



Askew #20

July 2017

The usually paper-only (and yes, the dead tree versions will be mailed Real Soon Now) ensmallled personalzine from –

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Long May You Run

Yes, this year's TAFF race finally ended on the evening of Monday, April 17th, and it ended up with me becoming the 2017 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund delegate to attend WorldCon 75 in Helsinki, Finland, this coming August 9th to 13th. Needless to say, I am very excited, and planning for this trip has been a bit on the stressful side for Valerie and I, but things are starting to take shape very nicely. Here is the quick run-down so far:

Departing Houston, Texas on Thursday, July 13th at 11:39 AM CDT, with a three hour layover at Newark International Airport in New Jersey, from whence we depart again at 7:30-ish PM (EDT) to then

Arrive in Manchester, England, on Friday morning, July 14th, at 7:40 AM local time.

At present we are planning to be in Paris, France at the end of July (something like the 28th), staying there for a few days before we head off to the Netherlands (Rotterdam and Amsterdam) to visit fans and friends, and then head up to Helsinki, Finland, getting there on August 8th. Once the WorldCon is over, we will be leaving Helsinki on August 14th, giving us five days to meander – via the Czech Republic, where Valerie's great-grandparents immigrated from in the late 18th century - back to Manchester, England, to depart for Houston on Sunday, August 20th. If you are mathematically inclined, that works out to five weeks for this trip. As it stands, it looks like the first victims of the Purcell Invasion Landing will be Paul and Cas Skelton, since they live in Stockport, a mere 8 miles from the Manchester Airport. After that we are not exactly sure yet who will be staying with and when, but odds are our first two weeks (United Kingdom) will be visiting Jim and Carrie Mowatt in Cambridge, followed by Claire Brialey

and Mark Plummer in Croydon (London hosts), and hopefully then we will trot over to Wales to spend a couple days with Ro Nagey, before heading over to Paris.

Already that sounds like a splendid trip. But wait – there’s more!

After the WorldCon is over in Helsinki, Valerie and I will have five travel days to get back to Manchester, England, to catch our return flight to Houston, Texas, on August 20th. Like I mentioned a moment ago, we have decided to nip down to the Czech Republic to celebrate her birthday in her ancestral homeland, and then hop back to Manchester. No doubt about it, this trip is going to be epic.

Exhausting, yes, but fun.

skewed results

Letters from readers. **My responses will be in bold-face, Arial, size 11**, while the letters will be in the regular Calibri, size 11 font. Onward!

Rich Dengrove
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.April 21, 2017

I am writing this Dear John letter. Am I writing to say we are breaking up? No. We were never together. Am I writing to say if you want me, you will have to go through secret drop off points? Don’t be absurd. No, I am responding to *Askew #19*. I am commenting on everything but the info you have on TAFF. I have voted and contributed; so there doesn’t seem to be much more I should do. I will say, as others have done before me: I have voted for the person I knew and liked – namely, you John. About the actual comments, as usual, I’ve chosen to make too many.

One subject you broach is how many people have visited your website. I don’t think I got more than two or three people to visit mine. It did not help that Yahoo gave me a complicated URL, and no search engine could find my website. This detracted from the purpose I was putting the site to. I intended to put all my JOMPs on the website, but, with the less than resounding interest, I let it slide. That started around the year 2000. I don’t know how many years I let it slide. However, when Yahoo finally decided to take it down, I didn’t shed a tear. It wasn’t a total loss, however, because I had fun designing the site. Another subject you broach concerns people who were heads and tails above me in math. In fact, I shouldn’t compare myself with them: I have trouble with two plus two. I should compare them to someone who actually knows some math. Those who are heads and tails are rocket girls from the book

Rocket Girls. You say they were the originally numbers crunchers. No, they were originally computers. While there may have been mainframes around NASA, for many years, NASA found it less expensive to employ a bunch of women to do calculations for most of its engineers. The person who told me about them first was not someone in the media, but Ned Brooks, the fan. He worked for NASA in the '60s and '70s; and admitted he and other engineers were very dependent on those ladies. What is curious is that while math was not considered a ladies' occupation at the time, the Rocket Girls had no problem in excelling in it.

Because of those ladies, NASA was not a horror show. What was a horror show were Lovecraft's novels.

Of course, we love Lovecraft's horror shows. A book you review concerns him and those, Scott Poole's *In the Mountains of Madness*. However, it skirts the big issue which makes his life a horror show for a number people: out of perversity, they have been attacking him because he had racist views. Didn't anybody ever tell them that views, such as his, were common in the early part of the 20th Century. Nobody thought anything about it. These people made me think the controversy could not get any worse. But someone succeeded in doing it. He claimed that Lovecraft's views on race did not make him a fascist. No, what made him a fascist was that he took a typical, wouldbe aristocratic attitude toward capitalism.

Having been subjected to this, I am encouraged to do what Milo Bloom, of the Bloom County comic strip did. He mispronounced the word "fascists"; and, instead, said the "fishes" are after me.

My next topic concerns another pulp tale, which has convinced us it is more than that, Sax Rohmer's *The Bride of Fu Manchu*. Was Sax Rohmer fascist? Probably not. Was Fu Manchu fascist? It depends on your definition. However, I am not going to discuss either certainly boring topic. Instead, I will tell you something about the name 'Fu Manchu.' I gather it had something to do with the last emperor of China. While his formal name was Pu Yi, according to a Korean friend, he was known in the orient under the nickname of 'Fu.' As for Manchu, it is no last name or first name; but means the Manchu people of Manchuria, i.e., no individual in particular. As well as having a checkered career in derivation, the name Fu Manchu also had a checkered career with Sax Rohmer. He found out long before 1920 that Fu Manchu was not a proper Chinese name, and was trying to phase out writing about him. Around 1930, however, he was desperately in need of money; and surrendered to writing far more lucrative Fu Manchu novels than he had written.

Enough about Fu Manchu, who predated First Fandom. How about current fandom, which arose long after fandoms stopped being numbered.. In short, I am commenting on letters now, and will start with a comment you made to my letter. You say, among the new fans, there are only a minuscule number of actual fans. Proportionally, I have to agree. However, I don't believe the new literary fans number any fewer than us Golden Oldies. In fact, when it comes to gaming, cosplay and con running, I suspect a lot more new fans than old fans have embraced them. Unfortunately, they are eclipsed by the mass of new fans who are in fandom to be entertained. In short, mundanes for whom it is now permitted to groove on science fiction.

After telling you that, I have something to tell Lloyd Penney. He asked for a recommendation of a Gail Carriger novel. I have one to recommend, the first novel in the Parasol Protectorate series, *Soulless*. It has the funniest sex scene I have ever read. Alexia Tarabotti, who is soulless, engages in foreplay with Lord Conall Maccon, a werewolf. Later her husband. Not much titillation but, in my book, plenty of

laughter. Of course, it doesn't sound like something that would gender hilarity, but it certainly did with me.

With a comment that has the potential to throw egg on my face, I say sayonara. @ Even running for TAFF, John, you didn't forget about the finer things of life: science fiction, scholarship, outright science fiction, and letters. Attached to the last are friends called fans, although we don't necessarily live in College Station, Texas, or in Minnesota. Still, regardless of where we live, you really appreciate us.

Rich Dengrove

Thank you so much for the long and interesting loc, Rich. (*) Yes, Lovecraft was a racist, no question about that, and recent articles in Tom Sadler's fanzine *The Reluctant Famulus* and Bob Jennings' zine *Fadeaway* discuss HPL's fascist streak, which matches his racism. Despite these terrible faults, Lovecraft still exerts major influence on modern supernatural fiction.

And I also thank you for your kind words at the end of your loc. I really try to not forget where I came from and who my friends are. Without recognizing and remembering these, I believe a person has nothing, and that would be a shame. I loves my fandom!

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April 6, 2017

In *Askew #19*, your mention of the counters on eFanzines reminded me of the gate counters that are attached to information packets in a LAN. As the name implies, the counter counts every time the packet passes through a gate. When the count reaches a certain number the packet decides it is hopelessly lost and destroys itself. I get a strange feeling when I think about all those little information packets destroying themselves. The alternative is to have all those lost packets wandering through the system forever.

So who are the phantom fanzine readers? They might be like most magazine readers who read an issue of a magazine and go about their business without any thought of interacting with the publication. They could be like the people you used to see browsing at newsstands. They would stand for half an hour looking through a dozen publications without buying anything. They could also be the disembodied spirits of the internet who are cursed to wander forever in search of some nameless nirvana.

I read about fanzines for about ten years before I actually saw one. I was quite young at the time and dubious about trying to participate. Also, the sticky quarters I might have used to obtain fanzines were all being used to buy the prozines where I was reading about the fanzines. I also read the prozine letter columns which were a great source of information on fandom. For years, I would have sworn I hadn't written any letters to the prozines. Then people started confronting me with letters by me that had been published in the fifties.

Rich Dengrove mentions mass fans. That reminded me that Wondercon was held in Anaheim a few weeks ago. Wondercon is run by the same people who run the San Diego Comicon but it's smaller. This year, it was only 60,000 people. The convention was discussed at our usual Friday night card game at the LASFS clubhouse. We wondered if anyone we knew had attended the con. Someone said three of our members had gone to Wondercon to sell Loscon memberships. We couldn't imagine going there for any other reason.

I think the people who are running Loscon are going about marketing the wrong way. They are billing themselves as a pop culture convention in the hopes of attracting younger attendees. As a pop culture con, they can't hold a candle to Wondercon. Out of the 60,000 at Wondercon, some must actually be interested in SF. Loscon can be much better at being an SF con than Wondercon can. Unfortunately, the people who run Loscons don't believe young people might be interested in SF.

Milt Stevens

“Phantom fanzine readers” sounds like a great basis for a fanzine article. They largely exist, I doth believe, as media fans (movie, comics, tv, etc) who lurk at the fringes of traditional fandom; they go to conventions, sure, but unless they really get the urge to get actively involved with these events, media-fringe fans are going to remain where they are: on the outskirts looking in and enjoying, but not contributing to the existence of the fandom that they are enjoying.

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April 19, 2017

This is meant to be a loc on *Askew 19*, but I suspect, it's just going to be a big ***congratulations!*** on being the TAFF winner for this year. I don't know who your opponents were, but they gave you a run for your money, and a one-vote victory is still a victory. You've got to be making plans already.

I wish I could do something like that, but right now, it's impossible, and not likely to boot. Right now, the job hunt is STILL going on, and even with good interviews, I still can't get anyone to say yes to me.

Nonetheless, I don't want to take away from your victory! The fan funds sure do make things happen. A recently innocent inquiry on my part on the CUFF Facebook page seems to have gotten things going again. The funds are being raised, and there will soon be another CUFF vote. All we need now is candidates. (Non-fanzine fans have won CUFF in the past, but even with full explanations of what was expected of the winners, few actually followed through.)

The locol...hmm, New Fandom. Well, I figure that a part of New Fandom is Old Fandom just looking for something new to catch their fancy. Perhaps that's why there's a number of people I know through the more traditional forms of fandom getting themselves into things like steampunk.

My loc...guilty of sin am I. I kept reminding myself and Yvonne that we had to vote in the FAAn Awards. And we wanted to, we really did. I kept reminding ourselves to vote, and one day, I forgot to remind ourselves. And, we didn't vote. Sorry, folks. I hope the results are what we all want. I can't go to Corflu this year, so I hope to learn who won what. I should remind myself...

Eight-page zines get what they usually get, and that's a short loc. Hate to say it, but it's the same way here. Off this goes to you, and again, way to go on the TAFF race, and please do say hello to Helsinki for us. Hugs to Valerie, and see you the next Purcellzine.

Lloyd Penney.

Thank you, Lloyd, and here is the next Purcellzine being finished two days before Valerie and I take off for Manchester on the first leg of my TAFF Trip. Five weeks in Europe? That's not too many...

I am on a panel at WorldCon 75 discussing fan funds with John Coxon, Nina Horvath, and others, and I am planning on mentioning CUFF and other one-off funds that benefit fans both within and without national boundaries. Apparently there is now a Brazil-based Fan Fund, and in Helsinki I want to track down some of those South American fans and see what I can learn about this. Stay tuned!

Jerry Kaufmann

April 15, 2017

Thanks for sending this issue, but in terms of your primary goal, too late! We've already voted.

Henry Purcell - what a great composer of his era. I'd vote for him, if he were running for TAFF - the Time Adjusted Fan Fund.

The movie *Hidden Figures* is, of course, based on the book of the same name. I haven't read the book (yet) but have seen, and recommend, the film. I would not agree that it's "mostly centered on John Glenn's orbital flight." That would be its climax. Instead, I'd say it's centered both on the path to that flight and the path to respect for the three main characters.

W. Scott Poole's bio of Lovecraft sounds very interesting, and I will have to keep an eye open for it when I go to one of our good bookstores, or the next general-purpose sf convention I attend. I know there's been increased interest in HPL's relationship with Barlow.

I tried one of Gail Carriger's books, but it seemed too cute for my tastes.

The issue of TAFF being for fanzine fans only, or for the wider fandom that included convention organizers and others, came up as early as 1957 when Robert Madle won the race. I can't speak about Sarah Gulde's or Alissa McKersie's routes to, or roots in, fandom, but based on what they say in their platforms, they both sound like they did not come in through media, cosplay, etc. And Alissa mentions she was one of the *Journey Planet* editors when it won its Hugo.

Jerry

Thank you, Jerry, for this fine little letter of comment. (*) I see the expansion of the fan funds to include other active members of Fandom At Large a good thing in that folks like Sarah and Alissa (who both are big convention organizing fans) will keep the fan funds alive. As SF Fandom changes with the communication technology, so will institutions like TAFF, DUFF, GUFF, and other funds. This is a development we will simply have to wait and see how it plays out.

WOOF #42

SUBJECT: Contributing to WOOF #42 – the Worldcon Order of Faneds, the APA (Amateur Press Association) collated annually at the World Science Fiction Convention – at WorldCon 75 in Helsinki, Finland.

Here is an UPDATE on what You Need To Know:

There is a European Official Editor of WOOF #42! Simo Suntala, a fanzine fan for many years, has “volunteered” (at the end of Jukka Halme’s volunteer-prodding stick) to be an OE as well.

Since he is a local Finland Fanzine Fan (a Scandinavian N3F, there), that means contributions can be emailed ahead to him at khuure@gmail.com in PDF (preferred) or Word Document attachments and he will then print contributions locally well before the collation occurs. The due date for these WOOFzines is Saturday, 5 August 2017; that gives Simo a week to print them before the collation. A proper Table of Contents will thus be created ahead of time, as well. Gee, this sounds so *shudder* organized!



Speaking of the WOOF #42 collation, it is tentatively set for Saturday, 12 August 2017, from 1300 to 1500 hours (as it will be listed in the program guide: all times are done in military or international time; otherwise that translates to 1 to 3 PM for those folks who don’t do math) in the Fanzine Lounge at WorldCon 75. Espana Sheriff is the Fanzine Lounge Coordinator, and I have contacted her to see if we can arrange for refreshments (soft drinks and munchables) to be available for the collating masses.

Copy count of contributions is still set at a limit of 50 copies. [NOTE: If that is not enough, we will try to get the word out as quickly as possible to people who are bringing their WOOFzine to the collation.) I guess North American fans who wish to contribute and will not be attending WorldCon 75 can send them to me ahead of time (ask me for my mailing address), but please include a 9"x12" SASE. Your final collated copy of WOOF #42 will be mailed to non-attending North American contributors upon my return home to keep postage costs down. Naturally, if contributors are attending the convention, they should bring their pre-printed contributions to the collation, and are encouraged to participate in said collation. Not only does the collation go

