

Shangri -
L'Affaires
62



SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES

62

CONTENTS

Cover.....	Bjo.....	cover
Editorial.....	Al Lewis.....	4
Fandom As a Way of Life.....	Alva Rogers.....	6
Fallen Angelenos.....	Bjo.....	13
Menacing Minutes of LASFS.....	Fred Patten.....	16
Picking a Bone with Shaggy.....	John Trimble.....	18
The Mythological and Romantic Elements of Modern Fantasy.....	Al haLevy.....	28
The Squirrel Cage.....	Ron Ellik.....	33

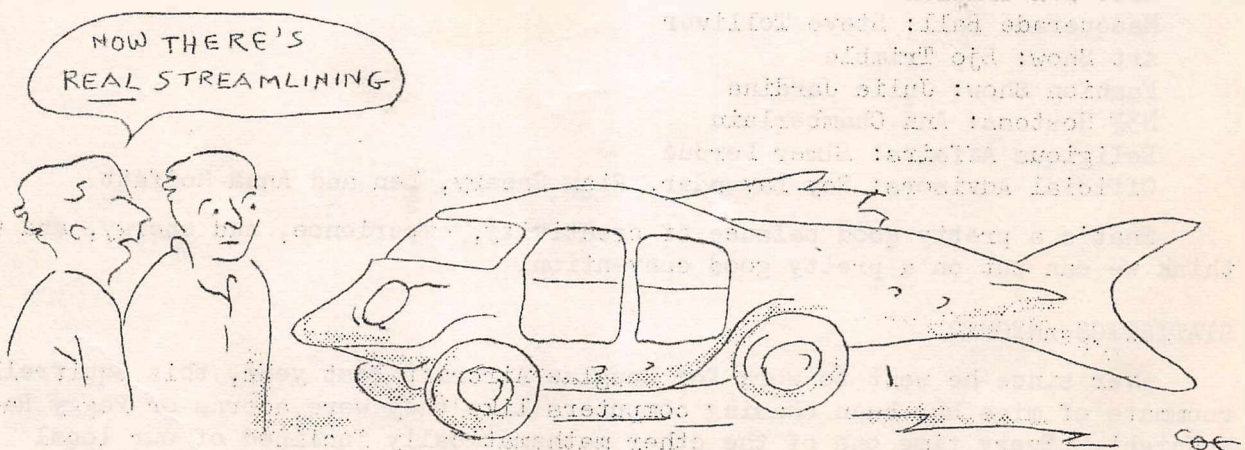
ART CREDITS:

Jim Cawthorne: 22, 25
Elmon Lee Gee: 3
George Metzger: 18, 20
Bjo Trimble: 6, 7, 9, 11, 13, 23, 28 and ff.

STENCIL CUTTING AND DUPLICATING:

Ron Ellik, Al Lewis, Fred Patten, and John Trimble

SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES is published behind schedule by the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. Copies are available for trade, letter of comment, or \$\$. Single copies 25¢; 5 for \$1.00 from Ron Ellik, 1825 Greenfield Ave., Los Angeles 25, California, or in the sterling area, single copies 1/8d, or 5 for 7/ from Archie Mercer, c/o BSFA Library; (Basement) 130 London Road, Cheltenham, Glos., England.



The LASFS meets each Thursday evening
at 8:00 o'clock at Silverlake Play-
Ground, Silverlake & Van Pelt, LA 26.

NOVEMBER

EDITORIAL by Al Lewis

Here is SHAGGY, twice as big because twice as late. The next issue is planned for early December, and will be our holiday issue, but this year instead of the Art supplement that SHAGGY has featured the last three Christmasses, we have a special portfolio--Poul Anderson's own illustrations for Three Hearts and Three Lions.

Los Angeles has been priveleged to have a regular parade of out-of-town visitors lately. Ethel Lindsay proved a most engaging travelling companion on the return trip from Chicago, and gave us the pleasure of four days of her company before embarking by Greyhound for the Bay Area. Two days after she left, the Willises arrived, making the grand tour widdershins, and our horde of inveterate Disneylanders got their second trip inside a week. Meanwhile, Ben Keifer stopped by long enough to say hello, travelling with Marian Mallinger, and then Dave and Ruth Kyle breezed hastily through and out again, and then Allan Howard of ESFA dropped by LASFS on his vacation tour, and Doc Barrett took time out from a medical convention to drop in on the 28th Anniversary Meeting. Meanwhile, on long-term loan, we have Joe Sanders of Indiana, who is doing graduate work at Claremont, and two new permanent residents, Gregg Calkins, geophysicizing for Standard Oil, and Redd Boggs.

Just as soon as the Willises left town--about an hour after in fact--we held our first official meeting of the Morcon Committee. We spent the day at Bjo and John's, for a swimming, steak, and fan-gab session (and to inspect Madeleine Willis in her Bikini) with the Willises and most of the rest of LA fandom, and in the letdown after bidding goodbye to friends we would not see again for years [the word is London in '65] someone realized that almost everyone on the committee was there, so whyyyy Not? So we called our meeting, and here, by-the-way, is our committee for the 1964 World Science Fiction Convention, Los Angeles version:

Chairman: Al Lewis
Vice-Chairman: Ted Johnstone
Treasurer: Bruce Pelz
Hotel Relations: John Trimble
Publicity: Ron Ellik
Publications: Don Fitch
Art: Don Simpson
Masquerade Ball: Steve Tolliver
Art Show: Bjo Trimble
Fashion Show: Julie Jardine
N3F Hostess: Ann Chamberlain
Religious Affairs: Elmer Perdue
Official Advisors: Roy Lavendar, Rick Sneary, Len and Anna Moffatt

That's a pretty good balance of creativity, experience, and energy, and we think we can put on a pretty good convention.

STATISTICS ANYONE?

Ever since he went to work for Douglas Aircraft last year, this Squirrely roommate of mine has been chasing computers like they were acorns or Peggy Rae McKnight. Every time one of the other mathematically inclined of our local fandom drops in, the conversation will sooner or later veer around to computers. This night Bruce Pelz, who is Assistant Physics Librarian at UCLA had dropped by after work, and Ron got onto the subject of his new job with Computer Sciences Corporation, and Bruce began comparing notes with some new machine that UCLA's division of Data Processing had just gotten in, and on which Bruce had been running library data.

"We ought to be able to think of a fannish use for something like that," said Bruce.

"Yeah," said Ron, "when I set up the N3F Tape Bureau..." And then a glimmer began to come.

"We could put all sorts of fannish information on those cards!" said Bruce, and we were off and running with the computerization of science fiction fandom. Name, address, probability of attending conventions, reproduction equipment (and evaluation of the results thereof).

"Seducibility!" shouted Bruce. "We'll classify all the femmefans: Easy Lay, No, Will, with effort, Can Be Had but Why Bother..."

So Anyhow, with this issue of SHAGGY there is going out a questionnaire for a Farley File of Fandom. Questionnaires will be punched out on IBM cards for use with an 083 Sorter, so that in a minute or less we can sort out everyone who owns a 7" tape recorder who is an inveterate convention-goer likely to attend a Midwescon, for instance.

Use? I guess there is a use. But mainly it's such a noble project!

MORE ABOUT COSTUME BALLS

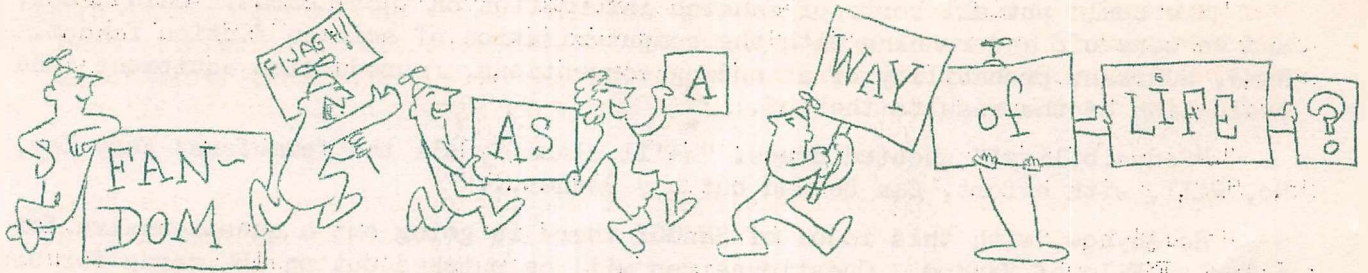
I have been giving the problem of costume balls a good deal of attention lately. It began with the article that Bjo wrote in SHAGGY last year and was climaxed when George Scithers asked me to be a judge at the Discon masquerade ball next year. In between I became involved in a dispute which had arisen over the Seacon masquerade judging, and apparent skullduggery involved. Fortunately, I had a chance to talk the matter over in person with F. M. Busby at the Westercon, and was convinced that while the matter of instructing the judges might have been handled more ably, the instructions were given in good faith. This year there will be no such problem. The judges have been selected a year ahead of time, and will be cooperating with the committee in drafting their own instructions. And we'd like to hear fandom's opinions.

In the opinion of many, myself included, the amount of dancing done at a masquerade does not warrant the hiring of a live band--and there is no such thing as a cheap live band. Canned music, as the Solacon used in 1958, seems perfectly acceptable, yet union regulations often forbid it (Chicago is so thoroughly unionized that they even had to use a union projectionist on the 8mm monster movies the kids brought along). One escape is the one the Pittcon used in 1960--no music per se, but with some other distraction to make the event a bit more gala. Now a suggestion has been made that instead of hiring a dance band as has been commonly done, a band be hired for the primary purpose of providing fanfare and mood music for costume entrances. This would make a major change in costume procedure, of course, as it would encourage acting and showmanship--two things which have not received encouragement heretofore. I happen to like the idea, as I attribute half the effectiveness of my own Detention puppet-master to the act I put on, and the wonderful bit of Jon Lackey's "Old Smudge-Pot" at the Solacon netted him the nod over Karen Anderson's superb vampire and Jerry Stier's authentic mummy. Of course it is more work to impersonate a character than just to dress up in a fancy suit.

Categories of awards are another item that needs some discussion. The most controversial category is probably that of the "Most Primal," "Sexiest" or what-have-you. Often in the past this has simply been awarded to the girl with the best natural endowments amply revealed. It has been objected that this is merely a nudity prize, but I like nudity prizes, and this keeps a desirable end in view in that it removes the tendency to award the "Most Beautiful" prize simply to the most beautiful girl rather than the most beautiful costume. Equally, however, it seems to me that a single prize is quite enough; we don't need two.

Another category that has caused some trouble in the past is that of groups.

(continued on page 45)



The text of Alva Rogers' Fan Guest of Honor Speech
at the Westercon XV Banquet, June 30, 1962, in
Los Angeles, California

I'm going to talk tonight on a subject of periodic interest to many fans. This subject has been lying dormant for some time now, but lately there has been some discussion of it in the fan press -- not much, it's true, but enough to suggest that we might be in for another round of profound debate on that most pregnant of questions: Is fandom a Way of Life, or is it Just a Goddam Hobby? As Barry Goldwater would say, how do you stand, sir?

Before declaring my stand, I'd like to examine the subject in some historical depth, in accordance with the highest standards of punditism.

When I plunged into the mainstream of fandom some twenty years ago I found, after becoming somewhat oriented, that a goodly portion of fandom seemed to be hung up on the horns of this fannish dilemma -- is fandom a way of life, or is it, instead, just a goddam hobby?

Me?...I favored the hobby horn. My reason for getting into fandom in the first place was the classic one of the lonely, socially scorned science fiction nut looking for a haven where his idiosyncracies would cease to be idiosyncracies, but would instead become part of the norm. I soon discovered, much to my surprise, that fandom was something of much greater significance than I had imagined...at least, according to some fans.

The philosophers of Fandom As A Way of Life advanced the thesis that fandom constituted a distinct sub-culture in America; a culture that could, not inconceivably, become an independent civilization. A staggering concept, it would seem.

But the idea was given partial sanction by none other than Bob Bloch, in a letter he wrote to Forry Ackerman, who published it in the 36th issue of his letterzine VOM, in October, 1944. The letter was written in praise of the recently published Speer Fancylopedia, on which so many of us in the LASFS had devoted many hours in order to make it available to fandom.

Bloch said in part: "...I wonder if you know what the Fancylopedia means to your group? It establishes a definite culture. It offers a complete history, sociological study, philosophy and modus vivendi. It makes fandom PERMANENT as a social phenomenon."

I don't know if Bob was pulling our little fannish legs or not, but I do know that this rather croggling accolade was accepted at face value by a considerable number of fans. The average fan then was not nearly as sophisticated as the average fan of today.

We, as fans, had (either consciously or unconsciously) sought escape from the nagging grimness of reality during the depression years in science fiction, and as a result of our reading our adolescent minds had been filled with all sorts of wonderful ideas; ideas of how life should or should not be, and of the ultimate invincibility of the intellect over brute force. Naturally the young fan, on his own at last, and intoxicated with the soul-searing discovery of his intellectuality, tended to get his fictional and factual ideas all mixed together, and was therefore quite receptive to the idea of an intellectual elite, such as fandom, becoming a dominant force in American society. And so, these fans were not at all dismayed by Bloch's enthusiastic endorsement of the concept of fandom as a culture.

Francis T. Laney, in an essay titled Some Sociological Aspects of Fandom, published in the January, 1945, issue of VOM (#38), took a critical look at this theory of the stefnate as a distinct civilization. This essay was prompted by the almost simultaneous publication of the N3F Welcome Booklet (which attempted to explain fandom to the neo), the Fancyclopedia, and Bloch's letter, all of which seemed to give validity to the theory of a fannish culture. Laney said, also, that he first became interested in the philosophical aspects of fandom when Al Ashley introduced his Slan Center Proposal.

[illegible]

Strictly for the sake of argument, mind you, Laney then granted the stefnate their premise that they represented a classifiable culture; he then conceded the exceedingly remote possibility of some sort of Slan Center being established at some future date which would be free and independent of mundane society. If such a center could be established and achieve economic and cultural self-sufficiency, Fran reasoned, then the stefnate would cease to have any need for any intercourse with mundane civilization--except for occasional raids into the "wilderness."

He then devoted several brilliant paragraphs to a consideration of the stefnate as a civilization with its politics and government, its rigid class structure, its mores (which he insisted were "...very nearly as immutable as those of an extremely primitive society."), and its journalism and self-expression which was, he said, largely centered in FAPA.

The weakest characteristic of the stefnate, Fran was convinced, was its generally poor adjustment to the opposite sex, and a marked -- if not widespread -- aversion to children by many stefnists. This certainly was not a trait of an enduring civilization, he pointed out.

He concluded his essay with these observations:

"But in any event, the rise, progress, or decline of the stefnate should furnish us all -- actors and spectators -- with a gripping and highly amusing drama.

"Y'know, I can't help hoping that the stefnate actually reaches the stature of an independent culture. I always did like a good circus. And, more seriously, the sublime egotism of some of the little slannies touches a chord of sympathy in this cynical old fan. Somehow, I wish them luck."

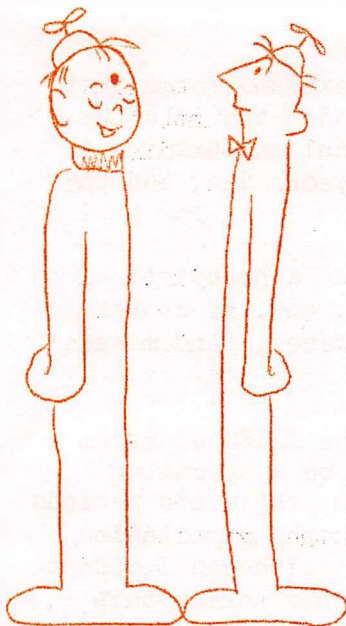
Although the general tenor of Laney's article was strongly critical -- even mocking -- of the stefnate's pretensions, the mere fact that he wrote this article -- that he felt he had to write it -- seems to indicate that even The Great Insurgent was not completely purged of the romanticism of the stefnate; that he was willing to go so far as to grant even the remotest possibility of a fannish civilization sprouting and flourishing in the future shows that he, to some extent, shared the dream of many of the stefnate.

This dream of a fannish civilization (or "fanationalism" as Speer called it) had been kicking around fandom for a long time in a vague sort of a way until the idea of a Slan Center gave body and substance to fanationalism. Al Ashley, purportedly, was the first to outline the details of a Slan Center: It would be a co-op community supported and financed by voluntary subscriptions by fans, totally self-sufficient economically, with its own government, scientifically organized school system, and functioning under its own moral and social codes.

And then along came Claude Degler, with his great crusading cry, "Fans are Slans!" and his doctrine that fans were the next mutation of man, destined to rule the entire universe. With mighty labors, countless miles of hitch-hiking missionary work, an incredible number of Cosmic Circle Commentators, and other bits of crud that poured forth in an unending stream from the Degler (and other's) mimeo, Claude tried to impress the Cosmic Circle on fandom.

This was fanationalism with a vengeance.

But most fans -- even those who believed in fanationalism -- weren't buying. Not only was the Cosmic Circle preposterous beyond belief, but the hysterical megalomania of Degler, combined his unsavory personal habits and unfortunate personality militated against his particular program ever finding acceptance by any but the lunatic fringe, or the most credulous neofan. In spite of the appeal to fannish egos of the idea that they were Slannish mutants, and that fandom would ultimately control the universe, fandom soon realized that Degler had taken their lovely dream of an independent fandom and turned it into a crackpot's delirium, and drummed him unceremoniously out of fandom.



IT'S A CASTE MARK!

Like Degler's Cosmic Circle nightmare, fandom's dream of fanationalism was relatively short lived. The intellectual euphoria that convinced many fans that because they were fans they were superior to less fortunate souls; and that fandom was such a dynamic force that it would soon be a recognized culture within a culture, gradually lessened and they soon took a more rational attitude towards fandom vis-a-vis the greater society around them.

The idea of the manifest destiny of fandom was not, of course, held by all fans. There has always been in fandom a strong element of irreverence, and, as given expression by some of our more talented brethren, this irreverence can make a shambles of any Serious and Constructive project. However, even if much of fandom viewed this whole business with the skepticism of Laney, the biting satire of Yerke, or the fey wit of Tucker, many of them managed to write some very sercon pieces about the microcosm, with some interesting results.

Jimmy Kepner, for instance, wrote a long article, complete with numerous graphs and charts and half-page footnotes, on The Social Structure of Fandom, which he published in his FAPAzine, Toward Tomorrow #4, circa June, 1945. Kepner was inspired, in part, by an assertion made by Laney in his essay that fandom was divided into rigid classes. Jimmy took acception with this statement and went into exhaustive detail in an effort to prove that fandom was actually a highly fluid society, and illustrated this with graphs which showed just how fandom was stratified, and indicated the movement of various fans up and down from one stratum to another. In the course of the article he showed where many of the pros were definitely a part of fandom, whether they knew it or not, and also demonstrated the interdependence of the pros and fandom. Of particular interest was his analysis of the various clubs existing at the time, and the cliques within them -- most notably the LASFS.

Another manifestation of the seriousness with which many fans took the fannish way of life can also be found in that reservoir of fannish lore, VOM. Although VOM was primarily a letterzine, it occasionally published an article, such as Laney's, and also had a column every so often to which various fans contributed, called Plans for Slans. Many of the great, and near great, of the day submitted to that column their grandiose programs for rearing their children in a truly scientific, philosophical, and fannish fashion. It was the great conceit of many fans, believed in seriously and soberly, that as fans they were endowed with greater vision and humanity, a deeper regard for man's cultural heritage (and the ability to instill these virtues into their offspring), than mundane man. (I wonder if this isn't still true, to some extent, of some fans?)

It's been almost twenty years, now, since many of those "Plans for Slans" were expressed -- and some of those who expressed them are still around in fandom -- I'd be curious to know how many of them, when finally confronted with the problems of child rearing, actually made an effort to carry out their plans, and if so, with what success?

So far, I've been speaking in general of some of the more extreme forms that fandom as a Way of Life has taken, particularly during Third Fandom and into the Third Transition. Now, I'd like to narrow it down to the personal and examine briefly my own attitudes toward fandom -- the fandom of twenty years ago, and the fandom of today.

As mentioned earlier, when I first entered fandom, it was as a hobbyist. I was an avid reader and collector of science fiction and fantasy, and, of course, yearned to be around people with similar tastes in reading. However, fandom wasn't all that simple.

It was my great good fortune to walk through the door of the LASFS clubroom at almost the same moment as did F. Towner Laney -- and thus to be a spectator and minor participant in one of the most dramatic, eventful, and tragicomic periods in fannish history. Anyone entering LA fandom at that time with the expectation of finding it a quiet literary society was in for a rude shock. Although I didn't find LASFS a quiet literary society, I did continue to cling to the notion that fandom was just a hobby -- in spite of much evidence to the contrary.

I maintained this belief down through the years, convinced that I was right. And I had good reason to believe so, I thought. I didn't get around to reading "Ah! Sweet Idiocy!" until 1960, although it had been published in 1948, three years after our relationship ended, and was pleased to note that Laney characterized me as "...much more mundane than other fans..." and because of this, "...by and large was about my favorite associate."

This pleased me, not only for personal reasons, but because it sustained me in my faith that fandom was just a hobby. After all, it had been Laney who'd impressed upon me, frequently and profanely, that to look on fandom as anything but a doubly goddamned hobby was to admit to having a weak mind.

It's pretty evident to me now that both Laney and I were kidding ourselves about this whole business. I think if Fran were alive today, he would be forced to admit (if only to himself) that at least from, say, late 1942 to 1945, fandom was much more than just a hobby for him -- it was, in the truest sense of the term, a way of life...just as it was for me.

I'd like to just briefly reminisce a bit about those old days to show why I now think this is so...as far as I'm concerned.

I lived, most of the time, at 628 South Bixel -- a rooming house famous in fannish song and legend. Most of the time there was anywhere from one up to half a dozen other fans living there at the same time. Mel Brown, Jimmy Kepner, Nieson Himmel, Gus Wilmoth, Lou Goldstone, Arthur Louis Joquel III, my sister, Marjorie, E. Everett Evans and his daughter Jonie...these are a few that come to mind who lived there while I did.

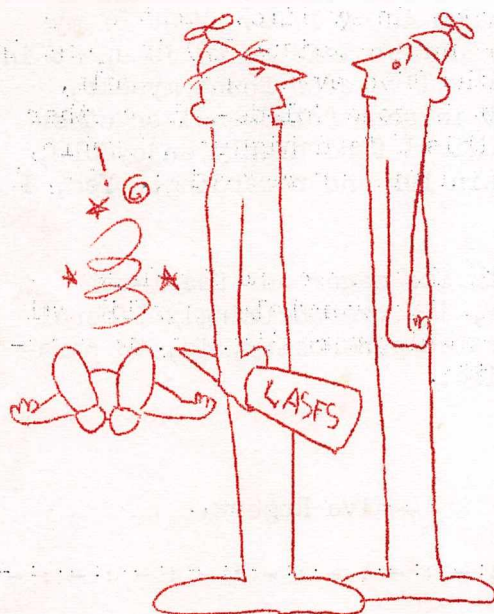
At a slight angle across the street was the home of Morojo (Myrtle R. Douglas), which was taken over in 1945 by the Slan Shack gang, Al and Abby Lou Ashley, their daughter Toopies, Walt Liebscher, and Jack Wiedenbeck. And almost directly across the street was the LASFS clubroom at 637 1/2 South Bixel, to which -- as one of the key-carrying members -- I had access at my pleasure at any time of the day or night.

It's obvious that, even if I wanted to, I couldn't avoid being in contact with one or more fans at any time.

Every evening, after work, most of us from Tendril Towers (to use the least controversial label that has been attached to 628), augmented likely as not by Laney, or Walt Daugherty, or possibly Forry (if he could make it from Fort Mac-Arthur in time), or any of a possible dozen other fans, would go around the corner on Sixth to the coffee shop in the Professional Bldg. for dinner. Then afterwards, if it was a nice evening, we'd go across the street for a smashing game of miniature golf.

Then, more than likely, we'd all drift back down Bixel to the clubroom for assorted fanac; or just sit around and talk; or watch ol' Perdue trying to unscramble his pried type between pulls on his trusty wine bottle; or just to rendezvous there preparatory to going down town to a show, or out to a bar, or God knows what. Regardless of what was planned for the evening, it was almost a ritual for most of us to check in at the club first to see who was there or what was going on.

This all sounds very idyllic, I know. But the feudin' and fussin' in the IASFS has been chronicled at great length elsewhere, so I don't see any point in going into it here...that could provide the subject for a four hour speech all by itself. Needless to say, one of the things that makes those days so memorable to anyone who was around at that time was the spirited infighting that went on almost constantly. The class of wills and personalities -- and the sparks they struck off -- was a source of never ending delight to me, a relative non-combatant...at least, in retrospect.



HE CALLED OUR CLUB A
FOCAL POINT.....

However, that's getting a little off the subject. The point I was trying to make was that for me, or anyone else who lived within walking distance or a short commute, the club was generally the focus of most of our activity.

It seems to me now, in thinking back to those faraway years, that all my time was spent in some sort of fanac, with some sort of fan. Even the most mundane pleasures -- wenching, boozing, jazz, bookstore browsing, movies, swimming, even political activity -- all were pursued in company with other fans.

And yet, in spite of all this, I stubbornly clung to the belief that fandom didn't dominate my life...that it was, you understand, just a goddamn hobby.

Maybe, after all, it was just a hobby. But when one's every waking hour, practically, is devoted to fanac in any of its multifarious forms; and when all of one's friends are fans, then this particular hobby becomes peculiarly amplified. It becomes, really, a way of life, no matter what you might prefer to call it.

If fandom was a way of life for me in the early forties, did it -- as Laney would insist -- handicap me in the fearsome outer world of mundane, leave me ill equipped to meet life's exigencies, cripple me emotionally so that I would be unable to cope with the problems and responsibilities of, say, marriage and

raising a family? For these were some of the more serious consequences, Fran believed, of overactive and involved fanning. Well, the only answer I have to that is that Sid and I just celebrated our fifteenth wedding anniversary a couple of weeks ago; and -- although we are still adjusting to each other's personalities -- we love each other, have three lusty offspring to bear witness to that, and still manage to get mutual enjoyment out of our activity in Bay Area fandom without upsetting the equilibrium of our family.

Fandom as a Way of Life, or fandom as just a Goddamn H obby -- in the semantics of fandom these are merely two sides of the same mimeo stencil. Most hobbies, seriously pursued, take up a good deal of one's spare time and become, to a limited degree, a way of life. A hobby such as fandom which gives one a sense of participation, throws one in the company of congenial, like-minded characters, and offers intellectual stimulation and an outlet for one's artistic and intellectual efforts, can't be too bad, even if one takes it seriously and makes of it -- for a while -- a Way of Life.

Do I consider fandom to be a way of life for me today? After much "agonizing reappraisal" I've come to the conclusion, painfully to be sure -- after all, one doesn't abandon a belief held firmly for twenty years without some trauma -- that fandom is a way of life for me. Oh, not in the sense that the more devout fanaticalists of the past thought of fandom as a way of life, but in a more relaxed and less exaggerated sense.

Since I was "rediscovered" to fandom (as if I had ever really been lost) three or four years ago, fandom has again loomed large in my life. Most of my friends are fans, most of my leisure time (and some not so leisurely) is spent in fanac of some sort or another -- and in recent months I've even found myself, much to my surprise, embroiled as a major disputant in some fol-de-rol or other concerning the moral character of fandom. All of this I find highly enjoyable, stimulating and at the same time relaxing, just plain fun and rewarding. Yes, I do think of fandom as a way of life for me.

In all seriousness, I believe that fandom, with its eager and fearless interest in the widest range of subjects imaginable, its overwhelmingly liberal and skeptical attitude, and its frequently demonstrated generosity, is, to paraphrase Candide, the best of all possible ways of life.

Thank you.

--Alva Rogers.

W A N T E D

Shangri-L'Affaires # 39,40,41,42,43,44

The first five renaissance issues of Shaggy, published from Oct 58 to Jul 59 (that's the Goldstone cover). Any copies of these issues are worth 25¢ apiece to Ron Ellik, 1825 Greenfield Ave, L.A. 25.

FALLEN ANGELNOS by BJO

Now we know what Ethel Lindsay means when she describes something as "smashin'"! I don't know if that is a standard British term, or if it's native Scottish, but it fits the program we saw last night perfectly. Events have an odd way of building up, in our lives. I went to Los Angeles with John, early in the morning, because I had been called to jury duty. John left me at the courthouse, and went to work.

As it turned out, I was excused from jury duty because of the auto accident, for it was too recent for me to be anything but a "prejudiced juror" if I happened to have to sit in on an insurance case. So they'll shelve my name for a few years more, I suppose.

Having nothing else to do with my morning, then, I walked three blocks to the Goodwill Thrift Store on Broadway, and found that all books were on sale for 19 cents each. Along with the wealth of battered children's books (and this year, everyone seems to be throwing "Heidi's Children" away) and old school annuals and the inevitable "Zotz!", there were some wonderful bargains. I met a lady from La Jolla (about 100 miles down the Calif. coast) who had come into town with her husband on business, and gotten lured into the dusty recesses of these bookshelves. We looked at one book, a light romance novel, "Lewis and Irene", which had a fantastically beautiful bookplate in it, showing the book to have once belonged to John W. Considine Jr. Mrs. French let me have the book, tho she found it, and I bought it for the bookplate alone. Later I steamed out the plate, and sent the book to the kind lady, in thanks for her generosity. I hope she enjoys it; I found it a bit confusing, but perhaps the translator was not as inspired as he should have been.

In those shelves, I also collected two Carter Dickson novels that I had not read before, one Saint story (now I'll dispose of the pocketbook version), a good copy of Kipling's "Phantom Rickshaw", Mary Rinehart's "The Window at the White Cat", Laswell's "Suds in Your Eye" (for a future gift to a beer-loving soul), Doyle's "His Last Bow", an absolutely wonderful find in Nesbit's "The Bastable Children" (including all three stories in one book), a kiddie science-fiction story "Five Thousand Miles Underground" (for a gag gift for the LASFS auction), and Zane Grey's "Riders of the Purple Sage" for John, who has never read it. All this for \$2.00; and the fun of browsing. I passed up a George Barr McCutcheon story, but will go back for it later, I think.

John met me for lunch, and said that he'd heard that the Royal Scots Greys and Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were to be at the Hollywood Bowl that night, and did I want to go? Well, of course I wanted to go, but it did seem to be very short notice and all....but off we went to the Southern California Auto Club, which takes care of all travel and amusement plans (that are legal) for members, and we bought some tickets on the spot.

It was a mild evening, which was lucky, as the Hollywood Bowl is an outdoor theatre, and we did not have a blanket or even heavy coats to protect ourselves. It would have been too much to drive 40 miles to Long Beach for these things, after John got off work, so we took our chances.

A whole group of people behind us were in very jolly spirits, and one man named Bob kept up a running comment on the whole proceedings. When one of the girls complained about being cold, he said, "Don't complain, girls. Them Scots'll be as cold as you in them short skirts."

Later, he observed that they had real nice seats..."handy to the snack bar, only 800 yards away..." but assured everyone that he had come prepared for a long evening, with "popcorn, some pistachio nuts, and a couple-a dozen 6-packs of beer." Actually, they all seemed sober, but in high spirits. This matched the mood of the entire audience, many of whom were wearing tams and tartans, either in honor of the show, or their own ancestors.

The music was, as Ethel would say, "smashin'"! It skirled into every heart, keened into every mind, until there wasn't a member of that audience who wouldn't have followed those pipers back to Scotland, if they'd lead the parade with "The Campbells are Coming"! The band also had one of the finest brass sections I've heard in a long time. The entire troupe was over 100 strong, and played as well together as if they were all brothers. Cheers would break out spontaneously at a particularly good bit of sound, and the applause was generous. One local Scottish group led the cheering on of the pipers with some wonderful whoops of enthusiasm that seemed to egg the whole band on to more effort.

The pipers were led by someone who looked as if he'd stepped off a Dewar's Scotch Whiskey poster, carrying a very long brass baton which he flourished with reckless abandon all the while the music went on. Bob explained to one of the girls, "notice the guy what's swinging that thing? It's got a big brass ball on one end, and a sharp prod on the other; that's why them others all march so well!" The girl asked Bob if he was kidding her, and he assured her, "I wouldn't steer ya wrong.....unless I thot I could get away with it."

After inspecting the band thru opera glasses, Bob observed to the rest of the audience, "Hey, them drummers got tiger skins on!" His knowledge of big cats is limited, for they were really leopard skins, and fine ones at that. Later, during intermission, John and I went around to the side, and saw the uniforms at closer range. We talked to one bright-eyed young fellow, who had the typically rosy cheeks we've come to associate with Scottish folk, and exchanged general pleasantries with him. We also observed a rather magnificent handle-bar moustache, borne proudly by one of the pipers. The lad wearing the "tiger skin" was asked where he'd gotten it, and he said it had been issued to him, which got a rather croggled expression from the inquirer.

Of course, the pipers and dancers were the favorites of everyone, and the rest of the band had to take second place to the wail of bagpipes whenever they appeared on stage. While the dancers were placing their swords on the stage, someone pointed out that all of these men were really in the military service of their country. Bob watched the sword dance in comparative silence, then, "Can't you see a bunch of American Marines doin' that?"

The great "shell" of Hollywood Bowl had been removed so that a huge grey castle wall could be put in its place. As there is no curtain for this huge outdoor amphitheatre, early arrivers could look at the castle and speculate about it. After the costumed band made its appearance, the castle looked perfectly natural, even to our eyes. But at first, some attendees were wondering about it. I commented to John that it looked suspiciously like the backdrop for "Yeomen of the Guard" and he'd better check the ticket stubs again. Bob suggested that we were to have a real war on stage, "they'll attack the fort, ya see, with cannon and bayonets and..." but everyone made unbelieving noises.

The highlight of the program came when the entire company turned out for a dramatic production of Balaclava. The troupe was divided into small

groups, representing the Irish, Welsh, English, and Scots. As they came onto the stage, they played an air representative of each country. The stage darkened as one lone trumpet in the very back of the vast auditorium played taps...then lights flashed to show that battle was still in progress. As the lights came up, so did the music, to represent the tempo of the battle. The whole band played "Meadowland", and went immediately into interpretations of battle sounds. As the music began to sound more tired, and the musicians, who all along had been standing at attention, looked dispirited, the skirl of pipes was heard, and down the aisles came the "cavalry to the rescue", playing "Campbells are Coming", and taking their places with the others, to form the magnificent "thin red line" which has typified the courage of the British Empire for these many years! It was a wonderful moment, and beautifully done.

One lovely bit of pure cornball was a bit of "theatre"; two flags had been hanging limply from the towers of the castle in the mild evening. Then, as the tempo of the battle turned in our favor, and the pipers arrived to give their support in 50-to-one odds, the flags moved slowly, beautifully, billowing out in the light of baby spots. They were, of course, an American and a British flag, and were given a bit of encouragement by way of small air vents at the base of each short flagpole. The sight of the flags, waving at the moment of turn of battle, was enuf to create a stir in everyone there.

The evening went too fast. It was only a three hour show, and I felt as if all night could not hold enuf time to listen and watch. John was enjoying himself thoroughly, and I was very glad that we fall prey to these sudden impulses. Bob commented on another member of his party in a plonking tone, "yep, plaid is definitely his color", which left everyone fairly speechless. The lady next to me loaned me her opera glasses occasionally, which was very sweet of her. She looked very much like a younger version of Estelle Winwood, who was Sybil in "The Magic Sword", and the fairy godmother in "The Glass Slipper".

One thing which struck me was that from the very start, with the playing of "The Star-spangled Banner", thru "God Save the Queen", and on to the final, emotion-filled rendition of "Auld Lang Syne", everyone who could joined in the singing! Not that the band could hear us, but it was a grand sort of feeling, to share this love of pipes, and this kinship with everyone there who wore some sort of tartan....if only somewhere in his heart.

The last we heard of our commentator of the evening was as they collected assorted pillows, blankets, opera glasses, and girl friends and drifted with the crowd toward the parking lots. Bob was asked if he enjoyed the evening. "Sure, I like bagpipes", he answered, "but I'd hate to have one move into the neighborhood!"

However much is said in jokes about bagpipes, including John's terrible line about "that man over there is strangling a small, plaid cow!" which took Ethel broadside, there is no denying that if you love the music, it'll move you. We were enriched by that evening of music, drawn even closer to the land and love of our own ancestors, and came away with a glow and a lilt to our step, and the strong, unshakeable knowledge that it was, truly, smashin'!

--- Bjo Trimble

the MENACING MINUTES of

the LASFS

by Fred Patten, secretary

After 5 months of meeting at the Silverlake Playground, the LASFS has settled down to its usual stodgy routine, proving that slan shacks may come and slan shacks may go, but the LASFS goes on forever. Currently, it's going on under the administration of Bruce Pelz, Director; Dian Girard, Senior Committee~~man~~woman; Forry Ackerman, Junior Committeeman; Fred Patten, Secretary; and Ed Baker, Treasurer.

The new term of office opened with the 1299th Meeting (July 5). This was the first after the Westercon, and several Westercon attendees were present, including Avram Davidson. Bruce introduced a spate of needed New Business, showing he's not going to be a do-nothing Director like some we've had lately. Old member Ib Melchior turned up with a movie he'd made with the U.S. Navy Dep't., showing how a young scientist became a self-made missile expert, with Navy backing. Sort of a modern pet story - a boy and his missile. Avram said a few words on the future policy of F&SF; basically the same as before, but with more serials.

Philly fan Phil Castora was at the 1300th Meeting (July 12); having moved out to LA. The possibilities of getting together an sf display for exhibit at the Main downtown branch of the Public Library was discussed; the Library had seemed mildly interested when it was suggested to them, and we decided to check into it further. The death of John Trimble's mother from cancer was announced; the Trimbles asked that anyone who felt like sending flowers make a donation to the cancer fund instead. AXE's article on the forthcoming article on fanzines in COSMOPOLITAN was read, bringing suspicious glances from those present - we know what mundania thinks of us "Buck Rogers" fans.

Al Lewis gave a brief Westercon financial report at the 1301st Meeting (July 19). The con cleared around \$380. Ed Baker began showing his true color - green; it seems he has a fanatical devotion to Esperanto, and intends proselytizing every chance he gets. The literary merits of Mack Reynolds were debated; Al holding that his ideas were original and interesting, while Bruce thought that all the stories did was promote Reynolds as a great world traveller. In the panel "Where Are The Girls In Fandom?" (Al moderating; Dian and Julie Jardine serving as panelists), it was decided there was more social pressure for women to conform to mundania than for men. "Have you ever gone into a liquor store to buy a prozine and been asked, "Why don't you take dope, honey? It's cheaper."?"

At the 1302nd Meeting (July 26), A. E. van Vogt and Kris Neville debated "How Would Science Fiction Authors Mastermind The Cold War?" Van saw world history as a conflict between 2 social philosophies; collectivist and competitive. Both exist side by side today; and the Cold War will continue until both find a common meeting ground. Kris thought the whole Cold War was a boondoggle perpetuated by mutual agreement between the East & West blocs, to maintain a status quo that allows gov'ts to subsidize their major industries, & thus practice subvert gov't control. Some confusion was resolved when it turned out that Kris & Van were using different definitions for the word "collectivism"; Van meaning "socialism", and Kris meaning "dictatorship".

We received our first volumes of bound prozines for the LASFS Library at the 1303rd Meeting (Aug. 2). Librarian Baker will keep them at his house, "for easier accessibility", as he put it, to keep a prediction of "neatly bound for easier stealing" from coming true. Patten told of finding a copy of Tales of Conan with a glued-in printed bookplate reading "Yngvi is not a louse!" in a 2nd-hand bookstore. An auction to raise funds for the Morcon Committee's varchest sold 3 original

Bradbury manuscripts to the USC Library, which wants all the Bradburyana it can get. "Tell Bradbury to send us his old grocery lists and notes to the milkman." It was noted that Baker is keeping the club's Treasury records completely in Esperanto, on special forms he'd printed up.

Ed Meskys proved at our 1304th Meeting (Aug. 9) to be the biggest cutup since Henstell stopped attending regularly. Bjo thought a new deal was needed on the Fan Art Show trophies, since most are big, expensive, mundane things having nothing to do with the Art Show. She suggested the LASFS pioneer a new award, a quiet looking base with a medallion & plate, very inexpensive. Ellik went to the other extreme, proposing a 6-foot Winged Victory looking as if it had been goosed; but Bjo's motion passed. In an hour-long slide show, Ron showed us his TAFF trip to England & No. Ireland & the British Convention. Bruce then showed pictures of the Westercon.

Forry had some dismal news on the film front at the 1305th Meeting (Aug. 16). A Japanese horror flic pits Godzilla against King Kong. In the version for Japanese release, Godzilla wins; in the U.S., Kong will be victorious. A ghastly-sounding movie of The Day of the Triffids is out, with one giant meteor blinding everybody & causing the triffids, which chase Howard Keel and Nicole Maury across France & Spain. Another imitation of FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND is out; this one's called FANTASTIC MONSTERS OF THE FILMS. And the editor of one of America's worst girlie mags, noting the boxoffice success of horror movies, has decided to start an sf prozine, even tho he knows nothing about the field - he was worrying how he could get stories, and was pleasantly surprised to find that there are regular sf authors. The mag will be PLAYBOY-sized, and is rumored to be at the printers' already.

At the 1306th Meeting (Aug. 23), Dian read newsclippings about the Society for Indecency to Naked Animals (SINA), a fully endowed foundation claiming that "man's subhuman friends are embarrassed by their enforced nudity" (LA Times), and demanding that people dress pets, farm animals, and zoo animals. Their trademark is a picture of a horse wearing trousers. Program Chairman Virginia Hill brought the first of several NASA space flight documentaries, which NASA will loan free of charge to those who want them. We saw it along with a short homemade sf movie Ray Craig just finished, which Jack Harness helped with (and got screen credit for).

Not much happened at the 1307th and 1308th Meetings, since over half LASFS active membership was partying it up at the Chicon. But we were all back by the 1309th Meeting (Sept. 13), along with Floridafan Mike McQuown, who came back from the Chicon for a brief stay. Various happenings at Chicago were discussed, and an enlargement of the Lorcon Committee was announced. Ron Ellik drew a round of applause with the announcement of his engagement, though he kept us waiting until next week to find out who he was engaged to (it's Peggy Rae McNight, of Penn. fandom). SINA's latest doings were reported. Ethel Lindsay's brief stay here the past weekend was mentioned; we were all sorry she couldn't stay long enough to come to the club. Bruce passed around a petition calling for ATom to stand for TAFF in the election that brings the winner to the '64 Worldcon. He's turned it down before, but if he's bombarded with enough requests... Bruce asked us to envision a Lorcon cartoon contest between Bjo, ATom, and Rotsler, all drawing furiously on long rolls of paper. Lichtman wanted to make it a foursome by adding Dave Rike; he was promptly squelched. The new ACE pb editions of Edgar Rice Burroughs' books, with Irenkel covers in the old St. John style, were favorably reviewed. "Wollheim has really got his heart into this. It looks like a good series", said the ussJT. We had a small art exhibit, consisting of part of the Chicon Art Show the Trimbles brought back with them.

The big attractions at the 1310th Meeting (Sept. 20) were Walt & Madeline Willis, and Bob Bloch. Walt thanked us all for inviting them to LA. We pointed out that this was his 2nd LASFS meeting; after next time, he has to join. Bloch proved he's as funny ad lib as he is in his fan writing, as he told us about a party he attended while in Chicago, at the palatial home of PLAYBOY-editor Hugh Hefner. The Playgirls never showed up; he was disappointed. Forry said that Harlan Ellison has sold one of his sf stories in A Touch of Infinity to American-International Studios; and is scripting it himself. Jack Palance will play the lead in the \$2 million spectacle. At this point, most of us wandered out to the kitchen for coffee, or onto the front porch to talk to the Willises, while 2 more NASA space-age movies were shown inside. Bruce asked for a site for our annual Halloween costume party, and we finally adjourned, wondering what next week would bring. #

Picking a Bone O with Shaggy

conducted by John Trimble

It's shake-up time around the ol' flea-carrier, and since Fred pretty much has his hands full with SALAMANDER, I'm taking over the SHAGGY lettercol; 'ware all ye letterhacks!

There's always a problem in separating the editor's comments from the actual letters, and -- far as I know -- no one has ever found a really satisfactory way of doing this short of making forty-eleven marks to set off the editorial commentary. This typer's got a wild symbol: §, which I'll use in conjunction with [, as: §[comment]§. This will prevail when I interject a comment, or make a short follow-up to a letter writer's commentary. If I'm going to make a paragraph out of my comments (and I'll try to do this as much as possible, to avoid as much in the way of gemcarring as I can), I'll run a set of § down the left-hand margin of the paragraph, and enclose my comments in [].

Hope that's not too complicated. After all, we've all got broad mental horizons, haven't we?

And so saying, let's lead off with....

RON WILSON, North 3107 Normandie St, Spokane 18, Washington

As is usually the case with entering the scene in the middle of the bacchanal, I was left in a state of "What the hell's happening," after reading SHAGGY 60. I did note some of the discussion on the Costume Balls and since I had the good fortune to be present at one, thought that a comment or two wouldn't be completely out of order.

The question of music is one that, of course, must be decided by the committee. However, at the Seacon, I saw no particular need for a band. I only noted a handful of couples dancing after the affair was over and none during the review or judging. (Although there were a few individuals whose limber sense of balance might have led on-lookers to think they were dancing.) For the most part, the Costume Ball was a time of displaying costumes, talking with interested fans, and doing some wishful thinking (I know what you mean, Al). The idea of tapes seems to be a good one and would certainly cut down on the costs. There was a rumor circulated about the hall that the judges



[Ron Wilson, cot'd] were inconsistent in their awarding of the prizes. Being my first such event, I was unable to confirm or deny this speculation.

Mervyn Barrett seems to think that just because he places certain unfavorable connotations on words, that this is the case with everybody. Flashlight does not necessarily suggest "bargain basements and mass-produced gadgetry" to me; it simply refers to the idea of illuminating that which I wished so. The thought of reverting back to a more mellifluous or quaint way of speaking may well be very poetic, but quite impractical for most -- simple because the reason for the current terms was a need for shorter more concise ones.

§[Do such terms as "flashlight" replace "electric torch" because of
§ a need for more concise terminology, or do these new words stem
§ from a basic laziness in speech that's slowly depriving the English
§ language of much of its more poetic aspects? -jt]

WARB-lings by Ruth Berman is a classic example of the fannish ability with nillisms. Ruth actually says nothing in her column, but does it in such a pleasant and interesting way as to give the reader a feeling of delight. I can only speak for myself, but if you have further installments of WARB-lings then by all means use them.

Robert Moore Williams' "On Creativity" shows a truly creative mind at work (or at rest, as Mr Williams suggests). The problem of channeling the creative thought is a deep one and very often means the difference between a creative accomplishment and middling thinking. In some ways, the sedentary mind is worse than no mind at all because the sense of awe may still be present in the mindless, but is usually replaced by indifference in the inelastic mind. In any event, Mr Williams' article was a welcomed thought-provoker and served to increase my respect for the creative imagination.

§[The next letter covers several issues, and is from...]§

Dr ANTONIO DUPLA, P. M. Agustin, 9, Zaragoza, Espania

Dear one on duty:

At last the process for which I have got SHAGGY is made known: a subscription, but, through who?; this riddle has arrived to puzzle me so that I beg you to put somewhere in SHAGGY 62 a note giving the name of that unknown agent of a very good fate. §[No sooner asked
§ than done, Dr Dupla; Forrest J Ackerman is the culprit! -jt]§ There go my letter, one of the things you ask, but were it of not enough merit to deserve a continuing flow of your zine please give me a little credit and say it so as then the way of sending you the money of a new subscription would be investigated and obtained. §[You send
§ along a letter of comment every couple of issues, and we'll keep send-
§ ing you SHAGGYs, okay? -jt]§

What to say about past issues so much time after they arrived? A couple of things about 59, the contents as good as always (Rogers, Ellik...) and the repro for the first time rather poor in some pages. In 60 a amalgam of color in the cover of which surely you have heard enough. It sounds fine the opinion...of Tackett about the Awards, informative and serious. I, myself, sent the poll saying yes to the project and no to the statuette. Berry fantastically good and the illos too. The symposium os costume balls rates an absolute first place for me, mainly for the article of Bjo. Not having seen never one (not probably will) the polemic part gives place to the informative, good and well put; with illustrations, the above said: a first

[Dr Dupla, cont'd] place.

The controversy Gibson Rogers goes on and on, that one scores a good point, then the other. Plenty of advice to neophytes but when at point of giving concrete data about some perilous guy the argument is somewhat swayed and at last the spectator doesn't know for sure if the basic facts are true or overstated. So, the articles and letter of both are very good and interesting but the ultimate objective is lost in the way.

§[Even though we've called a halt to the "Thieves, Whores, etc" controversy in these pages, I just had to print the above paragraph; § it sums the discussion up so nicely, don't you think? -jt]§

Re the Dilley letter about the connubial nude tolerance, if I am not wrong it all began with Ron Ellick commenting about it in his conreport on N° 57; then Betty Kujawa letter in 58 let me in doubt as if she was for or against the habit and now the letter of Dilley arouses my curiosity. Which is the position (polemic) of each intervening part? §[Good question! How 'bout that? -jt]§

Well, Mr Lewis, now I find another reason to be proud of being a U.S. citizen. What other country in the galaxy gives you a raise for making photos of blondes in bikini, though it being in the middle of Pittsburgh and raining? §[Well, no, that's not quite the situation, I.... Al, did they give you a raise for that? -jt]§

About Ruth Berman, had the mother of her car taken thalidomide when pregnant of it? as the matter as it stands is rather confusing; or has she, and this a WKF, no car?, though I doubt this state of affaires could be tolerated. I agree with those that don't think "Psycho" is a first rate film though it has a very good sequence: the view of the staircase when the private eye mounts slowly the steps and the zoom of the camera with the frenetic sortie of the murderer and the knifing. But it made not for a vintage Hitchcock and as for the enigma I went so far as the non-existence of the mother. After the cinema, at 1 a.m. I went to bed, seized the book and read it through. When at last I was asleep, the melange of the two versions was enough for putting me through a nightmare of which I remember nothing but that made me throw good and energetic shouts, as afterwards I was told by my wife.

§[We get letters from all corners of the world; even from....]§

ARCHIE MERCER, c/o BSFA Library, (Basement) 130 Lansdown Rd, Cheltenham, Glos., England

I have here SHAGGY 61, in which Fred (?) suggests I should use the whole of an air-letter if I use any of it. At the time I was pressed for time (what's Fred's excuse?) but herewith a few words anet the 61st issue.

I don't like the cover, but I like its colouring. The LASFS treatment tones down Mrs D's excesses somehow. So that it looks more shaggy than Dominican.

I liked Al's editorial. Remind me to relate how I took a photograph of Ella Parker swimming nude in the fountain in Trafalgar Square. Or would have done, if it hadn't been



[A Mercer, cont'd] for the facts that I haven't got a camera, that Ella didn't happen to have her birthday-suit with her, and that it was Piccadilly Circus (which is Altogether Different) in any case. Apart from which, neither of us were anywhere near the place (or each other) at the time.

This hassel over How To Judge Costumes would be easily resolved if the costumes were to be taken as an end in themselves, and the formal competitive element abolished. Then all the various conreporters would praise the ones they happened to like, a fair share of ego-boo all around would accrue, and there'd be no broken hearts or lions. This non-competitive bias of mine, incidentally is also my main ground for objecting to the Fan Awards project. To give Willick his due, he's got a fabulous taste in music.

And what's CIAWOT -- "Christianity Is A Way Of Theology"?

§[The only thing wrong with your idea re eliminating costume competition, Arch, is that a couple of the contenders are usually people who don't get (or read) fanzines. And this, coupled with the fact that on-the-spot egoboo is muchly desired -- by most folk -- over delayed egoboo (no matter how good it is), is pretty well going to insure that costumes will continue to be judged at Worldcon Costume Balls. -jt]

§[And another island is heard from....]§

MINORU MAEDA, Hagino byoim, Hashimoto, Shingu, Wakayama, Japan

I received "SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES" today for which I want to thank you. I have had the several other copies of it, since I wrote to you during the late of last year. I am sure I have got a long pleased time by seeing them.

It is that I send for you a small money as subscription are difficult as things that I would rather like not to subscribe to renew. I am grateful for kindness, as you sent me each issue of "SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES" free of charge.

May "SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES" be very progressive.

§[Thank you...we'll try to make SHAGGY very progressive. And don't worry about subbing to SHAGGY; you're pretty much on our semi-permanent list of people who get SHAGGY No Matter What! -jt]

§[Speaking of Japan, let's hear from....]§

ROY TACKETT, 915 Green Valley Road, N W, Albuquerque, New Mexico

It looks as is a goodly part of fandom is in the same boat these days -- none of us have enough time. I owe letters to practically all my correspondents and haven't hacked our a LoC to a fanzine in ages. Maybe when winter comes along there'll be more time available.

This talk of folding SHAGGY bothers me. I don't know why it should except that I have a soft spot in my head for the LASFS and would dislike seeing the club publication go under. Doesn't it seem to you, though, that with all the fannish talent knocking about out there a more or less regular staff could be found for the zine? Or why not do as (I presume) the Seattle group does -- have one day set aside each month or so for the publication of the zine? Get a group of LABFS members to drap along their typers and have a grand pubbing



[Tackett, cont'd] session with the editorial committee generally directing things.

Enjoyed the Westercon History and the reprinted conreport. Looking back over the past few years I'm inclined to think that Bradbury's 1948 remarks were particularly prophetic. Mobbishness, unfortunately, continues to increase at what seems to be a logarithmic rate. Sad.

Mervyn Barrett's "Good Words" was enjoyable. 'tis sad to think that Americanisms are creeping into the British vocabulary. I agree that some of the older and/or British usages are preferable to the present terms. Of course, it all depends on the point of reference, too. Take a crop-duster in an old bi-plane hedgehopping over the fields -- to me he is an aviator; the man at the controls of a transcontinental jetliner is an airplane driver. There's a difference.

Look here, on this costume ball bit. It would seem that this is something for the con committee to decide and there is no reason at all why they should be bound by rules and regulations to do it in any particular way. What they should do, of course, is to decide quite early what the categories are going to be and announce them in plenty of time for all potential attendees to fit themselves into one of the categories -- if they so desire.

Rick's suggestion for the Shaggy Menace is quite sensible. As long as Bruce is publishing the minutes there is no need to run them in full in SHAGGY, but some mention should be made in SHAGGY as to special events, visitors, etc. to the meetings.

Makes the rest of us envious, you know.

§[Roy, the idea isn't to saddle the Con Committees with set rules and regulations for costume ball procedure, but merely to lay out a set of rules to get uniformly competent judging, and to get a general group of categories that comprehend the general run of fan costumes, with no outstanding left-outs...and an open award for that special rig that won't fit any set of categories. Guiding lines for the committees, not a rulebook. -jt]

§[And on the longest paper I've seen recently, comes a letter from...]

THOMAS DILLEY, 1590 Robinson Dr. N, St Petersburg 10, Florida

And a startling shock it was when a great Shaggy beast burst through the door, in a flurry of loose staples and shredded bacover, hounded by a cruel post office department.

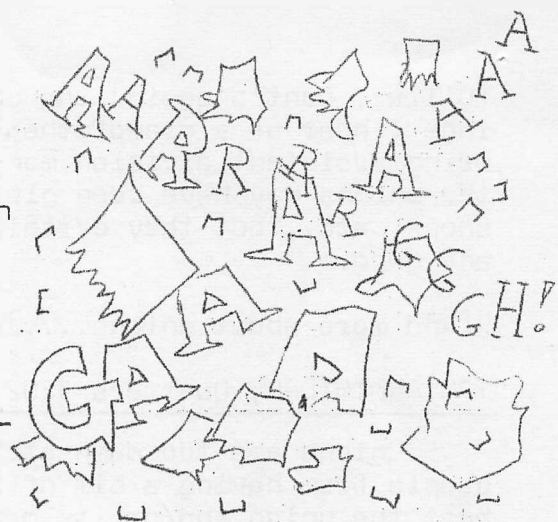
Actually, though the bacover did look much the worse for wear, even, the staples were most firmly attached; all four of them. "Naturally," I figured, "three of them are binding staples, and the fourth is a mailing staple."

"Only Steve Stiles does it the other way around."

"So, if I divide the pages here, and pull thusly...."

Naturally, I had divided the magazine right in the middle of the binding, and, after a few moments of filling the air with various sounds of shredding, tearing and mingled oaths, I found myself with

[Dilley, ripping, tearing and snorting, cont'd] a portfolio version of The SHAG (well, nearly portfolio; the binding staple was still intact). And so, from 15 sheets of paper which look as if each one had been on the outside of the magazine when the postman's special third class cleats hit, and one thoroughly lacerated bagcover, we try for another LoC:



If you people become anymore effective at playing musical chairs, it will eventually be more difficult to figure out who's the editor of SHAGGY than of VCID. As a matter of fact, I shall have to send this to the return address on the bagcover (yes, that part was preserved; it was right next to where the mailing staple used to be), but I haven't the slightest idea of whose place it is. §[Read the colophon! -jt]§

Say, how about going photo-mimeo and publishing that bikini picture? Heh, heh.

The article on "Good Words" was most enjoyable; I am really in favor of this sort of thing. But Mr Barrett left out one very important item: why not start a big movement to re-enstate the full use of the subjunctive? An author, if he be truly a lover of Good Words, will not let this poor, forgotten point of grammar lie idle -- uh, idle -- idle, that's it. Good word. (One is tempted to ask, "What's the good word?" But that....)

And your lettercol illustrates my difficulty with writing LoCs; here are all those people who saw the various costume contests in question, and can make comments upon them. And here I sit, with nothing more than opinions on the Gibson-Rogers fight, which is a dead topic. C'est la mort! I wish I were able to get around to some of these conventions; the costumes sound most, uh, intriguing. Incidentally, the saying from which "Judge Not" comes is hardly applicable in most fannish disputes that I have had occasion to see; a more fitting expression for fandom would seem to be, "Judge not, that ye be not budged."

Mrs Kujawa's letter brings back some interesting reminiscences about South Bend (we used to live about 15 miles from there). The unions around there are rotten. For example, it was either last year or the year before that the electrical linemen went on strike in the middle of the winter. In a northerm city, of course, this is quite a serious problem, for the sleet very quickly accumulates on the lines and causes them to break from the weight. With the linemen on strike, those sections of the city served by the broken lines would remain without electricity. In the last strike, the Indiana & Michigan Electric Co brought in other linemen to take care of the work, and the strikers blocked the exits of the parking lots containing the company's trucks. Fortunately, it was a municipal lot, and the I&M was able to obtain an injunction to open the exits. But this company, and, I imagine, others in South Bend (especially Studebaker) are continually plagued with rather violent types of strikes, and some firms keep stores of canned foods on hand to feed the more loyal employees who are trapped inside by the union brick-throwers outside. All of this, needless to say, has set my opinion somewhat against

[Dilley, cont'd again] the unions, especially in view of the recountings I hear of a grandfather's encounters with the labor boys (he being assistant division manager of said electric co). I dunno... the unions may have been glorious things in their elimination of sweatshops, etc., but they certainly haven't done cities like South Bend any good.

§[And more about unions....]§

TOM ARMISTEAD, Quarters 3202, Carswell AFB, Fort Worth, Texas

Unions are too damn strong! When a union can prevent a group of people from having a bit of innocent fun at something that wouldn't hurt the union and/or its members one bit, I think this union business has gone too far.

Betty Kujawa was right. Union help often leads to trouble. Even though I believe in what many of the unions work for, I think much of the fuss produced by unions is needless. The height of the ridiculous was the brick layers (who now make -!!- \$6 or more an hour) striking for a wage raise of some 50%, I believe, plus less work days in the week, etc. This situation concerned New York construction workmen, and perhaps they deserved the pay raise...but the thought of brick layers getting almost \$7 an hour for laying bricks gets me. Especially contrasted to the pay of teachers.

Anyway, I cannot see how a fan organized band can be rationally frowned on by a union. I know some union musicians, and the union they belong to doesn't seem to cause trouble of that kind. I believe a fan orchestra is a Good Thing...if an orchestra or band is needed at all. The idea of a pianist is also a good one. Perhaps a few of our playing fans could split the chore amongst them and provide an evening of good music at no expense. After all, many of the fans would be glad to show off their ability with no payment except the enjoyment of those listening. I know I would (Of course, the problem is that I play classics and jazz, and it is pretty hard to twist to Claire de Lune...).

§[It isn't the musicians' union the committee has to worry about, Tom, § but the other unions in the hotel; hotels are fiercely unionized, § and these unions will not tolerate such shinannigans...fan conventions have a hard enough time with the hosting hotels anyway, with- § out any additional problems coming from the unions. -jrt]

§["Here's a bone I'd like to pick with SHAGGY---" says....]§

DAVE FOX, 1143 Justin, Glendale 1, California

I thought it might be interesting to note down certain aspects of the recent Con §[Westercon XV]§ as they impressed me, particularly as I believe that those which I will comment on are fairly common in such gatherings.

With my customary obtuseness I was introduced to Karen Anderson on Friday evening, filed her among my list of attractive fan, and was moderately surprized when I discovered that Eminent Author Poul Anderson was sitting behind me in one of the meetings Saturday. I was puzzled that I hadn't seen him before and mildly curious as to why I didn't see him again, but I didn't bother much about it. Then, Sunday, I was much impressed by Little Man haLevy's excellent analysis of Mod-

[Fox, cont'd] ern Fantasy, and wishing to compliment him and make a comment on his talk, I went up to him afterward, only to realize that he had little or no interest in discussing the subject he had just lectured upon so well, and that furthermore he was aching to go elsewhere. Coming back a moment later, I found that he was gone, and was informed that he had gone down to the hotel bar. Still naive and trusting, I traipsed down to the tame tavern, only to get the distinct impression that I was talking to a brick wall! I may be a trifle simple, but the computer began to click over at last! I left quietly and went back up to the Westercon.

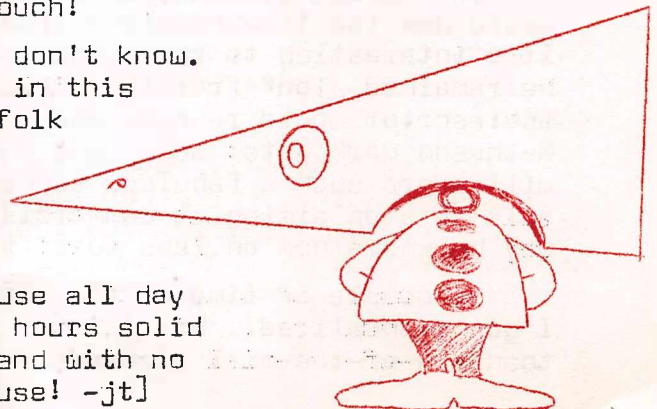
§[It should be pointed out that Al haLevy was suffering mightily from
§ a ferocious hang-over, and was just barely able to deliver his
§ speech at all, whereupon he joined the rest of us in the bar to get
§ a dose of hair of the dog! -jt]

This collection of experiences has at least two conclusions to consider. First, I am fascinated and a little irked by the spectacle of a "fan" who does as good a job as haLevy did on his speech, a job which must have involved a great deal of time and study, who shows such a total disinterest in discussing his magnum opus -- at least outside his own circle of intimates. It causes one to wonder if this was a Labor of Love, or perhaps a Term Paper, something originally designed to get Al Ahead in Life, and grudgingly delivered to our con. Or perhaps the Little Man is just shy!!!

The second conclusion, and one which has troubled others before me, is that some of the most-likely-to-be-interesting folk who attend a Con, particularly the pros, render themselves virtually unavailable to the fans by staying almost exclusively in the nearest bar for all or most of the Con. I am not just thinking of the younger fans, for whom this makes some of their favorite authors practically nonexistent, but of any ordinary fan who is not a Big Name in fandom. The average fan, wandering into the bar, who recognizes an Author and goes over for a "Hello" and a "I thought your last story was great" is lucky if he doesn't find himself none too politely frozen out, not only by the Great Man himself, but by the circle of friends gathered around him to catch up the Pearls of Wisdom and bask in Reflected Glory. This is not a tirade against Alcohol. Some of the drunkenest fans and pros are jolly fellows, and the joyous conviviality of the party up on floor 12 Saturday night was partly due to the sovereign power of a few shots of this or that to get things going. It is subtler than that. There is something about the atmosphere of a bar -- dim lights and limited seating facilities -- which brings out all the latent cliquishness in some folk, at the worst time! I suppose that back home our eminent guests are as friendly as the next fan, but put them in a fan-gathering and they flee to the dim recesses of the nearest pub like a scared kangaroo heading for Mama's pouch!

What can be done about this? I don't know. I suppose the Authors' Tea was a try in this direction. Sad to say, most of the folk we most wanted to kaffee-klatch with gave it the ultimate answer -- they merely stayed away!

§[I wish you'd been at ChiCon, Dave,
§ and seen how Heinlein held open house all day
§ after having been up for a good 48 hours solid
§ before even arriving at the con...and with no
§ sleep the night before the open house! -jt]



§[Onward! with good ol'...]§

HARRY WARNER, JR, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland

It may frighten you a bit, how SHAGGY maintains its own life and forces the club to sustain its continued existence. The situation brings joy and contentment to any number of readers all over the portions of the globe which have to date been blessed by the arrival of the message of fanac. And it continues a situation that may go back further than any of you modern fans realize. Just the other day I was leafing through the portion of Memiors of a Superfluous Fan that T B Yerke completed, and encountered some speculations that seem particularly relevent now. Yerke believed that the Los Angeles club changed from a group that existed a couple of hours weekly into a social body of people who got together on all possible occasions because it decided to publish a fanzine. That fanzine was IMAGINATION! and Tubby claims that the club altered character immediately. So maybe you people need SHAGGY as much as SHAGGY needs you; even if it no longer takes the combined muscles of almost all the membership to get an issue published as it did in the old days.

I feel just as Mervyn Barrett does about the pity of it all when good names get changed. One of my main interests, baseball, has suffered this way. When I was a boy, they still used inshoot and outshoot and drop. They were words that rolled off the tongue neatly, darted straight into the brain with vivid effect, and were instantly understandable even to the person infimiliar with baseball, at least until a southpaw got on the mound or a left-handed batter took his cuts. Now the less specific screwball and curveball and slider have taken their place. Then there was the span of six or so years in which I saw next to no football games, but listened to quite a few of them during radio broadcasts. When I finally resumed watching the action on the gridiron, I was sadly disappointed to see that this mysterious new off-tackle slant that I'd been hearing so much about was nothing but the linebuck of old and that the draw play was just a slight variation on the statue of liberty play.

I hope that you can persuade Ruth Berman to continue her column, particularly out of respect to the loss that we've suffered through the discontinuance of NEOLITHIC. She can say something more fully and finally in a small space than anyone else in fandom.

PSYCHO as a novel disappointed me, too. However, we must remember that Bloch has never been the fan's favorite for his fiction. His reputation in fandom has been built mostly on the strength of his non-fiction writing for fanzines, his enormous helpfulness to fans in such varied ways as toastmastering for conventions, conducting a column in a prozine, and giving struggling publishers material when he could use the time required to make money, and on his personality. It's interesting to think about the sort of fanzine play he'd get if he remained aloof from the field. I'd guess that a new novel or moviescript would receive about as much attention as a new Richard Matheson work gets: some, not much. I hope desperately that Bloch will score such a fabulous success with a novel soon that he'll be able to stop aiming at commercial success and begin writing the best way he knows how on less surefire topics.

A couple of times while reading Robert Moore Williams' article, I got scandalized. His science fiction has been only slightly better than run-of-the-mill hackism, and he goes on and on about creative

[Harry Warner, cont'd] imagination and the magic tricks that it can achieve. But most of his remarks coincide pretty well with my opinions, and I can forgive his failure to make the best use of the creative process in his own fiction, as long as he can write non-fiction as entertainingly as this

I still find it difficult to believe this TAFF progress report, since I not only nominated Ethel but also voted for her and my vote has killed dead more political careers than I dare to think about, not to mention some TAFF candidates' travelling plans.

§[But not this time, Harry! Ethel was here, and captivated everyone she met; we were pretty seriously thinking of shanghai-ing her, except that the breach in Anglo-American relations resulting would have been barely stopped short of war! -jt]

§[Speaking of overseas relationships....]§

WIM. STRUYCK, Willebrordusstr. 33 B, Rotterdam 11, Holland

I'm glad to see that you put a stop to the discussion: Gibson-Rogers. It was good that things were said about it, good things have been said about it, but now they have been said. Maybe my letter arrived too late, but I did write...about it to you and Gibson. What's more disappointing is the fact that I did not hear from Gibson anymore. Maybe there was an answer in his fanzine but he didn't send me any. If this is because I didn't agree with him, I'm disappointed.

The outstanding feature in this issue is Robert M Williams' "On Creativity". Well written (of course) and well thought through. Being an artist myself (however bad), I can follow his thoughts rather easily. There's one thing I don't agree with. I don't think what Mr Williams means is the same thing as what the Middle Ages theologians meant by Grace of God.

I have in my library the commented on Rebels of the Red Palnet, I haven't read it yet.... I can't say if it's good or bad space opera. Old as I am, I like good space opera. And why not? [It] very often agrees with my "sense of wonder". And if Fred Patten condemns a story because it's space opera (either good or bad), I don't agree with him. Maybe he didn't mean it that way, though. And no, I don't want Vargo Statten!

-oOo-

And that would take care of most of the letters for this time. JIM CAWTHORN (4 Wolseley St, Gateshead 8, Co. Durham, England) wrote, mentioning that he's missed several issues of both SHAGGY and GAUL, and adding, "Not that I'm blaming the GAUL or SHAGGY staffs for this; it just appears that your post office is out to kill the fanzine game." And we agree, pretty much. Jim also forwards LONDON in '65! ROBERT MOORE WILLIAMS writes to SHAGGY as an entity, and subbed. DAVE KEIL (38 Slocum Crescent, Forest Hills 75, N Y -- Hi, Don Wollheim) wrote a letter of comment on SHAGGY # 52, which he'd just received from SETH JOHNSON's Fmz Clearing House (plug!). Write again, Dave, as this letter showed promise and a lively interest.

Write! And address your letters to: 1825 Greenfield Avenue, L A 25, please; we've got enough mix-ups without SHAGGY LoCs going to several addresses.

-----john trimble-----

[A talk given to the attendees of Westercon XV, July 1st, 1962, Los Angeles, Cal]

the Mythological & Romantic Elements of Modern Fantasy

by Al haLevy



The purpose of this talk is to describe some relationships which exist between two earlier forms of literature, the myth and the romance, and a modern form, the "true" fantasy. By "true" fantasy, I mean fantasy which depicts a world other than ours, a world in which the laws of the universe as we know it

are contradicted, a world with magic, heroes, quests and the like. Examples of such works are Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings, Cabell's Biography of the Life of Manuel, and Eddison's Worm Ouroboros.

THE ROMANCE

The term romance was originally applied to works written in the Middle Ages in Latin, but since the predominant form of French literature in the Middle Ages pertained to stories of knights and their deeds, the term became narrowed and is now used to describe such stories.

Such romances consisted of long, very loosely constructed and connected stories in which the chief parts were played by knights or distressed ladies, acting more often under the impulses of love, religious faith, or mere desire for adventure. They were written for an aristocratic people of an age of Feudalism who had much leisure, and were interested in striking or colorful details. The chief interest of these people were in stories of marvels and of romantic or idealized love. In romance, the hero was a knight in armour who rescued ladies of distinct charm from less chivalrous knights, monsters, dragons, etc. There were many tender love scenes, and generally the endings were a happy one. Thus a classic story of the fifteenth century, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, told the story of a knight of the court of King Arthur who answered a challenge by the Green Knight, and then was required by his vows of chivalry to ride into what seemed sure death. The story was full of marvels (a knight on a horse, all in green, who, after his head was cut off, simply put it back on again), idealized love (Gawain's behavior in the bedroom of his host's wife is all but chaste), and many of the other characteristics which made up medieval romance.

Romances did not have an historical perspective. The general feeling I get from reading such stories is of a world which did not exist, or existed in no time, a world in which history as we know it had not occurred, and human beings were afflicted with none of modern man's ills. These stories have a remote and unattainable quality in them, with magic much in evidence.

The romance differed in many ways from the epic, i.e., the medieval literature exemplified by Beowulf or The Song of Roland. The lack of historical perspective seen in the romance was completely reversed in the earlier written epic which reflected an historic age, the Dark Ages. Thus the Icelandic Sagas, a form of epic, told the story of the settlement of Iceland, and the trials

and tribulations of the men who lived in Northern Europe in the 10th and 11th centuries. The setting of Beowulf is such that no reader can ignore the fact that Beowulf is a Geatman (Swede) who travels to Denmark; likewise Roland is in the court of Charlemagne, a man tied very closely to history.

The mystery and fantasy of the romance is also lacking in the epic, for the latter does not depend on magic and remoteness, but rather on solid story. The magic of the epic is not forced, and only reflects the beliefs of the people of the story, whereas the magic of the romance is necessary for the story.

Romance, being a type of literature written for the aristocratic chieftians of the Middle Ages, generally reflected their stereotypes, with the sharp focus on class distinctions. But in the epic little or no fixed social distinctions are found. Where romance was generally light-hearted, the epic, dealing as it was with history, was generally tragic and serious; things did not always turn out to have a happy ending in the epic. The more or less aimless adventure of the romance was also absent in the epic in which real people had real character and tried to carry out real deeds. Beowulf did not kill the monster Grendel because he wanted mere adventure, but because Hrothgar, King of the Danes, was in trouble and needed assistance. The unity of the epic also gave way to the rather episodic nature of the romance. Thus a typical romance of the twelfth century which recounted the deeds of the court of Arthur usually told the story of many knights, such as Gawain, Perceval and Lancelot, and these separate tales were mixed together in a single narrative although they had only marginal connections. The love interest of the romance was nowhere in evidence in the epic, which had little, if any, love story to tell. Finally, the romance was written in a very conscious and sophisticated narrative style in which the manner in which the poet told his story, rather than the story itself, became of paramount importance. In the epic, however, the characters speak for themselves, and the conscious style of the poet is usually absent.

The earlier epic was replaced by an almost fairy-tale style of literature, the romance. As we shall see below, the romance was in fact a fairy-tale form of literature.

THE MYTH

There have been many ideas about and definitions of myth and its functions. Robert Graves, for instance, considers that myth is an accidental or deliberate misrepresentation of sacred pictures or religious rites. On the other hand, many writers including Mary Renault (The King Must Die) believe myth simply tells an idealized version of history. Thus Hienrich Schliemann searched for Troy, believing that such a city existed because it was described in the Iliad. Without going into all these definitions, I think that they can be subsumed into three classes of definitions which really describe the evolution of thought on myth.

The original purpose of myth is religious, and is a story which accompanies religious rites (plays and pantomimes) whose performance has a serious functional purpose. The myth is the attempt to explain the action of the rite, and to translate it from the particular to the universal. It has what Gaster calls the "durative" aspect or quality, i.e., it is timeless, whereas the rite exists in the present (Thespis). Malinowski put it as follows: "Myths are told in order to preserve the meaningfulness and purposefulness or social cultures and institutions. They come into play when rite, ceremony, or a social or moral rule demands justification, warrant of antiquity, reality, or sanctity."

As religious rites were discontinued and new ones supplanted their place, the myth lost all identification with the rite, and existed alone primarily for entertainment or allegory. Thus in the Middle Ages, myths appear as folk-tales and fairy-tales. They were also used as a basis for romance, for much romance can be shown to have utilized myth.

True fairy-tales (as opposed to art or the invented fairy-tales of Anderson) are derived from myth and represent an attempt to clothe impressions of the universe (ideas, beliefs, customs, etc) in a romantic garb, and also represent a desire for a story. Fairy tales have an element of wishful thinking in them which myth does not have. The myth's sphere of influence is the real world.

The third and final class of definitions of myth is a symbolic one, and is found almost exclusively in modern literature. This subject does not concern me, and I do not want to discuss it further; however, several examples of this are alluded to below.

As examples of the evolution of myths, I first wish to deal with the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. As a religious myth, Eurydice had nothing to do with the story. Orpheus simply represented another form of Dionysos, the god who was resurrected each year, and the god of fertility. As such he represented the god who was born each year and died each year, the King who reigned for one year. Later, probably after the rite connected with Orpheus was abandoned, the story of Eurydice was added. In effect, the mantle of Dionysos descended upon Orpheus, as Dionysos is said to have brought his mother (Semele, the green earth) from below each year. Viewed in this way, the myth is very similar to that of Demeter and Persephone.

During the Middle Ages, the later-added love story was elaborated. It appears in medieval romance before the thirteenth century as a fairy-tale called Sir Orpheo (Lai d'Orpheu). A classical story was fused onto Celtic elements, i.e., fairy-land (it is interesting to note that fairies are originally derived from the idea of the spirits of the dead), and Eurydice does not die, but is carried off by fairies. The fourteenth century version of this story went even further; it was made into a very patriotic story. Sir Orfeo became a king in England, and Thrace, his home, was said to be located in Winchester.

In symbolic form, the myth has appeared in numerous examples of modern literature; the film Black Orpheus comes immediately to mind. Here the myth per se is relatively unimportant, and Orpheus and Eurydice are only symbols.

In a similar fashion, the story of Ulysses (as told in the Odyssey) probably existed as a myth (see Carpenter, Folk Tale, Fiction, and Saga in the Homeric Epics for a discussion of this), but this version is not extant; instead it is only found as the epic. Later it may have been transformed into a romance, though I am personally not acquainted with any romance dealing with Ulysses. Finally, in modern times, it was used first by Haggard as a basis for his fantasy-adventure The World's Desire; then used by Joyce as a symbol of a man in Dublin; and finally by Kazantzakis as a symbol for a man searching for psychological freedom (in The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel).

The Arthurian romances, the chief cycle of medieval romances, incorporate much that is derived from Celtic myth. For example, an excellent case has been made for the derivation of the grail from Celtic mythology (see Loomis, Arthurian Tradition and Chretien de Troyes), while the aforementioned Sir Gawain and the Green Knight can be traced partially back to a very much earlier Irish myth known as The Champion's Bargain which is found in The Book of the Dun Cow (see Kittredge, A Study of Gawain and the Green Knight). The

fairy material of the Arthurian romances is very extensive, and a number of books exist on this subject alone.

In modern literature, Arthur has been used symbolically (Charles Williams: Taliessin Through Logres and The Region of the Summer Stars), and also historically (Alfred Duggan: Conscience of the King; Edison Marshall: The Pagan King; Henry Treece: The Great Captains). T H White's The Once and Future King is essentially a recreation of a romance based almost entirely on Malory's Le Morte d'Arthur. However as "an outstanding authority on all aspects of medieval life," (quote from book jacket) White's interpretation is open to a great deal of question. For instance, White notes that Arthur slept with his half-sister (Modred was the result of this union), and says "...this pedigree is a vital part of the tragedy of King Arthur. It is why Sir Thomas Malory called his long book the Death of Arthur...It is the tragedy, the Aristotelian and comprehensive tragedy, of sin coming home to roost." This is sheer nonsense, as anyone who has read Malory can tell you. White also interjects his twentieth-century ideas into this story of a barbaric chieftan on the sixth century. The allegory of the ants as a communist society is one, and another is the statment that Arthur makes to his page before the last battle: "Put it like this. There was a king once, called King Arthur. That is me. When he came to the throne of England, he found that all the kings and barons were fighting against each other like madmen, and, as they could afford to fight in expensive suits of armour, there was practically nothing which could stop them from doing what they pleased. They did a lot of bad things, because they lived by force. Now this king had an idea, and the idea was that force ought to be used, if it were used at all, on behalf of justice, not on its own account..." Poul Anderson once told me that Malory had updated Arthur by some 800 years, but White updated Malory another 600 years.

RELATIONSHIP TO FANTASY

It should be obvious by now that there is an intimate relationship between the "true" fantasy, and the romance and fairy-tale. "True" fantasy is nothing more than recreations or rewritings of the earlier works!

This does not mean that modern fantasy contains no new elements, but basically the writing is in a very narrow field of literature which attempts to recreate the essence of medieval romance and fairy-tales. The purpose of the modern work is essentially the same as the romance and fairy-tale, to entertain, not to use as a vehicle for symbolism or propaganda. However, perfectly good fantasy can be written which is allegory, for much of romance and folk-tales were also allegorical in nature.

Recently, Anthony Boucher pointed out the "detective story and even more the psychological crime novel are -- like the western, the love story, the historical romance -- fixed forms, in which the creative challenge lies largely in seeing what the author can do within established boundaries." (RHODOMAGNETIC DIGEST, 22, 58) The early forms of literature discussed above also had established boundaries, and the modern "true" fantasy shares this also; thus fantasy differs from science fiction, for the latter had few boundaries.

Yet much can be done in fantasy which is highly original. A classic example is J R R Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings, a story which combines the best of the medieval romance, the fairy-tale, the saga, and other folklore. Here we are given a world in which the elements of the fairy-tale and romance are combined with a prodigious knowledge of the content of medieval literature. There is no moralizing here (this is why Edmund Wilson did not like the book) for the work has no other purpose than to entertain.

The essence of the romance and the fairy-tale, that of a world which is both unreal and unattainable, with the element of wishful thinking, comes through very strongly.

The same can be said for E R Eddison's The Worm Ouroboros, and Zimiamvian trilogy; for Lord Dunsany's fantasies; for James Cabell's great fantasies; and for Poul Anderson's Three Hearts and Three Lions. The latter story is an example of a type of fantasy which is somewhat unique. Here we have a story of a modern man who is projected back into a world of fairy. De Camp and Pratt, in their Harold Shea series of stories, also produced this type of fantasy. It is not pure fantasy, but a sort of ersatz type, for the entertainment here rests on the interplay between an unreal world and a real man.

Not all modern fantasy has this same quality of showing us a world which is unreal and unattainable, and yet meaningful to the reader. John Myers Myers' Silverlock, although it tries to present a world which is coherent, never quite makes it click, for Myers tries to utilize every character and event which romance, saga and myth provides, and to push them together in a reasonable story. But any story which attempts to reconcile Beowulf with Circe or Cuchulain cannot help but seem highly artificial; it may be fun to read, but it really owes little but names to the romance, myth or fairy-tale.

The same can be said for Robert E Howard's Conan stories. Take out small bits of magic and sorcery which occur in the stories, and you might just as well pick up a piece of adventure story written by Sabatini, Murdy, or even Haggard (much of Haggard is not fantasy at all, but plain adventure).

Finally, we have a type of fantasy which, although it is highly imitative, can be extremely good, possibly even the best of fantasy. This is the type based not on the romance and fairy-tale, but on the myth. It should be pointed out, however, that not all recreations of ancient myths are necessarily fantasy, for some authors have deliberately translated a piece of myth into historical fiction (see Graves: Hercules, My Shipmate; Treece: Jason). As examples of fantasy which simply retells a classic myth, the following are some excellent examples: Evangeline Walton: The Virgin and the Swine; Kenneth Morris: Book of the Three Dragons; James Stephens: Deidre, and In the Land of Youth; and C S Lewis: Till We Have Faces.

-oOo-

In summary, let me say that the purpose of this talk has been two-fold: (1) to indicate to you that modern fantasy owes much to a number of earlier forms of literature, and (2) to suggest that a reading of the earlier romances, sagas, fairy-tales and myths may well satisfy a hunger for more "true" fantasy which simply does not exist. I know that it has done so for me.

#

---al halevy---

DIALOGUES AT SUNSET - VI

Ron: "You people are maniacs!"

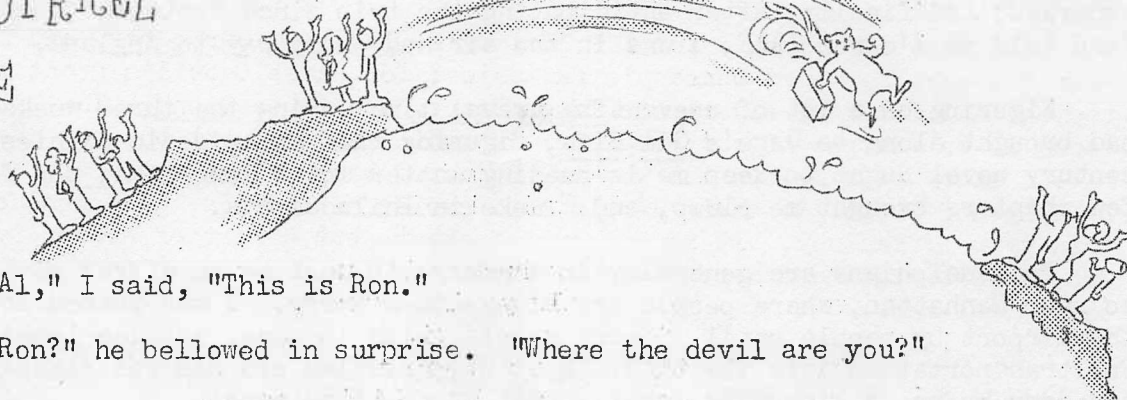
Bjo: "What?"

Ron: "The way you drive!"

John: "Huh?"

Ron: "You left a few minutes before I did, and you arrived a few minutes before I did, and I drive like a maniac!"

SQUIRREL GAGE



"Al," I said, "This is Ron."

"Ron?" he bellowed in surprise. "Where the devil are you?"

"Down at International Airport. Can you come down and get me?"

"Sure," he said, "But how come you're there now? We aren't expecting you until three a.m.!"

"Well, in the first place, I got tangled up in the London subway system, so I missed my plane. And then I had a stop-over in New York, where I picked up an earlier plane that was late. And here I am in Los Angeles."

There was dead silence for a minute on the other end. Then he said he'd be down as soon as possible.

Half an hour later, just as I'd reclaimed my luggage, a Volkswagen and a Peugeot, both bursting with fans, pulled up in front of the TWA terminal at L.A. International, and out piled John and Bjo Trimble, Steve Tolliver, Al Lewis, Bruce Pelz and Jack Harness, full of questions about England and news from Ella Parker and Eddie Jones about my wild adventures transmarine.

We got back to 1825 Greenfield, and I started unloading my luggage. They gasped at the beautiful artwork sent by Ted Carnell to the Chicon, and again when they found that one of the paintings was mine--his gift to me. And while they were looking over pictures, books, fanzines, British money and other souvenirs of the trip, they kept insisting to hear how I had gotten home three hours early by taking the subway. So I told them the story of my travels as TAFF representative to the 1962 British Convention in Harrogate, and it turned out to be a long story.

-oOo-

Three weeks earlier, Bjo, Al, Eleanor Turner and Steve Tolliver had seen me off at the same terminal. My tickets had been bought months earlier, and I had told everyone of my travel plans--a weekend in Philadelphia and New York, and then the bulk of the trip in England and North Ireland. But it wasn't until we got to the boarding gate that Bjo looked at the flight destination and really believed me.

"You're not going to England at all!!" she accused. "You're going to spend the whole time in Philadelphia with Peggy Rae McKnight and make up a phony TAFF report!" I sighed, reminded her I'd told her a long time before that I was going to Philly first, kissed her good-bye and whispered, "You're right--but don't tell anybody."

I boarded the plane, my crew of bon-voyagers left the airport, and as always TWA announced that there would be an hour delay before take-off; so I wandered around the nearly-deserted Terminal building alone until we re-embarked; and finally, after anticipating the trip since September when Don Ford told me I'd won TAFF, I was in the air and on my way to England.

Figuring on a lot of uneventful travel time during the three weeks, I had brought along Le Sage's Gil Blas, figuring that an episodic eighteenth century novel ought to keep me in reading matter for a long time; the first few chapters brought me sleep, and I woke in Philadelphia.

Philadelphians are generally in a hurry; it must be an effect of living so near Manhattan, where people are always in a hurry. I was rushed about the airport by people until I found myself, with luggage, outside looking for transportation into the city. A stout, grizzled old man was stamping up and down before a limousine, wherein sat three timid people.

"\$1.35 to Philadelphia," he spat at me. "If you don't like it, you can take a cab for \$3.50."

Starting, I realized that staring at him wouldn't get me any nearer town, so I paid him and loaded my suitcase and self aboard. I tried to get a shot of him, because he was a fascinating caricature of a man with a hideous scowl spread over his broad, heavy features, and a great black cigar-- but unfortunately this was the first time I'd tried to set up Al's camera for a real shot, and by the time I'd remembered how to arrange filter, speed, focal length and aperture, he had scared three other people into the limousine was was getting in himself. He should have been by Dickens.

When my Barkis deposited me in the center of Philadelphia, I made my way to the McKnight apartment, where I got a very funny greeting. Peggy Rae had spent the night there so I wouldn't have to go straight out to the farm, and about two hours earlier she'd gotten a telegram. Telegrams are always bad news, but this one said,

SHAGGY WANTS YOUR TAFF REPORT STOP UNICORN PRODUCTIONS WILL BUY ALL FILM RIGHTS STOP TELL HIM TO GET RID OF THAT UGLY TIE STOP JOHN BJO AL STEVE ELLIE

She showed that telegram to everybody we saw that weekend, including her parents, Terry Carr, Pat and Dick Lupoff, and the Shaws. But besides that, it was an enjoyable weekend. We spent Saturday in Philly baby-sitting her nephew David, and went out to the family farm in Lansdale that night. Sunday, Buddie McKnight made her table groan gently under a burden of oriental food for dinner, and in the early afternoon Peg and I took a bus to New York.

She stayed Sunday night with Larry and Noreen Shaw on Staten Island, and I went back to Manhattan where I was guest of Dick and Pat Lupoff. The Lupoffs and Snoopy (their decadent dog) and I stayed up talking most of the night, and Dick convinced me to take a dozen copies of XERO to England for him, saving several shillings in postage.



In the morning I actually got Al Lewis' camera working, and took some shots of Pat and Dick. After Dick went to work, I walked up Second Avenue to the high Eighties, and back down Third to their home, looking for (1) book stores (2) something photographable (3) a tobacconist's. The third was easy--but the first two completely threw me. I don't think people in the Eighties read, and I'm sure they lack any idea of exterior decoration.

About ten, Peggy Rae came over from the Shaws' and we went down to Greenwich Village to visit T. Carr, one-time co-editor of a great fanzine.

Terry is now a filthy pro, living in a comfortable flat on Jane Street in the Village. He's grown a beard once more, is selling science-fiction and working on serious fiction, seems remarkably happy with his current lot and was glad to see us. Carol, Terry, Peg and I ate lunch before Carol had to go back to work, then the three of us took a subway up to Times Square and walked back down to Washington Square.

A long walk through a strange city is a great way to carry on a conversation. Terry had lived in New York less than a year by then, Peg had never been there any length of time, and I had visited it only twice; so we walked for hours by the Empire State Building, Soldier's Memorial, Herald Square, and while we walked I ran through a roll of film and we talked about nothing of any consequence. Eventually we wound back to Terry's door.

Rush-hour traffic on the subways getting back to the Lupoffs' was pretty exciting--it left Peggy and me exhausted, and more than ready to tear into the Good-Bye Ron Ellick dinner Pat had prepared. Dick brought out enough beef to fill twice as many people, and began carving great steaks from it--one serving quelled all appetite either of the ladies could muster. He and I took care of more of it--and there was lots left. I think my reputation as a member of Food Fandom has grown since I was in high school, because Pat and Dick had obviously expected me to inhale all the food they could burden their table with. Those are two of the finest hosts in fandom.

Finally I had to break away from their hospitality, say good-bye to the last American fans I was to see until I met Ajax Hoch in Harrogate, and head for the BOAC Terminal at Idlewild.

-oOo-

In reflecting on my first overseas trip, I think less of the actual airport happenings than I do of the preparations. When fans are preparing to go to London for the 1965 World SF Convention, they should know some of the things I learned and have some of the help others gave me.

Late in 1961, Don Ford sent me a copy of TATF BAEDER, his account of his 1960 travels to England, with the sound advice that I read of his preparations for travel. Such things as trousers might never have occurred to me as a problem--but he had taken wool slacks, and found that extended walks in them wore the hair off his legs. I accordingly took clothes suited to long walking, sitting, and fanning. (I think that last is general enough to cover anything excluded by walking and sitting that you'd do in your clothes.)

But his most valuable advice to the travelling conventioneer was about American Express. The AmExp people, he said, are in business solely to make your foreign travel arrangements as you want them made, and to ensure that you don't make plans which will get hopelessly complicated or crowded when you get overseas; and you know what? He was absolutely right.

In February I went to AmExp and threw myself on their mercies. They asked me where I planned to go and how I wanted to get there, and worked out an extremely convenient travelogue at the lowest cost possible. And when I asked about the English tour of the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, they even went out of their way to get me a schedule of the tour...but that, unfortunately, proved beyond them or anyone, and I saw the Company for the first time months later on their American tour.

In short, however, when I arrived at Idlewild, my vaccination and passport papers were in perfect order, and I boarded the 707 Astrojet with no difficulty. To my distress, they served us a complete meal on that flight--I was so full from the steak dinner at the Lupoffs' that I couldn't eat a thing until morning, and had to refuse the free meal.

Gil Blas of Santillane occupied me until the wee small hours, and I dozed off dreaming of escapades in a Spain that existed solely in Le Sage's imagination, wondering how much of the style was auctorial and how much due to Smollett's translation. I woke over London, with hardly a cloud between me and the earth--the dawn of a beautiful spring day.

BOAC had no convenient connection to Manchester, so American Express had transferred me to BEA. I fell asleep in a Douglas jet late on a bright London morning, and woke in haze and rain early on a miserable Manchester afternoon, with Eric Bentcliffe waiting for me in a huge overcoat at the baggage claim area,



No problem in recognition here--we had met just nineteen months earlier at the Pittsburgh convention, and recognized each other the minute I stepped through the door. After getting my luggage and horsing around taking pictures of each other (a peculiar old British custom originated by Dave Kyle), we took me for my first ride on a double-decker bus.

Everywhere I looked, things were just slightly different. The roads were narrower, the hills lower, the people a bit smaller than in America. In London airport I had drawn amused smiles from an elderly couple by staring at the change I received from a ten-shilling note...I knew what those funny coins were, but I had never seen them before. This feeling of freshness lasted throughout my visit--I always felt right at home, after a brief flash of newness. Once Eric explained the system of fares, I could hop on and off busses, cabs and trams with ease--but the first time a conductor asked for "two sixes," I would surely have given him two-and-six had not Eric paid the fair--with a shilling.

It works this way: You say where you're going, and the conductor (who is not the driver) tells you the fare, from his memorized schedule. "Two sixes" means he wants two six-penny fares, or twelve pence, or a shilling. "Two-and-six," which is what I thought he meant, means two shillings and six pence, or thirty pence.

The correct fare was 14¢ US; I would have paid 34¢.

In two transfers we got from Ringway International Airport through the city of Stockport and out to the part of Stockport where Eric and his mother have lived for years, called Great Moor.

Eric, of long-standing reputation in British fandom as a bachelor, had been recently benedight, and his newly-minted bride Beryl and he were still staying at Alldis Street with the warm and wonderful middle-aged Mrs. Bentcliffe and the Corgi bitch, Flossie. For two days I was an extra mouth and bed, and much more trouble than I had expected to be because of an attack of biliousness which left my supper on their stair-well; but through all this, the crowded Bentcliffe household never seemed disturbed by the noisy, hungry American visitor.

I got off to a good start with the Bentcliffes right away. When Eric and I walked into the house, Flossie ran to meet us and sniff Manhattan and London on my shoes; I'm a rebel fan in that I prefer dogs to cats, so she and I were getting along pretty well until I asked Eric, "What kind of dog is she? She looks like she's dachshund and toy shepherd."

Flossie drew back from me haughtily, and Eric said sadly, "She's a full-bred Corgi. We have papers." I explained that I had never seen a Corgi before, and he assured me it was quite all right. Floss stayed a distance from me for a while, though, and I think she never forgave me.

Mrs. Bentcliffe, Eric's mother, began the moment I entered her kitchen to try to stuff me with food until I burst. It was three in the afternoon, but she put on a rasher of bacon and some eggs, and watched eagerly while I put them down with some toast and jam and milk for company. She worried constantly that the strain of travel to strange countries would upset my eating, and, except while I recovered from my mal-de-air, she made absolutely sure I was stuffed all the time.

Beryl came home from work in the late afternoon, and we got along fine right off--we had both just been vaccinated for smallpox, and mine hadn't taken. I've been vaccinated many times since infancy, and it never takes; but the disease has ravaged England recently and first-time immunizations were quite common, and Beryl was not immune. During my stay she fought day and night to keep from scratching the red area around her shoulder--more to show me she had the will-power than because Eric and I convinced her to leave it alone. She's a smiling, slim girl with terrific endurance under teasing--and fortunately the effect of the vaccine had worn off by the time she got to the con.

That evening the four of us, with Flossie sitting much too close to the fire, sat down to play Rummy. Eric had taught the ladies the game, and to keep from losing he kept inventing new rules. He was dismayed when he tried to teach me the game...it seems I already knew it...and he had to stick to Hoyle. After a couple of hours Mrs. Bentcliffe and I had each won thruppence, and Eric's natural good humor was becoming a little strained. Beryl thought the whole thing was delightful.

My sickness that night, I'm certain in reflection, was due to the reading on an extended jet flight, combined with excitement of travel. The next day I lay abed until the afternoon--try as I might, I hadn't the strength to rise until nearly four. I got down some tea and bread, and Eric and I sat in the front room before a warm fire, with Floss almost in the coals, showing each other slides and talking TAFF business.

I had become US TAFF Administrator since winning the election, by agreement with Don Ford, whose personal life had required too much of his time for him to continue to handle the Fund. That afternoon, Eric and I talked about plans for TAFF's future, with an eye toward scheduling the next few trips and encouraging people to stand for election.

We agreed on two definite points at the beginning, and from them we formulated the calendar which we hope will guide TAFF until 1965. First, there is too little enthusiasm and too little time to plan for an American to go to the 1963 British convention (which would be, we thought, in London--little could we prophesy!); second, while TAFF is decidedly a non-partisan organization in all things fannish, we both wanted to see another London WorldCon, and agreed to help this cause as much as we thought consonant with our rather public office.

The result was almost no change at all in the policy of TAFF. There has been an average of one trip per year, lately--two one year, none the next. So we agreed to have no trip in 1963, and two in 1964--an American to the 64 British convention, and a return trip to the World SF Convention in the fall, which will be on the west coast. The next step was easy--we blithely assumed that the 1964 East-West traveller would bid for and receive the 1965 convention for London, and we have scheduled the next trip for fall of 1965 from America to London, via the (hypothetical) charter plane, just as Bob Madle went to the 1957 LonCon on the charter plane, with TAFF buying his ticket.

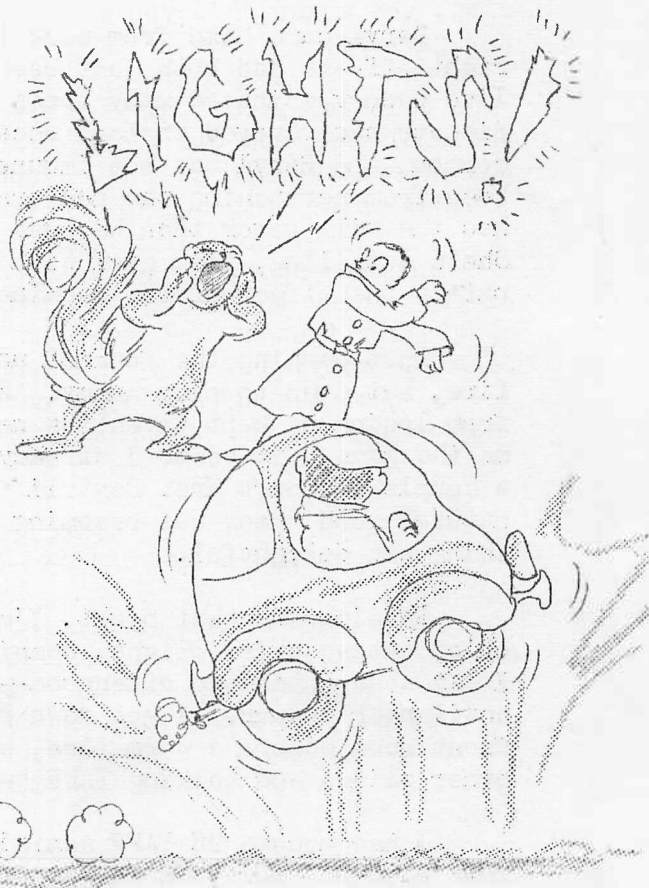
Farther than that, of course, we didn't even try to plan. Each pair of Administrators makes their own rules, and we were only formulating guides for the future. Ethel Lindsay and I may change what Eric and I set up--and Ethel and the next American Administrator may change that.

That night Eric, Beryl, Mrs. Betncliffe and I played more Rummy, and I lost tuppence. I watched British television ("telly") and tried to convince Mrs. Bentcliffe I was completely recovered, even if I didn't want two suppers.

That was to be my last night there, so Eric took me to a telephone booth to call Norman Shorrocks and make arrangements for me to go to Liverpool next day. On the way, walking the streets of Great Moor at night, I spied a car driving with its parking lights on. I didn't think--I never do think--but I yelled "LIGHTS!" at the driver, to tell him to turn them on full.

Eric looked at me in wild surprise. "What did you yell?" he asked. When he started to laugh at my explanation, I was surprised--until he told me the car had had full city lights on--higher lights would only be used in the country, where roads aren't illuminated. I doubt I could drive with only street lamps and parking lights--but I never was offered the right-hand wheel of a British car, and wouldn't have taken it if offered, so I never found out.

And it's only a myth that my shout made the driver swerve off the road and wrap himself around a lamppost.



The next morning I rose after Eric and Beryl had gone off to work, and talked with Mrs. Bentcliffe until time to leave for Manchester. We had many amusing differences in dialect and outlook which had come up during the two days, and one will always come to mind when I think of her cheerful Cheshire attitudes.

One morning or afternoon when Eric had been out, I was scratching Flossie's ears and Mrs. Bentcliffe was sewing. "'D you like a wee drink?" she asked, looking up brightly over her work.

"Why, thank you," I said, "I'll just have some water. And as I walked over to the tap with my cup she looked up, and set down her sewing.

"Sure you don't mean to drink it cool?" she asked, and I stopped with the drink half to my lips, realizing that I hadn't been offered one cold drink while there.

"I -- I like cold water," I said, apologetically, and at once she was afraid she'd hurt my feelings; it seems that this pleasant, hard-working North Country woman has never in her life taken a drink of anything cold, and my strange tastes had quite startled her. We laughed about different customs, and she explained that she partially accounted for her good health with her liking for drinks warm.

During that morning when I was about to leave, she went to the sink to get some hot water, and turned the tap; while waiting for the hot water to flow, she asked, "'D you have geysers in America?" She pronounced it geezers, not guyzers.

I looked up. "Oh, yes," I said, and began telling her about Yellowstone National Park and Old Faithful, and was brought up short when she pointed to the hot-water unit over her sink. "Nay," she said, "I mean like that, as we get hot water onto our dishes and things."

And you know, I didn't understand what she meant. It seemed such a matter-of-fact thing to her to have water heated by a geyser that I just nodded dumbly. I actually thought she meant her dish-water came by way of a natural hot-spring near the city, and it wasn't until the last night of the convention, four days later, that through the kind contrivance of Ron Bennett I was thoroughly initiated into the truth of geysers.

-oOo-

That morning I was let to myself on the British transportation system for the first of many times. Eric had given me thorough directions to Liverpool, via diesel from Manchester. My eyes were open all the way--the English architecture does not change, so much as it takes on strange flares. Buildings are usually wall-to-wall with their neighbors (as in residential San Francisco), and dusty grey in color--frequent churches, public buildings, theatres and parks, with their sudden rush of open space, continually caught my eye. The moving vehicles and my own fickle attention, however, kept me from photographing anything. Too, billboard advertisements drew my gaze--they are radically different from open-air advertising in the States...and I find myself at a loss to describe the difference.

I found Piccadilly Circus in Manchester dissatisfying--it covers more ground, I saw two weeks later, than the area of the same name in London, but I was there on a weekday morning and saw nothing to match the bustle of London's amusement center. Eric had forewarned me, the previous day, and I used it as it was meant--to change busses, for a tuppenny ride to one of Manchester's two railway stations.

Both stations are run by British Railways--i.e., the government. It wasn't until I visited Terry Jeeves in Sheffield that the system was explained to me in detail. All during my travels in the United Kingdom I saw with wonder and a touch of horror multiple railway lines crossing and crossing again, and wound my way through a labyrinth of multiple stations, with all England playing my Ariadne as I asked questions of each passerby and every policeman or public transport official I could catch.

The problem all began when Eric tried to tell me how to get to Liverpool. "Take such-a-bus to Piccadilly in Manchester," he explained, "and from there go to the Central or the Exchange, and take a train to Liverpool."

"What are the Central and the Exchange?" I wanted to know--and he told me that both were railway stations, both were run by Her Majesty's government, and both ran frequent trains to Liverpool. I accepted this as slightly silly and perhaps a foible of the Bloody Provincials, and a week later Jeeves explained that all England is so connected, for the train system sprang from many independent transport companies, each of which established its own lines and own stations--only to be absorbed later into royal rolling stock...leaving still the separate lines and separate stations.

In this way, it has become common for a traveller to find himself traveling much more than necessary in having to change stations at intermediate cities. I found myself thinking the system more than silly--and comparing this form of royal non-competetivism with the U.S. system which struggled with greater distances during the last century and came up with the western part of the country--from Chicago to the Pacific Ocean--linked by well-planned lines. We were, of course, not hindered by a complexity of land-holders; where the British couldn't cross someone's ancestral manor, the American government gave large land-grants to railroaders from public holdings.

It was Eastertide while I was in England, and everywhere the trains were crowded by schoolgirls looking like alumnae of St. Trinian's; a little old, perhaps--the average around fourteen years, I should say--but all very innocent looking, as if they had just set fire to the rector. The scenery by train from Manchester to the sea is amazingly uninteresting--I used the time to change film, clean camera, filter and spectacles, and read a bit more Blas. A good book, that--you can pick it up with only a hazy recollection of what has gone before and continue with zest. I feel sure it could be read quite at random, and fifty pages would yield three interesting adventures of barratry, kidnap or romance, all thoroughly self-contained.

-oOo-

Norman Shorrocks was easy to spot in a crowd--he stands tall, looks like he has a cosmic mind, and carries himself with the dignity appropriate to a Grand Master (L) of the Order of St. Fantony. Besides, I'd seen a picture of him at Eric's, and I easily recognized the black hair and the sleepy but amused glint in his eyes.



It was just before eleven on Holy Thursday, and Norman walked me through the streets of the city to his office, explaining that I must get about on my own while he cleaned up last-minute business prior to closing for Easter.

"Do you fancy you can get about in a strange city without getting lost?" he asked, looking at me sharply.

"Colleague," I said, drawing up to my full height and trying to look confident in that tangle of a shipping town, "I hitch-hiked three thousand miles at the age of seventeen to a metropolis I had never seen, spent five days there and went home. No road map." He seemed to like this.

We stopped by John Roles' bookshop--he wasn't in--and went on. On this walk, we saw a particularly imposing statue of Britannia atop a civic building, and I paused to photograph it. Norman asked a question about my exposure reading, and we compared views on how best to shoot an object against the sky. He finally talked me into taking two frames with different exposures--later, they were very interesting to compare--and he closed his argument by saying that he uses a fixed-lighting moving-picture camera most of the time.

"Oh," I said, "I'm quite willing to listen to opinions from anyone; I'm just using Al Lewis' camera--I'm not a photo bug, you know." At this his mouth dropped open.

"You know," he said, "I was quite impressed by your flinging ASA's and focal lengths about like that. You'd convince anyone you are a camera bug, of the most thorough-going type."

And so we wound up at his office building. "That window on the second floor is mine," he explained, "and we'll see you here at 1:30 sharp, to go across the water to Wirral."

And so I wandered for close to two hours through the dirty, complex, and very busy city. I went down to the wharf area to capture the Liver Bird in my camera--and found, later, that the distance had been too great. Several of the shots of Liverpool did come out well, though--and through using the camera in no haste and with no worry about expense through the kind offices of Don Anderson, who had donated great amounts of film to TAFF, I learned a considerable amount about photography that day.

Near the waterfront is the commercial area, and the side-streets are dotted with bookstalls. Through two or three of these I wandered aimlessly, finding one interesting book--and finally I discovered a place that could keep me entertained for days...maybe months. It was a high-ceilinged, narrow-but-deep shop, crammed with books.

Suddenly, through the dust of ancient tomes in which I was burrowed, I heard a church bell ring once.

Sure enough, it was 1:30--and Norman was waiting at his office to eat lunch with me--and I had no idea where I was.

I paid for my books and asked that they be wrapped so I could manage with them--the proprietress called it a "wee bundle"--and thanked the lady for her help in looking for some books I had asked about.

"Don't give up," she said, "We get new books in all the time." (Where do they put them? I asked in blank amazement of my spatially-conscious inner self.) "Come back in a few days or a couple of weeks, and maybe we'll have the book you're looking for."

"Oh, I couldn't," I said. "I'm leaving Liverpool tomorrow--probably won't ever return."

She peered hard at me. "But you come in often. You've been in before."

"No," I laughed, "you must be thinking of two other people. I've never been in the city before today--why, I've never been in the country before this week. I'm from California!" I shouted over my shoulder, making for the door while she stared unbelievably after me.

It was a clear, warm day on the first diazomaic hills above the center of Liverpool, along which I walked for elevation to look down on the city. Finally I spotted her--Britannia, riding proudly on a large whistone building in the center of town, and I headed right for her, triangulating, as I approached, with a large monument to Victoria which I had photographed earlier. And, as I turned a corner, expecting to be a block from Norman's, I found myself lost again. I looked around in despair, and a mile away was a second Britannia, flaunting her trident at me as if in jest that I had followed her imitation up wrong streets. I turned on my false friend, and headed immediately to the waterfront, where a policeman directed me to Water Street, and I arrived at the Liverpool Stamp and Coin Company twenty minutes late.

"Eddie Jones just left," Norman announced, and I looked properly shamed after my boasts. "But you'll meet him tonight at club," he continued, and we talked about my adventures in Liverpool while we walked--without getting lost--to a restaurant called the Alligator. It was my first Meal Out in England--but not my last by a bit--and not so radically different from Yankee food as I had expected. It was chicken-in-wine, muchly enjoyed, at a price so low I raised my eyebrows most impolitely.

After, we took a ferry across the water to Wirral, in Higher Bebington, where I met the second of my British hostesses, Ina Shorrocks, and the Shorrocks family, of whom the eldest is Janet, nearly a fan in her own right, and the other three Linda, Roy and Alan...Alan was still in arms. Ina seems not at all unhappy with her lot as part of a focal point of fandom, and though I was there only one night she made quietly sure that I felt to be one of the family. In the early evening, before Jeff Collins showed up to take Norman and me to the Liverpool Group meeting, she spread her table with sausages, bacon, vegetables, hot muffins and assorted fringe-items, and called it a snack to keep us a while; I stowed as much as I could in keeping with my policy of appreciating food while a guest, and wondered if the appetite of Tolkien's hobbits was not taken from knowledge of Cheshire folk.

Collins is a burly, brown-haired artist with an interest in some fans but not in science-fiction or fandom. He came by about 7:30 to pick us up--but we drove in the Shorrock car, a fine old black automobile with a chauffeur section and running-boards--an Austin, vintage 1936. It may have looked odd to see an unliveried, bushy-bearded chauffeur in such a car--or odder still to see his passengers leaning against the partition, talking to him, instead of reclining back with the glass closing him off--but that's how we proceeded through the underwater tunnel back to Liverpool that evening, and Collins went off to tend to some business while Norman and I went up an endless flight of stairs to the fourth-floor pair of rooms occupied solely by the Liverpool Group.

Eddie Jones, who looks like the Shepard pictures of the Mole from Wind in the Willows, was bartending, and handed me a drink, saying "How 'bout a vote for me for TAFF, mate?" It's a fine mustache he has, and well kept--but it's a good thing Ethel won TAFF, because Jones would have taken every US fan's money at poker dice before his trip was up.

Among the Liverpoolians present were Stan Nuttall, Joe Navin, John Nash, John Roles, and a chap name of John Campbell...a Monster fan. He reads Famous Monsters of Filmland, and he sees every horror and monster movie he can; he's in his late teens, and very red hot about horror movies. Roles is a quiet, booky sort who carries a conversation remarkably well if you slow down to listen; we talked about Tolkien for quite a while, calmly finding out in each other the same sort of interest in the Ring trilogy, and tracing almost the same pattern of discovery of the books. To carry further the simile of the Mole and Eddie Jones, I should say that John reminded me of Disney's interpretation of Ratty...tall, with long, narrow moustachios, and a quiet mien.

Before the meeting started, I was shown around the two-room clubhouse. On the ceiling is the longest interlineation in the world; an entire wall is devoted to signatures of visiting dignitaries; another wall is menage-decorated with Jones art, newspaper clippings, Bonestell prints, and anything else the Group could get their hands on. And they have a record player.

I had told Norman that the Good Show, with all the music and crazy humor is played frequently on privately-subscribed radio stations on the west coast, and that from exposure I had become a Goon fan; he accordingly told the Liverpoolians, and they wound up the record player.

Yes. They wound it up.

"How do you like your Goon records?" asked Eddie. "Loud or soft?"

"Oh, loud," I said. "I don't hear very well in British."

"Fine," he said, "I'll turn up the volume." And so saying, he demonstratively leaned over and opened the doors on the front of the cabinet. The ancient victrola spun into action, and for the first time I heard a half dozen 78's recorded by the Goons; devastating folk ballads, heart-rending love songs (such as "I'm walking backward for Christmas/To prove that I love you") and many other old familiar tunes, all out of key and just as -- well, I think "uninhibited" would not be too strong a term -- just as uninhibited as the regular radio shows. And played on a mechanical record player.

Eventually the group and I went into the smaller room for the LiG formal meeting, with Norman Shorrock directing and Stan Nuttall as secretary.

The business of the meeting was swiftly disposed of--as it was convention time, attendance was very small and business was smaller. Then they turned on me, elected me an honorary member of the Group, and opened a bottle of Ackerman wine purchased especially for the occasion. Honorary membership, it seems, was the least expensive honor they could bestow--it would cost me only fifty pounds annually, payable at my convenience to Nuttall, plus a skimpy ten bob for each meeting attended.

They were allowing me to buy the Ackerman wine for only thirty pounds. A right sociable crew, the Liverpudlians.

After the meeting, Norman, Eddie, Stan Nuttall and I went to a night club. Eighteen months earlier, Parliament had legalized slot machines throughout the country, and night clubs had taken on a new life. Jeff Collins was interior decorator to this particular club, and Norman held a key. The interior was dark and moody, with a glass-brick dancing floor, small tables, and a torch singer-and-combo at one end. Very Hollywood--but they served good stout and filling hamburgers. And it was fun playing slot machines with sixpences instead of dimes--it doesn't cost nearly as much.

After the pre-meeting drink, the Ackerman wine, and at least two stouts under my belt, Norman and I steered each other back to the ferry boat...running the last ten yards to follow an old British tradition invented by Dave Kyle. We talked about A. E. van Vogt all the way across the water and up to #2 Arnot Way, and at some late hour we found our way to our couches. I knew nothing until late the next morning.

-oOo-

Long after the sun, I rose, struggling off my back to take a cup of unbelievably black coffee from my host, who was wondering how I would fare that morning. He had heard somewhere that I don't drink. After my rest in Manchester, the night out had been a good way to shake me into convention condition, and before I could relax out of condition we were packed into the Austin (which Jeff had kept the night) and down to the train station where I had met Norman.

The Liverpool Group had a new method of travelling to conventions--they had hired a Minibus (the Rootes version of the Microbus), and a driver. Norman, Ina, Janet and Alan Shorrocks, Eddie Jones, Roles, Weedall, Nash, Navin, yours truly and several long tons of luggage were all loaded up, and off we went over the rolling English countryside for three hours--up and down knolls on the Great Harrogate High Road, a narrow country lane. Two simultaneous poker dice games were going in the van, and I must say I have seldom enjoyed a con trip so much. It only cost me six shillings to learn to play poker dice, and as they would not accept money from me to pay my share of the trip, I count it the most enjoyable, least expensive, and quickest trip across country I've ever taken. We arrived in Harrogate at the West Park Hotel just past noon on Good Friday, and the convention was already in swing.

Next Issue:

The 1962 British National Convention--continuing Ron Ellik's report.

EDITORIAL (cont'd from page 5)

Should groups be given an award as such, or should they be eligible instead (or, as has been suggested, in addition) to compete for "Most Beautiful," "Most Humorous," etc. against the individual costumes? Should an individual costume which is a part of the group be allowed to compete for one of the other prizes in addition, or should a costume which enters as a part of a group be judged simply as a component and the group judged on its group effect? Should a combination of these ideas, letting a group costume compete as a single at the option of the wearer be permitted?

What about an "Open" prize? When categories are fixed, there is the likelihood of a truly notable costume placing second in a particular category to an even better one, while a markedly second-rate costume cops a first in its own group. Stu Hoffman, at the Solacon, had what is my favorite of all of his masks that I have seen--from Vance's "The Miracle Workers." However, he lost out to Karen Anderson's best-ever Vampire Bat. An open award would permit the recognition of a costume such as this. Of course it can also be argued that Stu lost out to honest competition. Also a valid point. Still, the Open Award or Judge's Choice or whatever name one wishes to give it has worked out quite well at the Art Show these last two years.

Alternatively, one might simply let the judges invent the categories after they see the costumes. This was tried at Detroit, but because of an obvious personal prejudice on the part of one of the judges was not given a fair chance, and was abandoned the next year. Both the Seacon and Chicon decided on certain categories and announced them well ahead of time. This has worked within reason, but an Open Award would give the judges a bit of leeway in taking into account factors which could not be known until the costumes actually appeared on the floor.

Here, presentation becomes important. Many costumes depend for their effect on knowledge of what they represent. One of the most delightful I remember was at a LASFS Halloween party one year where Larry Gurney fiddled with a pair of ping-pong balls all evening until the time came to announce his costume as "The Ghost of Captain Queeg." This is the point at which the audience should also get a chance at a good look at every costume. The lack of adequate presentation was the most serious shortcoming of both the Seacon and Chicon balls--and the latter had such an overcrowded dance floor that most costumes could hardly be seen. Now it would seem that a minimum requirement would be sufficient room for display, a chance for the costumes to come past an announcer who would indicate the title of the costume and then past the judges, with sufficient interval between costumes for close inspection of each. And it doesn't really matter if this takes a little while. Costumes are, after all, to show off.

One personal bit of consideration here: a special stage should be set up for photographers at one end of the room, with studio-type floods installed so that the 8mm movie hounds may get their light-bars out of everyone's way, and so that others present may have a proper chance to get good costume pictures. And any costume parade should end by delivering the contestants to the mercies of the photographers. To set up such a scene properly depends primarily on having someone in the local group with sufficient savvy and equipment to do the job--lights and such can't be hauled across country. One thing I will promise as a point of personal gratification is that if Los Angeles lands the convention in 1964 we will have such a facility.

There are other questions too: Do we need both humorous and fannish categories, authentic fantasy and authentic science fiction--do we need any fantasy-s-f distinction at all? Most original? A grand prize, and if so, how do we choose it?

This is sort of a semi-official request for opinions, and rest assured that any letters of comment, whether they make the SHAGGY letter column or not, will receive the consideration of the Discon Committee and the Costume judges.

--Al Lewis

Ladies and gentlemen: As I took charge of the Shangri-L'Affaires mailing list last issue, I am having trouble distinguishing among persons on the list for different reasons. Bear with me, and

feel free to write if you disagree with my view of your status. According to my records, for some fairly respectable reason you are due to receive Shaggy until and including issue number: 65

Subscriber

Contributor

Exchange faned

Reviewer

Sample copy

Subscriptions are 25¢ per issue, or five for one dollar, from the below address; or 1/8d per issue, or five for 7/-d sterling from Archie Mercer, c/o BSFA Library, (Basement) 130 London Road, Cheltenham, Glos., England. Copies are also available for all-for-all trade or, naturally, to letter-writers and contributors.

--Ron Ellik

SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES #62
from Ron Ellik
1825 Greenfield Avenue
Los Angeles 25, California

PRINTED MATTER ONLY
RETURN REQUESTED

LA ONCE MORE IN SIXTY-FOUR

TO:

Rosemary Hickey
3844 Broadway
Chicago 13, Ill

