

***Afterburner #11*** — published for SFPA #204 [Jun-Jul '98] by Binker Glock Hughes  
5831 Hillside Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30340-1721 /770-448-5143 (tel) /770-448-9477 (fax)  
©1998 by E.M.B.G. Hughes

I thought there might be some stuff besides a brief DSC report for this *Afterburner*, so I held off until now [1st, July], but no such luck. The basement project continues, the jobhunt continues, the hot weather continues . . . so what else is new? Therefore, let's hurriedly report on my brief — and semi-illfated — visit to DSC.

Good news and computer pestilence delayed my preparing for and arriving at DSC [viz., a call from a recruiter and then spending the Entire Day on Friday trying to get his overcrowded server to accept an e-mail of my resume], but I did manage to get stuff together Saturday morning and drive over, with a hatchload of miscellaneous ex-basement stuff, etc., arriving near 4:30 local time. Needless to say, there were no dealer-tables left [though a hint at a faint possibility kept me hoping until Saturday morning], but I did get to put a few things in the Art Show. It was too late to hope for much, but one did sell and I'll presumably get a check for about \$10 in a few weeks. What the hey — better than nothing.

Soon after I arrived, I got to hook up with a gang of fen on their way to the Fish Market, a delicious restaurant [fish, obviously] within walking distance, and that started the Real Con-going. I brought my guitar in from the car overnight [since I was parked on the street] but without any serious intent to damage people's ears by playing — there were too many neat SFPAnS and other Southern fen around to catch up on. If I try to list them all I'll inevitably leave out somebody vital — and I didn't get to talk with half of them half long enough — but it was very much my idea of a wonderful convention. Sure, people were calling it 'Deep Sweat Con' due to the iffy main-area air conditioning; sure, those with rooms were complaining about the minimal [and miniscule] towels; but the People were there — and that's what matters. I kept getting distracted by conversations on my way somewhere else, then getting distracted again, so I ended up talking with fewer people than I wanted — but it sure was good. The kind of Con that makes me think DSCs ought to go on for a week, without any particular increase in programming, or until we all got sick of each other. Definitely good.

I'd arrived after almost all the programming was over, but it didn't make a bit of difference. My only regret was having fewer hours in which to catch up on people not seen in years. LIZ and JEFF COPELAND were in from Boulder, JANICE GELB from California, GUY LILLIAN and DENNIS DOLBEAR from New Orleans, GARY and CORLIS ROBE and their kids from Tennessee, GEORGE WELLS from New York, CUYLER BROOKS from Virginia [now moving to Atlanta], MEADE and PENNY FRIERSON, STEVE and SUZANNE HUGHES, TONI WEISSKOPF, HANK REINHART, JERRY PAGE, KEN MOORE, IRV KOCH, JOANN MONTALBANO, GEORGE INZER, JOHN GUIDRY, WARD BATTY, and I even got to see JANET and KYLE LARSON and kids [the latest too young to understand about being born into fandom]. I'd swear I caught glimpses of others who are so rarely seen at DSCs that one always suspects it's a ghost and not the genuine article. I saw a name tag that said David Weber [MIKE's brother?] but didn't see mike, so don't know if he made it.

With all those and more for conversation-fodder, it's no surprise that I didn't bother to get a room. I just sat up all night talking with the fans in the Con suite, catching a couple of hours' sleep on a sofa in order to be able to drive home in one piece the next day. A couple of fans kindly offered me floor or bed-space, but I knew I'd wake in an hour or so ready to rejoin the conversation, so I passed them up on it. *Thanks for offering!*

A bunch of us had planned to go to the Original Pancake House for breakfast the next a.m., but CON-Stellation changed our plans to lunch by providing an outrageously delicious – and huge – Con-suite breakfast. Whoever slaved over a hot stove Birming the Ham done good – it was Wonderful! And so was everything else. Wow – we should get people to continue this wonderful tradition!

After a late and lazy lunch at the Pancake House [as good as ever – and thanks, Dennis! I'll get even with you someday], it was time to make myself drive home before I fell asleep from sleep-shortage abetted by good food. I so rarely get to see such a neat bunch of people that I hated to, but I knew better than to try to drive home any tireder than I was already. So, getting directions back to the expressway from Meade [and finding out how tired I was by promptly taking a wrong turn!] I headed home.

The potentially-ill-fated part of it was that when next I went to drive somewhere, a day or so later, I found my right-rear tire pancake flat. Ugh. I've grown accustomed to that tire having problems – Jimmy's patched at least 3 nail-holes in it [always the right rear, never the others] – but this was more extreme than usual. I re-inflated it, ran my errand, and the next morning found it in the same flatter-'n'-a'flutter condition. Hmmm. Again, I re-inflated it. Again, it leaked down. Curious, I inflated it before church the next Sunday morning and, sure enough, it had leaked flat by the time I was ready to drive home after choir practice – a rate of about 10 lbs/hour, on a guess. That made it look like I needed to get one of the tires from the basement [I have most of a little-used set down there, wrapped in plastic], but I didn't have a handy place to have it swapped out and balanced, so I stalled [and just didn't drive much] while looking for one. Then, this past Sunday, one of the people from church spotted the nail! Hooray! That means maybe Jimmy can fix it! Anyhow, he's going to try, this weekend. Poor tire – it's not that old, but it seems to be a veritable *target* for nails. Getting on for its swiss-cheese rating, I'm afraid. Maybe this time it'll have better luck. I never have figured out where all its nails come from. The left rear tire picked up One nail years ago, but this right-rear seems to be a magnet for them. I'm always careful to avoid things in the road and haven't seen any nails around where my car is parked or in my driveway, but every few months this poor ol' tire has another one to be patched. Oh well, maybe this will be the last for awhile. [P.S. right before printing – Jimmy did fix it (a headless 16-penny nail – yeesh), so all's well that ends well.

Anyhow, *THANKS*, one and all, for the most enjoyable DSC I've attended in a long time – and mostly, for all of you coming and giving me a chance to see you all again. It's events like this one that put an end to any foolish thoughts of being sensible and getting out of SFPA – I'd miss entirely too much fun! I gave Liz and Jeff the *Seasons* at the Con, but I wanted to do a brief report. Better call a halt and get this printed and out.

Those of you who missed DSC this year really missed something – let's see if we can repeat the effect next year in New Orleans and the year after, on St. Simon's Island again [which reminds me, I need registration data for both]. See you there?