.D. members, have been called on. We keep having ideas and passing them around the group to be worked on. Len & I have the advantage though, we have been talking about it for eight years. We got ideas we will never use. -rs✓

3. Decide, now, whether you want any advise from others of previous cons, or whether you're going ahead on your own.

∟ We are asking for as much advice as we can get. We want ideas, and will use all that we can. So far all of our advisers have also been volunteers, but we want everyone to get in that has anything that will help. We are not out to put on the biggest Con., we do want to have it smooth running. That way, the Committee can enjoy it self more. -- One of the troubles we have had is getting any help from the World Science Fiction Society. We have tried for six months to get any kind of word from them, and not a "peep." Thank goodness we weren't dependent on them. rs.∟



4. Set up your convention committee or open it to various outsiders (Maybe regional publicity agents & the like over the country & in England)

∟ This we are doing. Art Thomson is our Official representative in England, and our contact with the Luncon. Willis, our loyalist supporter, is sort of incharge of everything else. Honey Graham will be our Registration Chairman(sic.) and is now our representative in the Bay Area. Dick Ellington has just volunteered for the NYC area. We fornoch for more. rs.∟

5. Go to the various hotels & get their rates, banquet prices, and all information needed for a con, NOW. Don't wait until next June & then suddenly get the lead out of your ass.

∟ This proved harder than we expected. We had all agreed that Hollywood would be the best site, as there was more trees and clear air-space. But the Hol'y CofC said there was no hotel large enough to hold us, with-in our price range. We have sence found a hotel in down town Los Angeles that has everything we need, at reasonable prices. It isn't a pretty area, but it is near everything. The banquet will be under \$5, and we hope to get rooms for \$5. We will probably not deside on the site tell the Westeroon, in July. rs.∟

6. Get estimates on the cost of printing your Program Booklet & your Progress Reports.

∟ This, we crazyly haven't done yet. Though Rotsler said he would give me the name and prices of a guy that does his work.∟

7. Price your membership cards & badges. (You'll get a shock on these)

∟ Cards and the like we are counting on being printed by Stan Woolston. We want to get a Con. Device, and have a printers out made, and use it on everything. The badges we hope to get from the C.of C.. as in the past. rs.∟

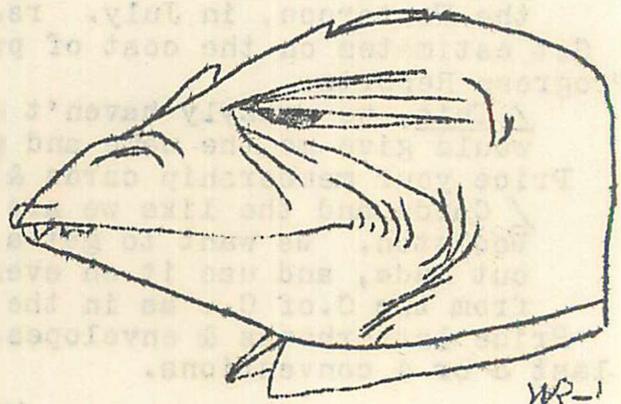
8. Price letterheads & envelopes. Get postage estimates from the last 3 or 4 conventions.

9. Add these items together & then start to thinking of ways to cut corners & the like. (Make your Program Booklet break even by the advertsing. Don't make a high estimate of the Banquet attendance. Investigate the cost of a Buffet.)
 / I admit we are rather naive as to cost of things. But we do not plan on a lot of expensive things. If we haven't got it, we wont spend it. One of our objectives - for which I will be responceable, is to keep an accurate set of books. We hope to be able to give a full accounting at the end of the Con. rs_ /
10. Consider the idea of having the con 1 week before Labor Day for these reasons:
 A. No double time for the waiters, etc for banquet.
 B. No interference with school regestration for parents or college persons.
 C. Stores open for shopping for out of towners.
 D. Transportation not jammed as over Labor Day.
 E. Many people can not get their vacation after Labor Day, thus a week ahead allows them to travel long distances to a con and back on their vacation.
 F. Hotels are probably less jammed than at Labor Day.
 / Here you run up against a stone wall. The date was salected 8 years ago, as the Outlander reunion is to be at Noon of the Saturday before Labor Day, of 1958. Some of your reasons are very good though, and the next con might think about it. But, one hotel manager told us that Labor Day was a very good day for a con, as it was a "off" week. The "traveling men" are usual home. Also, if it was on a non-holiday and still four days, lots of local people would have to work. rs_ /
11. Keep up a constant barrage of publicity for South Gate in '58. Plan to take ads in all of London's progress reports & program book.
 / Right you are. Atom is right on the job there. rs_ /
12. Get your people lined up, now, to make the bid for you & the seconding speech. In addition, get the large clubs in the U.S. & England lined up to support your campiagn at the con itself.
 / Right again Don, and thanks alot. Forry Ackerman will make the bid, to be second by Dotty Faulkner (full-fledged Outlander) and Willis. (I keep telling him) Beside the 5 local groups we have the support of the Little Men, and the Wheels of IF. We want only volenteers, as they last lenger. Thos we have will have pleanty to do. rs_ /

ARTHUR THOMSON

14 Oct. 56

I'm very interested to hear your plans for SOUTH GATE IN '58. and yes, I'm behind you all the way on it. In fact I'd like to vol-unteer my services to you as your agent overe here in regards to any advertising and inform-ation to British Fandom and the '57 convention here. / What sweet music to a con. committee' ears. rs_ /



I think you know already that I was not only 100% for South Gate in 58 but believed in it with almost religious ardour. The life of the South Gate tradition has coincided almost exactly with mine in fandom and I think of it as one of the eternal verities. One of the reasons I was so keen on getting the Worldcon nomination for London in 57 was that that was the only way South Gate could get it in 58, and Ken Bulmer could tell you how when we thought London had lost the 57 nomination I was far less worried about that than the prospect of this superbly fannish legend ending in anti-climax. I don't know if I'm just a sucker for this sort of thing, but the thought of this torch being handed down through the decade from generation to generation of fans until one day in September 1958 the Outlanders do actually meet in front of the City Hall at noon.... For year's I've carried a vivid mental picture of the occasion in mind. It's a sunny day (of course) with just a few white clouds here and there. There's one early fan standing there waiting as the clock in the tower across the street approaches noon. The fan is standing on a flight of shallow granite steps and as the first chime strikes he walks slowly down them. From each side Outlanders come striding down the street, laughing and waving. They shake hands, exclaiming "At last", but really too excited to say anything coherent just yet. Sometimes I've fancied myself as one of them, appearing quite unexpectedly and staggering everyone; sometimes I'm even the fan on the steps (I've come a long way and had to be sure to be on time), but that idea has been of the same order as the thought that every true fan in the world somehow manages to keep this appointment. I used to visualise, you see, while it was still far in the future, that if everyone had sufficient notice like that they could plan and manoeuvre to be in that spot at that time.

That is a mighty pretty dream Walt, and I kind of hate to spoil any of it with such dull things as facts. But the fact is that the only thing across from the South Gate City Hall is a Mortuary. Our civic buildings are all in a line on one side of the street, and of neo-colonial design. All are set back from the sidewalk about 50 yards, with lawns and flower beds running along the front. You can hear chimes though, which is a lovely thought. The steps are shallow, but of cement, and you can see a block in either directions... But, your thought captures more of the feel that we once had for the dream than anything I or any one else has ever written. You have had faith. A faith so strong that it is partly responsible for the "facts" of our present plans. It is little wonder then that one of our dreams is to bring you and Madeleine over for the Convention. It is a crazy fannish type idea, just as South Gate in 58 was, and yet one mean almost as much as the other. In fact to us old Outlander types, one is part of the other. But it will take a little more than a few "old Outlanders" to get the idea off the ground....or, to put it another way, to get the Willis's out of Ireland.. That then is the purpose of this page. To announce our plans to fandom at large. That we want Willis... And, as any fool can see from reading The Harp Stateside, and his many other references to South Gate in 58, he wants to come. ... Now, we want to know what the rest of fandom feels... We did it once, we can do it again. We want your ideas, suggestions, and help. Then, we will want your money. But just think, you will all get another Harp Stateside... And we will get Willis. rs_ /

FINAL REPORT

by Ted Johnstone

The saucer hovered out in space, about 1000 miles above the blasted carcass of what had been, only one short but busy month ago, a rare jewel in the firmament. It had been the subject of much argument in the Galactic Council since its discovery a few hundred cycles previous as to whether the dominant life-form could be classified as intelligent and welcomed into the Federation or unintelligent and trained as proteges. Now, it seemed, all the argument had been in vain. Whatever they had been, they were no more. Some strange psychological quirk had exploded and apparently taken most of the planet with it. But the standard procedure of final investigation had to be carried out and the reports all filed. The ship descended.

It came to rest in the approximate center of what had been one of the largest centers of what had passed for civilization. The newspapers of the last month blew like the last leaves of winter through the cracked streets. The crew stepped gingerly out of their ship, and looked apprehensively around. Nearby lay a piece of a sign on which the letters HOTE- could be made out.

Suddenly the quiet was split by a burst of salutation and a strange little man wearing an odd, floppy black hat with a wierd device on the front and a great glazed button with strange lettering on it pinned to the front of his tattered coat came leaping out of a rickety-looking lean-too made of the rubble. "You came! You came!" he cried. "Willis! and all Irish Fandom! Come in, come in," he continued joyfully. "Len and Forry and all the gang are just inside. We had expected you sooner," he went on, as he pushed them into the lean-too. He shouted into the small, empty space, "They're here. Everybody, they're here! He added apologetically to the captain, "I'm sorry, Walt, but our P A system broke down. You know," he added conversationally, "Over the last few years there was really some doubt as to whether we really would hold the Worldcon. But I always said we would, and I guess I showed them! South Gate in '58! South Gate in '58! Hahahahahahahahahahaha.....

With the strange laughter of the last man on earth ringing in their ears, and a strange feeling in their hearts, the crew fled, leaving the Last Convention in full swing.

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A QUESTIONNAIRE REGARDING THE 1958 CONVENTION

With the aim of presenting a better convention, the South Gate in '58 Planning Committee (backing the bid for the World SF Convention in the Los Angeles area on the 1958 Labor Day Weekend) wants your opinions on the following questions, in an attempt to determine the current trends of thought on the subject of conventions. We will study the results of this poll and use it to aid us in planning our program, wherever it is practical to do so. Please fill out and return this questionnaire to:

Committee Treasurer: Rick Sneary
2962 Santa Ana Street
South Gate, California

Do you plan to attend the Convention? _____ The full four days? _____

How much do you think the Banquet should cost? _____ Would you rather have a luncheon (buffet)? _____ Or both? _____

Whom would you suggest as Guest of Honor? _____

Whom else would you like to have speak? _____

If of equal interest, which do you prefer: panel discussions () or single speakers (). Suggest a topic for a panel discussion _____

Would you like to hear a review & panel discussion of books of the last year-- by competent reviewers? Yes () Maybe () Not very ()

What do you think of fan plays? Good () Fair () Poor () Bad ()

Would you like to see an s-f film "classic" () or a new s-f film () or both().

How do you like documentary films: Good () Fair () Poor ()

Displays? _____

What percent of the program time do you think should be devoted to fannish material (such as talks by fans, about fans and their doings, and fanzines) rather than professional slanted material (such as publishers' reports, editors' panels, science talks).

Time for Fans _____% Time for Pros _____%

What do you think of balls? _____

CONVENTION TIME TABLE

TIME	Fri. Aug. 29	Sat. Aug. 30	Sun. Aug. 31	Mon. Sept. 1
12:00 AM				
1:00				
2:00				
3:00				
4:00				
5:00				
6:00				
7:00				
8:00				
9:00				
10:00 AM				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30				
12:00 PM		OS		
12:30				
1:00				
1:30				
2:00				
2:30				
3:00				
3:30				
4:00				
4:30				
5:00				
5:30				
6:00				
6:30				
7:00				
7:30				
8:00				
8:30				
9:00				
9:30				
10:00				
10:30				
11:00				
11:30 PM				

At the left is a blank Convention program time table. We would like your suggestions as to when you would like to see the different events scheduled.

Circle the time you think should be devoted to each, and put it's initials in the space. An example is the Outlander Society (OS) reunion, set for Noon on Saturday.

The following is a list of regular avents, and their key initial. In some cases such as the auction or movies, you can place them in more than one time spot.

- (B) Banquet.
- (M) Masquerade Ball.
- (A) Auction.
- (F) Films
- (S) Speechs
- (PD) Panel Discussion
- (BM) Business Meeting
- (P) Plays
- (CO) Call to Order
- (AD) Adjournment

Leave blank spaces to indicate intermissions and recesses. If there are any other events you would like to see scheduled, or any suggestions you would like to make, list them below.

() _____

() _____