

This will probably be one of the shortest issues of Celephais for a long time. I've got almost no time to do it, have just installed a "new" mimeo, have no mimeo paper on hand, and haven't even had time to read the mailing. All in all, a hectic situation. I'm not even sure I'll be able to print this so that it can be read. If you can't read this, that's why.

The new machine is a Rex Rotary 270 I picked up used "through channels" - it looks nice, but I'm not sure I know how to make it talk. We'll see, tho. At least it has an automatic feed that works, which is more than the old ditto had. And you will be spared the purple spots before the eyes.

The real reason for no mailing comments or articles this time is simple - w*o*r*k. A nasty word, but it does pay for such things as stamps and trips home and gasoline and food and a place to sleep, and I don't think I would like not doing it. But it does tend to take up time that could be used for farming or other more relaxing things.

Since last mailing I've attended a meeting in DC - ACS - with visiting firemen dropping in; prepared a lengthy review article; completed - almost - 6 programs for the 7090; attended a meeting in Los Angeles, returning via Texas - and continued my usual work.

Of these the trip to Los Angeles was the most fun - fun? I must be slightly off to call it fun. But it will give me something to write about - and make the third consecutive issue of Celephais with a trip report.

The meeting was on the thermodynamics and kinetics of propellant systems, run by the Western States Section of the Combustion Institute. Was held at UCLA during the Easter break, starting on Monday Apr 16. So, I flew out Sunday from Friendship Airport via jet coach - on government travel you take coach or pay the difference - at 3pm, due in at 5:15. Going over the mountains around Pittsburgh it was cloudy; when the pilot came on with his little chat, he remarked that it was snowing down there, and that the outside temperature was -60 F. He added that "it looks as if we will be able to land at Los Angeles airport this trip." Apparently the last few runs had had to ground at range, due to fog/smog closing LA. This didn't make me feel too good, but when later he said it was clear, I felt better. Coming over Colorado it cleared off below (we were at 31000) and the Colorado Rockies showed up below. Not too much snow appeared; there were some peaks with good covers, and others with just some filled cuts. Then we were over the "Four Corners" country, with the odd shapes like Shiprock visible below. Neither the Rockies nor the rocks were too impressive - we were just too high.

Then we were over the Grand Canyon, which showed up nicely in the afternoon sun. I was unimpressed, though; the view from the ground gave a much more impressive feeling, and revealed the true magnitude of the canyon. The colors, too, didn't show up too well from 30000 feet. Still, for one who had never been there in person, this would give a thrill. So, we wen over the hills east of Los Angeles - I don't remember the name and the map doesn't show it - after passing over the Mojave and slowly let down. These were more impressive mountains, as we were lower and could see the city lights springing up in the midst of them. And finally into LA, arriving 20 min early; so I waited 40 min for a bus to Westwood.

Celephais, published by Bill Evans, Box 86, Mt. Rainier, Maryland, for the May, 1962, mailing of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association. Vol 8, No 3, 1962

Finally I got the bus to Westwood, then a cab to the hotel on Wilshire. I'd picked blind, but managed to get a nice place, complete with swimming pool (I was too busy to use) and free continental breakfast, which was nice as I could have had to walk about a mile away from the campus to get food (actually a half mile each way). So I could sleep a little later.

Checked in I called Manthom House - or tried too. It was then I discovered there are two telephone systems in LA - Bell and General. And for a switchboard like the hotel on General to get a Bell number is as bad as calling New York. First you get the hotel board. They ring the Bell "long distance" operator (in my case it took two tries before the operator would answer) who in turn places the call, carefully recording the calling number for long distance billing. Quite frustrating.

Anyway, I finally got Manthom House, and found people at home, expecting the call (not psi, John, I'd warned them) and with people planning to drop in. I suggested my taking a bus down, but this was promptly vetoed - "We want to have a visit tonight, before you have to leave," and I was told either Al (West Coast) Lewis or the USS Trimble would arrive. A short while later, as I was down in the lobby getting a breath of fresh air - no smog - a small car appeared, and I met the first LA fan - Al Lewis. (And only 24 hours before I had talked with the other Al Lewis.) We drove and drove and drove, and I was thoroughly lost. Finally we pulled up before a neat 20th century Spanish (or the California version of it. Bjo?) and stopped. I got out and walked into a fan gathering. Fans all over the place, cutting stencils, reading sf magazines (!), talking, talking, talking, drinking beer, talking, drinking beer.... In the middle was the smiling face of Bjo, backed by the likewise face of John T. Then there was someone I greeted as Eney - realizing my error at once - Jack Harness doesn't have a beard like that. Met Ed and Anne Cox, renewed rapport with Burbee after 15 years, met what seemed like half of LA fandom, and most of the FAPA group, watched Ghod Himself playing poker with Burbee and Jacobs (Durb won the cash - enough for more beers), talked, talked, talked.... Saw Burbee drink ordinary canned beer - no homebrew. Talked some more. Discussed conventions and art shows and FAPA and other odd topics. And finally, convinced I'd better leave while I could still see a little -- after all, it was three hours later, according to my inner, EST clock - Al drove me back to the hotel.

Being on EST, I woke up at 4AM, instead of 7. Rolled over and finally got up at 7. Breakfast and to the meeting. Thank goodness they built the campus on the hill so you climbed on the way to, not on the way from, after the sessions. Registered, met lots of old friends, and finally the session started.

The welcoming speech was by the dean of the engineering school - who is apparently about to retire - at least he talked about the days when Berkeley was only a new school, and UCLA was UCSE. And about how we should really not be talking about how to conserve resources and stop the smog and such. After he finished we got down to business, with papers on calculation of exhaust composition and performance factors for various combinations of exotic fuels. At several points I felt moved to make remarks, not all of a nature designed to please the speaker. However, I seemed to have backing, and in general people at least listened to what I said without my having to use a Moskowitz tone. (It is flattering to have people come up and ask for your opinion on various matters, and see them accept your offhand statements as the final word. But, you learn not to make offhand statements, for fear they will haunt you.)

Dinner that evening was at some fancy-expensive place in Encino in the valley. There was an hour of free drinks before, courtesy of the several engine firms, with good snacks and good scotch. Fortunately, for the dinner was only fair - the prime ribs were good, but cold, the baked potato only fair, and the beans watery and blah. But the ride back was nice, with a nice view of the city from the hills. By that time I was tired and hit the hay instead of looking for the flesspots with some of the others.

Next morning was more meetings. After lunch, I decided to take a break and headed off to Hollywood for book-and-magazine shopping. This was a mistake, I found out the next day. But, I had fun, after riding miles and miles by buss I finally was walking along the street of stars - Hollywood Blvd with the stars set in the sidewalk bearing names of movie, radio, and television stars, plus some recording artists. I was interested to note some of the names I'd almost forgotten, and yet who had been favorites of mine. I did find Feeder (Chaliapin's name (as a movie star, when he made only one movie, and that in Europe), Ellington, as a recording artist when he had been in more movies than Chaliapin, who had made about 100 records. Of course the Duke has made about a 1000 sides.

Anyway, I located a couple of shops, and actually found some old pulps in one, after clambering up to storage space over the door via the only entrance, a long rolling ladder. But for 1919 Argosys and 1914 Adventures for 25c I would do it again. And there were a lot more of the 1922-30 vintage pulps with things of worth - Burrough Moon Maid series, for example - that I already had.

Back to the elevated atmosphere - relatively smog-free - of Westwood, and later out to dinner, somewhat foot-sore. Then back to rest, and to miss two phone calls - delivered to me next morning when I dropped off my key. One from Ghos himself, the other from Burb, with an invitation to come out and sample the fabulous Burbee food - and I don't mean Charles Burbee. I guess I'm just not in tune with hotels, especially in Los Angeles.

The morning was nice, but getting warm as I climbed up to LA's pride and joy the next morning. When I got there I found I had been selected, in my absence, to run a workshop on thermochemistry and thermodynamic functions and such stuff. This was somewhat of a shock, as I had no ideas as to what to say or how to get the thing off the ground. However, in spite of this problem, things got moving, and the 25-30 people who had stuck around for the third day and for this workshop - there was another at the same time with about the same number - managed to keep things moving for a couple of hours.

And then the meeting was over, and I was free until 1:45AM.

Leaving the hotel for the last time - somewhat less wealthy than when I arrived - I rode down to down-town LA, and checked my briefcase and coat. I investigated a couple of book shops, with no success. Then I stumbled onto a stamp store I remembered from my previous visit - and that killed the afternoon. They had a fabulous general stock, with loads of older single stamps - the kind you just don't find nowadays. So, I finally escaped just in time to reclaim my possessions from the department store.

Trusting myself once more to LAMT once more I rode a tripper cut-back bus out near the Trimble's, and walked a few blocks to Manthom House. There I found Ernie cutting the grass with something not usually seen in the decadent east - a hand-powered lawnmower. Inside was more fan-gab, although less strenuous than Sunday, and the best meal on the whole trip. [Bjo, I wasn't kidding; it was good.] Later Elmer came around, bring some street railway maps and such he'd been saving. I went into raptures over some of them; only the lack of space kept me from bringing them back with me. I'm hoping some transfer arrangement may develop via Chicago. Then urbee called, and we chatted, in Burbee fashion, for about 30 minutes. I did get to talk to Isabel; next time I'm going to get out there....

Finally came midnight, and the grand old custom of "getting Bill Evans to the train (plane, this time)" so familiar to Biz, began. Only this time I had more time. And in fact, made it at least an hour to the good. I'd forgotten John had been a cab driver, and so knew how to make real time. Even in LA. I don't think we went through more than two red lights....

Then at 1:45 we took off, and I could see the lights of LA below, and then the hills and the desert, lighted by a full moon, and looking like silvery water.

Two and a half hours later, at 6:15, just as I was getting well asleep, we came into Dallas airport, with the sun well up. As I headed across to check in for my flight to College Station I noted headlines on the papers; "DC-3 crashes at Dallas Airport". As I was going out by DC-3, I was a little perturbed. It turned out later that this was a private plane, not a regular airline. Still, after those big DC8s and Boeing 707s, the DC-3, squatting on its tail, seemed small. And this was a first class flight. But, I got on, and we took off. It seemed like a beautiful day for a flight; we were skimming along only a couple of feet high, and I could see the ground and structures and all very clearly. We stopped at Waco - and things happened. It seems that there was fog - fog in Texas? - and the next stop was closed in. The three or four for there got off, to proceed by ground transportation. College Station was still open, and they thought they could land. So, off we went. Soon we were flying over a sea of clouds - clouds below 2000 feet. Finally we started down, edging down and down and down. The pilot throttled back the two motors and dropped lower and lower. Still nothing but clouds were visible. suddenly we started up, with motors roaring. We went on to Houston.

It turned out that at that time visibility at College Station was 1/8 mile, with ceiling 2 feet. And no instrument control. We landed in a clear Houston - clear, hot, and humid. After breakfast, I went back to check on the return flight. At last they had a report showing clearing, and we left for the return trip - same plane, same pilot, same stewardess. This time we landed.

The professor I was to meet was waiting with his air-conditioned Cad - 1954 vintage. A short drive - the Station is a part of the college lands (Texas A&M) - and we were at the Chemistry Dept. I got the grand tour, pointing with pride. And it is worth pointing to. Had lunch at the union -- very decent - and visited the data center and toured the research labs. Easter vacation meant no classes or undergrads, but the graduate students were in force. Came 3 and I gave a talk - critical tables and non-critical computers - which seemed to be well received, as nearly as I could tell. Then to Bruno's place for a drink or two before plane time. Finally, to the airport - a ten minute drive - getting there in time to watch the plane circle and land. Off into the twilight, back to Dallas. The trip was nice - the ground below blooming with lights, and yet the ground features visible.

Had a four hour layover in Dallas, which was quite a strain. By then, I was minus sleep for some 36 hours (good training for conventions) and couldn't relax or I would have gone to sleep and missed the plane. Finally, they opened the gates, and I got aboard the Elektra II. For a coach flight, this was most luxurious, with wide seats. I did sleep until we started down over the Potomac, approaching DC. That became a little rough, and I was wide awake as we came in through rain clouds, and then circled for about 15 minutes before landing. For a change, DC weather was nice - cool and fresh, with the rain stopped, but streets still wet.

I walked out of the terminal, waited ten minutes for a cab, and finally got home about 6AM, just in time to catch some sleep before going in to work about noon. (For once, I was paid for sleeping on the job.) Since then, I've been trying to catch up.

I thought last Saturday I'd have time to do more. But, Russ Chauvenet lured the hermit of Hagerstown, down to see a ball game, and invited Eney and me to come along. So, I went. A wonderful day for the game - warm with a nice breeze. Not too good a game, tho. Some long balls hit, tho. Dinner afterwards at Hall's, on the waterfront, minus Russ, whose wife was sick. Put Harry on the bus, and home - to catch up on my immediate letters - the kind that say "Please remit."

So this is a four page Celephais. But next mailing.... Everyone 100 pages for the 100th Mailing? [I hope not....]

Bill

