

March 1958

# a foggy day

Number 1

This is a letter substitute substitute. I refuse to publish a letter substitute until I find out by bitter experience just how much work it involves. Thus: this.

Boggs should note that the current (March) issue of SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN contains an article on why mirrors "reverse" an image from right to left but not from top to bottom. Of possible interest to Burbee is this quote from the same article: "Another type of musical reflection is produced by turning a player-piano roll around so that it plays forward but with high and low notes reversed--the inverted music a pianist would produce if he played in the normal manner on a looking-glass piano. The melody becomes unrecognizable, and there is an unexpected transposition of minor and major keys." If you try this, Burb, I'd be interested in your reaction.

TAFF, and the lack of any public progress reports on same, was beginning to concern me. However, Madle showed up at work today with a draft ballot from Ken, along with a list of various candidates and their platforms. One candidate has not yet forwarded his platform, but the ballot will go into print within a week regardless of this. Candidates are Bennett, Berry, Newman, and Wild. Each is quite well known in England, and has been active in British fan affairs. I'm personally backing Bennett, but I'd be tremendously pleased no matter who won. I peeked at the financial standing of TAFF, and found to no great surprise that money is needed. The voting fee is still 50¢; an additional 50¢ from every voter would probably be a big help. I'd like to see the jinx that TAFF works every other year broken, and that extra token contribution just might do it.

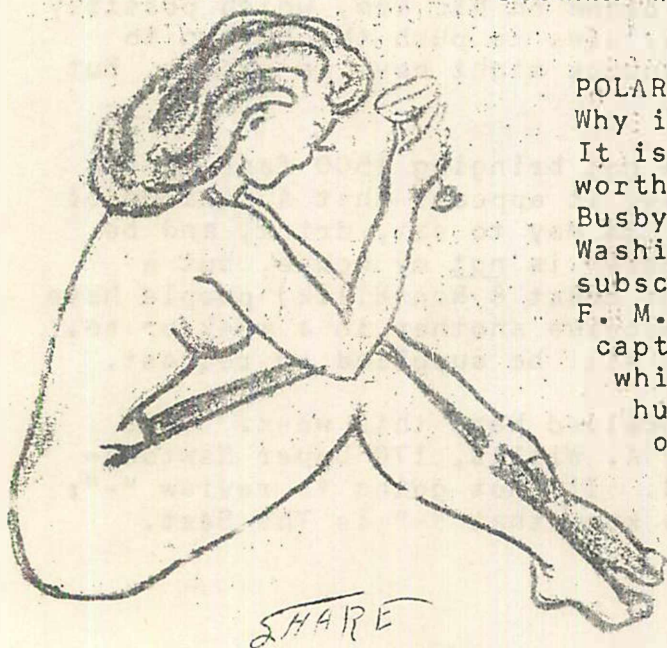
Baltimore fandom is going to hell in a bucket. RUMBLE NEWS-LETTER hasn't appeared in ages, nor have SPECULATIVE REVIEW, VARIOSO 15 (not in my direction it hasn't) or FLEATOOTH. Magnus has been seen recently with a ravishing blond on his arm, which possibly explains his silence (it's the arm he uses to push the button to start his electric mimeograph.) Hitchcock might have an excuse, but I doubt if it's as good as Magnus's.

Danner has announced that he is not bringing 1500 fans to the Disclave with him. Despite this blow, it appears that a minimum of 25 out-of-towners will gather here this May to eat, drink, and be sorry as hell the morning after. "Here" is not my house, but a motel in Arlington. Most local (east coast & Ron Ellik) people have received an announcement, and will receive another in a week or so. If you haven't and/or don't, details will be supplied on request.

The 19th issue of HYPHEN was received here this week. It's available for 1/- or 15¢ from Walter A. Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland. I'm not going to review "-"; you've been in fandom long enough to know that "- is The Best.

FANAC is a two-sheet ramble on fandom in general as viewed by Ron Ellik and Terry Carr, 2315 Dwight Way, Berkeley 4, California. News plays a significant part in this magazine, the most important announcement probably being that the WAW to the Gate fund has folded due to the inability of Willis to make the trip. Sneary--or maybe it's Woolston--has already sent a check for \$20 to Madle as TAFF's cut of the Willis fund. Ellik and Carr announce that they will send FANAC free for letters of comment or news. These good men support Ron Bennett for TAFF, which is merely one of many indications of the impeccable taste you'll find throughout this magazine.

One week after the Big Snow of 15 February I braved the roads to Derry's wilderness home in Brandywine, Maryland. I got stuck in Derry's driveway, but tromping on the gas and spinning those tires took care of that. Too bad Derry's car was immediately in front of mine at the time. However, one mystery of the FAPAcon was cleared up during that visit. Derry had brought with him to the con the required 68 copies of his FAPazine, AMATEUR'S JOURNAL, along with one or two extra copies--all that he had. After all the bundles were wrapped we started looking for those extra copies, and not only could not find the extras, but couldn't even find the copies that were supposed to be in the surplus stock. Derry got a rather odd light in his eyes, stalked over to the stacks of wrapped FAPA bundles sealed all safe and secure in paper and two-inch wide kraft tape, and suddenly started ripping bundles apart muttering under his breath something about "damn fools wrapped them up with someone's bundle." We lured Derry away with a Pepsi bottle--applied forcibly over the head--and mailed out the bundles anyhow, knowing full well that no such mistake could possibly happen at a well-organized FAPAcon. When I walked into Derry's home that Saturday two weeks later Derry got a strangely familiar gleam in his eye, and I began to regret that I had brought beer rather than pepsi's. Instead of ripping me apart, however, he handed me a pocsarcd from Dean Grennell. And what did Dean say? Just that he had received five copies of AMATEUR'S JOURNAL with his bundle.



CONFIDENTIAL! is hardly the word for POLARITY, January 1958. Why its not even..... It is, however, well worth obtaining from F. M. and Elinor Busby, 2852 14th Avenue West, Seattle 99, Washington, at 15¢ for a copy--no longer subscriptions accepted! In this issue F. M. demonstrates the Busby method of caption cartooning, which I enjoyed, but which you may not if you lack a sense of humor. One of the points most in favor of this system is that it enables anyone to draw as well as anyone else without artistic talent. This is described by F. M. as "artless artwork," but a certain talent is required in

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selecting words and themes. Good though the method is, it will never replace ATOM or Rotsler. Other than this, POLARITY contains multitudes of letter extracts, an article by Toskey on the Big Hole which formerly disgraced the middle of a Seattle street--quite a bump if you hit that hole with a car! Berry's article on slipsheeting is interesting, but his recommended method requires that you emulate Berry or Derry or Grennell or Tucker and keep a supply of three-year-old children around the house. Book reviews (good) and general fan chatter (ditto) neatly consume the remaining otherwise blank space.

Jazz continues to increase in Washington. The Bayou features Dixieland, as it has for many years. Local talent in a more modern if less listenable vein is found nightly at The Flame. A place named simply the 2100--oop, it's the 2011--also has a group of some sort, but since I've never been there I can't comment. The Spotlight is picking up Jazz. Saturday nights it has a large and varied selection of people--Jack Nimitz, Bill Harris, Wilbur Little, and others. Also Saturdays (or Sunday mornings--12:30 to 3:30 a.m.) they continue with other local talent (such as Keeter Betts on bass) added to their regular group. This coming Sunday afternoon Washington's "The Orchestra"--an 18 piece group under Bill Potts--will hold sway for three hours, while Jimmy Smith and his trio starts there this coming Tuesday. On radio, Felix Grant has a one hour show every week-day evening, another station has a show lasting from midnight to 3:00 a.m. every day of the week, and yet another station has a three hour jazz show on Sunday afternoons. A recent innovation is a TV jazz show--the Charlie Byrd Quartet. This show is on weekly, 11:25 p.m. until a few minutes after midnight, Sunday evening.

I underlined Quartet above, because Charlie also has a Trio, playing nightly except Sunday, at the Showboat. I discovered Charlie and the Showboat by accident; since that accident I've returned there every Saturday night with few exceptions. The trio sticks mainly to standards (Ellington, Basie, etc) but will usually play a couple of very funky blues during the evening, as well as two or three of Charlie's own compositions. Charlie also plays solo for at least one set (45 minutes or so) during the evening; his selections for this set will include a Spanish flamenco or something comparable, an item or two by Bach originally written for lute, and either a few of his own pieces or a couple of old folksongs. For these items, and for most of his work with the trio, he plays the unamplified spanish guitar (finger style rather than pick); he will also use the amplified guitar for half an hour or so on Saturdays (double that on other days, when the bars close two hours later.) His trio consists of himself, Keeter Betts on bass, and someone whose name I've never bothered to listen to on piano. Byrd has two records out--"Blues for Night People" and "Jazz Recital," both on the Savoy label. I recommend both, particularly the first named (which is the latest in chronological sequence.)

Eney (and that transition should be abrupt enough for just about anybody) is still publishing STUPEFYING STORIES which is apparently receiving wider and wider circulation. This letter substitute

business begins to look dangerous when erstwhile letter substitutes begin to resemble fanzines. Not that SS has yet sunk to quite that level--it is, if anything, improving with age--but I keep fearing that Eney will one day find himself unable to continue with this and thus will be forced into the letter substitute substitute business.

Yesterday I got the early flash about Explorer II going up. I thought that I'd be able to cheer a little about it here, but at this writing it is still lost and presumed dead. Well, the fourth Vanguard trial is due any day now....

SCIENCE FANTASY NEWS is seen almost as rarely as a successful American satellite attempt, but Vinç and Joy Clarke and Sandy Sanderson recovered sufficiently from the convention to put out this 15th issue. SFN, as the name implies, is primarily a news zine. If this issue is typical, it has as nice a balance between fan and pro news as any fanzine I've encountered. It is unfortunate that SFN has a highly irregular schedule, but that seems to be true of most of the more-desirable fanzines. You might try writing for a copy (7 Inchmery Road, Catford, London S.E.6, England); who knows, maybe there will be another issue in 1958. They're worth waiting for.

Ron Bennetts PLOY is delayed, but Mike Rosenblum's NEW FUTURIAN is advancing rapidly toward another issue. Subscriptions for either (or both) are available here, 15¢ per copy, 50¢ for four. Also available at 15¢ per copy is Ron's DIRECTORY OF 1957 S-F FANDOM--an excellent compilation of who's where.

And that would seem to be that until next issue--if any.

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