

I. The Seattle - Tacoma Convention, 1961

And a thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all. A bit of a FAPA session was held somewhere on the north side of the most southerly corridor, second floor, at which the participants convinced Unca Elmer that mailing comments should be written. This shall be done. The mailing which last emanated prior to the convention will be reviewed, one magazine at a time, in depth. Unfortunately I don't know the mailing number, mainly because Rachel did a thorough job of housecleaning recently and I haven't found it since. Our lovely Phyllis H. Economou has offered to print these comments, and the 96th(?) mailing will be the most thoroughly reviewed mailing of all time.

The Economou deadline is unknown. It doesn't matter. It may take ten or twenty years before the bottom of the stack is attained.

II. The question of follow-up.

Another thing about which objections have been heard is the lack of follow-up. Specifically, what was the outcome of nooks and fardels? What was the best final statement of Caryl Chessman?

The nook and fardel question, including a lovely answer from Merriam-Webster, was in process of consolidation when the over-lovin' to whom I had just sworn marriage vows packed away the material. The last words of Caryl Chessman, however, are now ready for unveiling.

G. Gordon Dewey, the fabulous, was seated on the couch doing something else whilst I was reading. (Dewey had read the essay on Chessman's last words). I blurted, Here it is! This Chesterfield advertisement! These, ah these are the perfect last words!

(A recent acquisition is a paperback entitled The 100 Greatest Advertisements: Who Wrote Them And What They Did).

Dewey quietly spoke four words, the words in the advertisement.

Oh?

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I was in college, quoth Dewey, when that advertisement first came out. It was the first one to use a woman in a cigarette advertisement. And my professor in creative writing came in, and was he ever red-headed. And then he held the advertisement high, and said, "This is the entering wedge. Next thing you'll be seeing her putting it in her mouth!"

-- The Chesterfield advertisement came out in 1926. It showed a man and a woman seated on a cliff, overlooking some water, and the moon is full. The man smoketh. The woman says:

"Blow some my way."

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This is a good place for a little bit of bathroom humor:

When the last western conference was held in San Francisco, I took advantage of a break in the proceedings to call a young lady who once worked in our office. She assured me that she felt fine; that getting out of the Department and out of Los Angeles was the best thing she ever did; and volunteered her services fully to report the doings - at standard pay rates, of course. As a certified court reporter her income must be well over a thousand a month by now.

--Oh, and by the way, Elmer, I'm building a house in Berkeley. I'm getting tired of sidewalks and concrete, and would like to have some greenery for a change.

--Wonderful.

--And I insisted that the architect design the bathroom with paneled walls. You see, I'm a good liberal and would like to start a new and exclusive society.

--'Fraid I don't follow you, Ruthie.

--Well, this new society will be limited to those persons owning houses with wood-paneled walls. I'm going to call it the Birch John Society.

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Personal and urgent to Ruth Berman: I own about thirty yards of cotton material, decorated with scenes from Wizard of Oz, individual scenes maybe a foot on a side. Bjo has sewing machine, thinks you'd look good in skirt of said material. Will send vital-statistics to Bjo, and accept result as trade for Aphorretta:

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And now, a bit more bathroom humor:

This home of mine underwent renovation in January of 1961, a couple of months after my marriage. After we got a new bed and a new stove the wife decided that the toilet must go.

Ah, that toilet has bittersweet memories. Originally it had been high-mounted with a chain pull. The former owner of the house had relocated the flush tank to a much lower position, and in the process connected the tank and the john with a bastard pipe fitting that no plumber can duplicate. The joint dripped. And dripped for years. And the wood rotted away, so that towards the end the john would move under you, held in place solely by the plumbing. Also, the flush tank was too close to the john, so that the lid had to be held up by hand. Someday Mr. Burbec must speak about an incident that occurred at one New Year's Eve party here...

So finally the plumber, the carpenter, and my pocketbook could get together. Meanwhile, Rachel (my gorgeous wife) had gotten used to a toilet seat that was always down. Shee, too, can speak of an embarrassing occurrence with the new john...

Well, Buzz, you know how it is. The carpenter rips up all the linoleum or asphaltic tile or what have you and there you are with a bare wood floor and the problem of what is to go on it.

There is a building in Los Angeles, at the northeast corner of Sixth Street and Normandie Avenue, that has a facing material that I faunch over. Beautiful stuff. Imagine that you take a batch of egg-size gravel, spread it out on a flat metal plate, and pour high-quality concrete over it so that the conglomerate is slightly more than half-way buried in the concrete. The larger diameter of the mass, so the neighborhood kids won't pluck out the stones and leave unsightly holes. Then you take the mass and either saw off the top of the stones like with a marble saw, or just polish them down. Anyway you end up with a mess of tile-like rectangles, all the rocks sticking out of the concrete by about an eighth-of-an-inch, and the polished beauty of the gravel interior presenting never-ending, intriguing differences.

Oh, and these tiles are about six by eight inches. I thought long and deeply about flooring the john with them, including consideration of their effect on bare feet fresh-scrubbed from a hot soak. Well, an eighth-of-an-inch isn't much, especially since

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the angle is obtuse. . I decided that if my feet couldn't take it, there always is available the bath mat. But that is not the reason why the bathroom still has a floor of mixed linoleum and bare wood.

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Another fan and I were sitting around drinking beer and discussing these beautiful tiles, and he claimed that they were made in a single mass three or more feet on a side, then sanded down to the desired depth and the concrete was thereafter etched out with hydrochloric acid. He also claimed that there is a special kind of gravel, whose name I have forgotten, that as a result of millenia of erosion has been flattened on each side. This said he, is the kind of gravel that was used. He went further to estimate the cost at less than a dollar per square foot.

There are only about fifty square feet in the bath room. So the prime cost plus labor additive do not account for the existing bare wood floor.

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Most of you don't know this, but my nickname of God came long before fandom handed it to me. It goes back to high school days, and to my attempts to find summer-time jobs. I never found one. Oh, I'd go down town almost daily, and invariably ask at least one place for employment. Then I'd end up at the library and do more research into fascinating books.

Then I'd come home and if Pappy were home I'd report failure. Then would come the familiar story about his having full-time work since he was fourteen.

(Which

reminds me of my Uncle Roscoe. He's the fat one, you know. And his recurrent story of how grandpappy Perdue (that's the blind one that taught me how not to play chequers) bet the boys a dime that they couldn't learn how to milk. And Uncle Rock chuckling about how stupid he was -- you know, I never did learn how to milk. But your pappy won that dime).

And it was all started by Pappy. Every once in a while the family would be gathered for dinner, and a hush would fall. Pappy would sometimes look up from his soup, look at me, and grunt "Gawd." Sometimes, when he was feeling particularly ulcerish or disgusted, he would worship even further, grunting "Migawd."

Only Milton A. Rothman has heard my father's grunt..

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Do you want to know why there is bare wood in the bathroom? Same to you, buddy, and I'll tell you anyway:

The God-fearing free world and atheistic communism are in a cold war. Among the myriad facets of communism and of the cold war is the struggle for the loyalty and sympathy of the uncommitted nations. Unto each of us -- Yeay, even unto thee and thee and thee and me -- lieth the responsibility of not the least weapon unto the enemy handing.

And that is why half of my bathroom is still of bare, unpainted wood.

Do you think that I want the communists gleefully to boast, and to be able to prove to the uncommitted nations:

God has rocks in his head.

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Guest article, written last Saturday by another fan while Dale Hart was putting a new roof on my house and taking an occasional beer break, and Kenneth H. Bonnoll had me buttonholed talking about the precocity of his son...

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"Among those present were A, B, C, D, E, and another fan...."

How often, dear fandom, have you read those words? How often, dear fandom, have you ever given the least thought to the life, aspirations, and the previous condition of servitude of 'another fan'? You have given not the leastest least.-

And yet, such a fan exists, lives, breathes. He has aspired and he has served. I know. I am another fan. My credentials? I have none. Still, I read the first issue of "Amazing Stories" before the second issue was on the stands. I was pro-tem editor of an antediluvian Fanzine whose successor is still being published. When I am introduced to the latest literary lion of the Pro-Fan world the invariable answer is "oh, yes, I met you at the Xyzcon."

I am a source of embarrassment to my friends. When I am presented (FANS are never presented to me) they feel it necessary to add "He's a fan from a way back." The usual acceptance on the part of the FAN

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is a smile of condescension and a general feeling of "go way back and sit down."

Stop and think. There must be a reason. (Not for me to go a way back and sit down, but for my existence). On second thought, let's say there may be a reason. Why does World Fan Number 3 say "I and another fan were sitting at a bar when..."

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At this point the article ended, and another fan closed his blue eyes and dozed, the inch-and-a-half long ends of his straw-colored mustache gently waving with his breath. His unhappiness started about 1958 with Solacon reports, and there was a long while in which he was pleased with his anonymity. Last year someone forgot and referred to him by name. He was unhappy. I do not know whether he is happy or sad to be relegated to obscurity; but his anonymity will be preserved for a long time to come in this 'zine of mine. He do make a good drinkin' buddy.

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And that reminds me of another fan, Bob Wells by name. Works for the Long Beach Independent-Press Telegram. Should call him Dr. Wells, Ph.D., because among his reportorial duties was an expose of doctorates-for-sale, in which he became a Ph.D. with the Independent's money. The swindle school head drew six months jail time, if I recall correctly, and Wells a regional award. Well, Wells also writes two columns for his employer: Eye-opener, in the morning paper, and Night-cap for the evening. He and I enjoy trading stories.

Like: my professional title is associate engineer, Department of Public Utilities and Transportation. Local transportation is handled by a State agency, the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority. They're thinking of various types of express transit, including monorail, subway, and elevated. The agency has recently considered rubber-tired subway trains a la Paris, in which City they're called La Metro.

So I talked to Bob Wells, saying in effect that if they put this into effect it should be called Metro-Cal.

Mr. Wells (a good man) came back with a topper, to wit: I have a friend who is waiting for them to come out with Metrical with a pickalilly flavor.

--Why?

eat it with relish. --So he can

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Among my possessions are too many possessions. One of these puzzles me. It turned up a few years ago and must be worn to some future convention, once a satisfactory answer is found. Description:

A pin-on type badge, circular, blue enamel. Diameter four inches. Atop the blue enamel is overlaid a white circular rim, enamel, perhaps a quarter inch wide. Within this circle, in letters three-quarters of an inch high or so (sixty-point) is overlaid in white enamel the simple question:

A S K
M E
W H Y

All knowledge and all intellectual capacity resides in fandon. Somewhere in this pool of ultimate knowledge rests the answer to what may be said to Joe Greenhorn Fan when the aforesaid badge/seal/insignia/emblem is in plain sight, say upon the left coat lapel close to the necktie -- the necktie?

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And this would be a good point at which to shout a mighty hulloa of agreement to Mr. Harry Warner (a good man) and his statement that he keeps his work and his fanning separate. After all, who knows when some disgruntled fan may underhandedly strike at another through his employer. Verbal chatter is one thing .. damn few of us carry concealed tape recorders, such as I did in 1957 and still do occasionally. But something in writing, emanating from a proveable typewriter, wherein a man bitches about his work, is another thing.

I have just drawn a line through a paragraph for the foregoing reason. It was a good paragraph, too.

But there are fascinating kiss my aspects to the work. Last month it was necessary to set up with the Commander, Highland Parque Division, Los Angeles Police Department, a conference together with other interested parties in order to determine how a parade could take place with a minimal interference to mass transit. Oh that poor parade chairman -- we outnumbered him seven to one and convinced him that he should change the route of his proposed parade.

Last week it was the Chinatown parade to inwelcome the new year, this being the year of the tiger. And did we ever have ammunition -- last year, the damn band sat themselves down in the middle of Hill Street and played a ninety-minute band concert.

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elmmurings volume one number one whole number one, which is continued onto page eight mainly because one has forgotten how to set this machine to one-and-one-half spaces vertically, in which case one would be through two pages ago....

So five police officers, two gentlemen from the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority, and myself overwhelmed the lone parade sponsor and convinced him that people on buses had a right to get home for supper and it wasn't right to hold them up in a traffic jam for forty minutes like he did last year...

Tomorrow, another conference in the office of the Commander, Newton Street Division, Los Angeles Police Division, to try to persuade the parade chairman that a parade along Central Avenue will create more ill will than it will generate good will. Central Avenue is serviced by trolley coaches, which cannot be detoured more than the length of the trolley contactors. We will point out that the average parade costs the City about nine cents per spectator for police patrol alone, and endeavor to get the gentleman to amend his route to minimize interference with mass transit.

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End prepared and prethought text. Let us at this point think of F. Towner Laney, and of how he once said to me Elmer, when you get in a spot like when you got eight pages to fill and you ain't got the words you just sit down and jam with yourself until you hit bottom.

I don't got a complete set of my outpourings. I don't give a particular damn whether I've repeated myself or not; but I would like to think that all thoughts are new. This time the man wants five and one half pages. They've already been written elsewhere, in the matter of the Minutemen of America. That's a fine organization, Meyer, 'cept for the chance that one might misinterpret minute in the special sense rather than temporal. It isn't. I must suggest to our honourable founder, Mr. Harry Merkin, that a physical examination be given to prospective members.

Those who are minute men in the spatial sense -- they gotta go, Meyer.

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