

AS THE CROW FLIES 1

Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave . S.W., Seattle, WA 98166-1953
the e-mail address is: bearlodge@msn.com.

It's become more than apparent that I'm rapidly becoming a one issue per year sort of fanzine fan and I don't particularly like that. Don Fitch wrote that he thought that about every three months would be about right. Well, I don't know about that, but I'm going to try a new format and see if I can't do a little better. The writing will be no better than usual but the frequency may increase somewhat. Perhaps you won't forget who I am from issue to issue. I will openly confess that I have copied this format directly from Darroll Pardoe's PIGS CAN FLY. I have always been delighted with that zine. Thank you, Darroll.

I guess I'll dedicate this issue to the memory of Stan Kenton, innovator of modern jazz orchestral music and to Bob Graettinger, who wrote such modern and sometimes dissonant arrangements for the Kenton organization back in the early 50s. I have plugged in my earphones and am listening to a fine CD entitled City of Glass; Stan Kenton Plays Bob Graettinger. I heard this orchestra in Seattle back in those days and the composition, "City of Glass, was so advanced and abstract that during the concert Stan would only play one of the three movements. For many years I thought that there would never be a CD of this music, but a couple of years ago Richard Dix told me tha it had been published. There is a deity! So we have moved on almost 45 years and the music is still very advanced. You wouldn't hear it at a jazz concert, but more likely at a concert of avant garde music. So now I'll sit back for fifteen minutes or so and just listen. Thank you, Richard, for giving me the news that this was available.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF INDIA

That headline is only to catch your attention. Indeed, in August (of '97 when I wrote this) India did celebrate her 50th year of independence, but that's not precisely what I wanted to talk about. For some reason, wholly unconnected to India's independence, I have recently been reading several books related to that country.

I was visiting Vancouver, B.C. in early July and when I'm in that beautiful

city I always stop in Duthie's Book Store on Robson Street. Gentrified Vancouverites love to call it Robson Strasse these days but they've wiped out all of the neat stores which gave the street a continental flavor. At any rate, the previous time I had visited the store I was taken by a book entitled **Sindhe Revisited** by Christopher Ondaatje. I think he is the brother of Michael Ondaatje, author of **The English Patient**, winner of the Booker Prize in England, the novel from which the motion picture was made. Christopher Ondaatje has been a longtime student and admirer of Sir Richard Francis Burton, famed explorer and translator of Arabian and eastern texts. Through his lifelong study of Burton's life he came to believe that the formative years of Burton's life were the years spent in India in the military arm of the East India Company, in the time before the Empire. He determined to visit India and follow, as best he could, in Burton's footsteps, visiting the places which Burton had visited.

The book is published in a larger format, though not coffee table size, and contains many photographs taken by Ondaatje. He is an interesting writer and a pretty good photographer. **Sindhe** is in the northwestern part of India. With the help of various government officials and people in higher education he was able to visit many places and have access to buildings about which Burton wrote. Although I haven't read a biography of Burton I knew enough general information about him to thoroughly enjoy the book. I sat back, rather satisfied with myself for having found the book and finding it so enjoyable.

THEN... last Sunday's paper had a book review of a book entitled **Quest for Kim** by Peter Hopkirk. Hopkirk has been an admirer of Rudyard Kipling's **Kim** for a long time and finally had the time to follow the route of Kimball O'Hara as he accompanied his holy man through India. Along the way he attempted to identify real places which Kipling used as settings. Since I had re-read **Kim** within the last couple of years it was fairly easy to follow Hopkirk's book. If this novel of Kipling's is a favorite of yours, as it has been mine, you'll enjoy this book a great deal.

I won't go into a long review, but some of you may remember **The Jewel in the Crown** from PBS television some years back. The film was based on Paul Scott's "Raj Quartet." These are not straightforward adventurous books which many sf and fantasy books are; they take a little work. I've gotten through two of them and they are worth the effort. Another look at India as it neared the time of its independence.

THE JENNY REPORT

The above was written sometime in June '97, I think. In July a major change was made in our lives. We took custody of our 10-year-old grand-daughter, Jenny. I won't go into the reasons for it except that we feel the young lady needed a change. But it sure changes things for us, as well. It's been a long time since we were parents. So we have been to Parent's Night, to parent conferences with her teacher, to the winter concert. We've been to the music store to rent a flute so she could be in beginning band. We've missed the beginning of some pow-wows because she had basketball practice. We've watched her pitch softball. We're trying to learn not to get upset at some things about which my friend, Dan says, "Let that one go. It's not worth it."

The biggest change probably was the change in our travel plans. We had expected to spend part of September and October of last year in England, returning in time to attend Bouchercon in Monterey and then heading east to spend more time exploring the Anasazi ruins in the southwest. Instead we were getting ready for school, buying school clothes and supplies.

Jenny is tall for her age and had her 11th birthday on New Year's Eve. She's made friends at her new school, has had friends over after school and a couple of sleepovers. She did well in basketball but the coach warned them that they would be playing 6th grade girls and were likely to get whopped fairly regularly. All the girls on her team are 5th graders. The flute is coming along pretty well and at the winter concert she and a friend played a short duet.

She is also learning the dance steps for jingle dress dancing, one of the three dances for women at pow-wows. She is doing remarkably well and soon will be wanting regalia and to join the pow-wow circle. I'm surprised that she has learned the steps so quickly because they are not easy. She's had the fortunate experience of making a friend with a young lady two years older who is an exceptional jingle dress dancer. Christine has taught her a lot.

She claims to not want to travel but we've taken a couple of small trips, the first a circular trip down to Fort Vancouver and then up the Columbia River, circling north again and returning over Snoqualmie Pass. This was a four-day adventure and went pretty well for all the protest. The second trip was a two-day jaunt to Vancouver, B.C. She weathered that one pretty well, too. So we're hoping that by summer, if we have various court things out of the way, we will get that trip to England in.

So this a shortened version of a major change in our life. Gosh, we get to go through the teenage years again. We will attempt to learn parenting all over again, although we suspect that the rules have changed in the meantime. Hey,

another challenge. Just think, when Jenny graduates from high school I'll only be 75. So far we think we're doing all right. I'll try not to bore you to tears with Jenny stories but I thought you might like to know about this.

ELDERHOSTEL

In April Anna Jo attended a weeklong elderhostel. It was about 60 miles north of here on Puget Sound. The emphasis was on bird watching, or birding, as it is called these days. The weather was only partially cooperative. On one day when they were to go birding individually in the afternoon, she found good weather. She went to a state park on Camano Island, a small island in the Sound. She had a fairly successful outing. Later in the week the group went birding together but found extremely high winds which made most of the shore birds seek shelter. So they were unable to find some of the species they were hoping for.

Meanwhile I was at home being domestic. I found myself rising several hours earlier than usual to get Jenny off to school, delivering her to softball practice, packing lunches and cooking the evening meal. So this is what batching is like! But I somehow managed.

Both Anna Jo and I are fairly certain that we should take an occasional break. Jenny is doing quite fine and she is not a lot of trouble, but she has changed our lifestyle considerably in our late years. So the opportunity to go off by oneself on occasion will be appreciated by both of us. I may spend some time at our cabin or I may go down to Oregon and visit with friends. Who knows? I may have some adventures which I can later relate here. Meantime, Anna Jo has discovered where we can find loons at this time of year. Loons are birds for which I have searched for some years and have never been able to find. I have a hunch that we'll take a jaunt up the Sound sometime soon before the loons take off for inland lakes where they will nest. (Didn't happen. Maybe next spring.)

LAST WORDS: The situation has improved greatly and in a year or so we may be able to hand Jenny back to our daughter. That would make all of us very happy. Meanwhile, summer is here and today's temperature of 88 was not welcome in the northwest. Other parts of the country may be able to deal with as much as 116, but for Seattle 88 degrees is hot. A week ago we escaped to Reno for a few days while Jenny went to a horse camp for a week. It was 94 there. Next issue I'll relate our adventures there. And so I close this experiment in frequency. We'll see if I do any better than I have previously.