

Expletive

20 October 1966 *#*# Bjo Trimble, 614 Walnut Ave., Santa Cruz, Calif. 95060

Congratulations to everyone! LASFS, in spite of weather (or not) and boredom at times, has managed to limp, gallop, and scurry thru the years past its 1500th meeting. Pretty impressive. Since I first came into the club, in 1951, there have been hundreds of new faces, new ideas (and stodgy old useless traditions), and new activities introduced. There have been times I've wondered where my own intelligence went, for continuing to attend LASFS meetings. But there have also been times when travelling many miles has been well worth the meeting. I've most certainly never regretted the friends I've found in the club; if the price must include a few enemies, also, that doesn't matter much.

Seems funny, now, to think back on those early days. I found out about the club from a 4-line notice in the LATimes, stating that a Mr. Forrest Ackerman was to speak at a banquet for the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society. That was all, but I looked up Forry's phone number and asked him about the club. I lived in Orange County then, attending Orange Coast College. At that time, several kooks of like temperament at OCC had formed The Sir John Audible Junior Boy & Girl Bird Watchers of Orange Coast Junior College. The group was divided into Girl Boy-Watchers, and Boy Girl-Watchers, of course. I worked my way up to Sparrow-Spotter, but never made it to Eagle-Eyer. More on that group, someday; the characters were interesting but not all SF fans.

However, Mike Neil, who had a car, drove us in to one of the meetings. I promptly got off on the wrong foot by winning the raffle that night (on one ticket, of course) which was a fine selection of 10 SF books. That meeting contained, among others, Barney Bernard, Frank Quattrochi, Ed Clinton, Audrey Clinton (they were later divorced), Terry Bartfield (now Pinkhard), Forry, Wendy, and some younger fans whom I've forgotten.

I attended a few other meetings, but some unpleasantness at home forced me to "run away" by joining the US Navy (yes, I've heard all the jokes; don't bother!) in February of 1952. It was during this time that I discovered organized fandom, such as it was, by going to my first convention, the Chicon II. I was AWOL, due to a series of events that will take too long to relate here, for the entire weekend, but got off without more than a serious reprimand. At Chicon II, I met so many people who have remained friends today; Harlan Ellison (he proposed to me for the first time at this convention), Elliot and Jim Broderick, Agnes Harook, Roger "Teddybear" Sims, George Young, Fred Prophet, Howard deVore.

A year and 13 days after entering the Navy, I was given an Honorable Discharge for medical reasons (no, not that; damaged feet and ankles). I went back to California, and attended a few more LASFS meetings before embarking on another ill-advised adventure; marriage to Don Wells. Don was a 10-year, gung-ho Marine, going for 20 years; we were as different in personality as we could possibly be. I was 21 then, and should have known better, but then, I've never been known as a person who gave anything much deep thought before going into action.

During this marriage, Don's insane jealousy (of li'l ol' freckled me!) built up until it reached a stage where he'd pop into the house with a loaded .38 to "catch me" with someone else. This understandably made me a bit nervous. Fandom started being aware of me as an artist, and this caused some trouble, too. The day I got a card from Terry Carr, asking for "illos", saying that he was "faunching" for some, and that his "fanzine" wouldn't be complete without me, was almost the last straw. For one thing,

I didn't know fan-gab very well, myself, and had a terrible time explaining to Don what an "illo" might be; I was totally in the dark about what a "faunching" was, but supposed it had to be fairly harmless or Terry wouldn't have put it on an open post-card. This unhappy marriage lasted 3 dragged-out, fight-filled years before I called it quits.

For a time, then I hated people very much, and men in particular. This left me peculiarly vulnerable, for some reason, and a great deal of trouble (which today still clings to some relationships) was caused by my ignorance of everyone else's motives and desires. I moved into a small apartment in back of Zeke Leppin's house, where LASFS meetings were held, and became involved full-scale with fandom.

Somewhere along this line friendships with Ron Ellik, Steve Tolliver, Al Lewis, Djinn Faine, Ernie Wheatley, and (off and on) Ted Johnstone coalesed into something which we turned into full activity. Earlier, Tolliver, Ted, and a few others, including Miriam Dyches (now Knight) had published a dittoed fanzine called MIMSY, and we rather liked the idea of publishing. So when I discovered that LASFS had once published a club zine, we started tracking down material, mailing lists, and people to write for it. Djinn became the editor of the newly revived SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES, or SHAGGY, as it was affectionately known.

We talked the club into the idea of financing a Gestetner 120, and later, when the publishing load became too much for a small machine (since LA fandom suddenly blossomed into individual publications, also), we traded it off for the Rex we have now. Lately the publishing urge seems to have grown on local fandom again, which is a happy sign, I think.

I met John Trimble at a party at Torry's house, where we were both telling stories about our stay in the Armed Services. We got along, but I'd been dating lots of guys in fandom (and a few outside, too) and didn't want to trust another marriage. John's sweet nature, and his wonderful care of me after the bad auto accident in 1959, began to convince me that here was the guy I wanted to spend the rest of my life with. That decision was a good one; he has been a great husband and father.

So fandom in general, and LASFS in particular, have been decided factors in my life. I don't think I've "lived fandom", but because of circumstances and choice, I've been involved more in fannish activities than other outside interests. Here I have found like personalities, and if not a sharing of interests, at least sympathy toward my own ideas. This atmosphere can sometimes be exasperating (such as LASFS's habit of letting some schlock give interminable movie reviews) but the tolerance shown by that same act is, on the other hand, the very thing which keeps most of us coming back to the club. Because we all need that tolerance, and we would not find it in very many other groups.

Some fans have asked why I've never been actual editor of SHAGGY, when I've certainly been its guiding light, occasionally. Mostly, it is a strange reluctance to take on a job I've always been fairly sure I could not handle. I don't know why I've had this feeling, but it is there, and I've always been afraid of letting the club and SHAGGY down, somehow. It has been a strong desire to see SHAGGY win a Hugo for LASFS, but even in its heyday, the zine never got closer than a nomination.

Somewhere in this straggly narrative, I've been trying to tell you why I have a fondness for LASFS, including all its kooks, foibles, and fancies. Perhaps I've touched upon your reason for coming to meetings, or perhaps you now understand, at least, why I come to meetings (and why I'll come to meetings whenever I can, even at this distance!). Happy anniversary meeting, you crazy ol' LASFS, you!