

FANTASY FICTION

the national fantasy review

FIELD

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SPOTLITE on FANDOM

LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY OPERATION For the benefit of those anxious long-term subscribers and others who have been patiently awaiting FFF #19 for more than a month, here is the excuse. On October 20, while at work at my lonely vigil, I came down with what I was later to discover was appendicitis. (I am writing in the first person of Harvey Inman.) My trouble was diagnosed as gall bladder trouble by the local medical profession, and in due course a yawning opening was created in the appropriate place. Out came the gall bladder, with a minimum of ceremony. Further browsing around by the surgeon disclosed the deplorable condition of my appendix. With a few more strokes I was parted with another component with which I had hoped to enjoy a lifelong association. ... Among hospital visitors were local fans B. Joe Fekete, Bill Bowers, and Bill Mallardi, who gazed with horror upon the wreckage of the former hard-drinking, hard-fighting, etc., fan. ... So that is my excuse for being late this time. Amateur publishing just did not seem to be of pressing importance at the time. My health should be back to normal in a few more weeks, but I still feel it necessary that I cut this issue shorter than normal. Also, all this is being composed on stencil and what news items I have will be presented more informally than usual. Let's see what happens.

A letter from Avram Davidson, who recently moved to Mexico and is somehow editing Fantasy & SF by remote control, mentions briefly his misfortunes in making the move. He speculates: "Had we known how often and expensively our car would break down en route to the Mexican border, we would have attended the Con (DisCon), flown all the way -- and still saved money!" A further epithet in reference to the trip, I hesitate to reproduce. Avram further says he is passing along James Blish's remarks at the DisCon, favoring a general revival of lettercolumns in the pro mags, to his publisher. "Our recently instituted lettercolumn has met with mixed receptions. Heroby I extend a general invitation to write letters to F&SF -- not just 'Podink's story was the greatest and I liked Glop's illo', but 'Thought Provoking Communications!'" That quote from Avram Davidson, whose address is now: Quinta Chelius, Libertad 13, Anacameca, Mex., Mexico.

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Joe Fekete, local Ohio fan, who has been living in Chicago since July, 1962, has returned to Ohio, and is living in the Cleveland area. He was able to get a job in Cleveland and expects the move to be permanent. Joe denies a rumor that he was married while in Chicago. During the short time he has been back, he has turned himself into a hotbed of fannish activity. For instance, I am in receipt of a form letter stating there will be a meeting November 30 at the Cleveland-Sheraton Hotel in Cleveland for the purpose of forming the Clevention II committee and making a bid for the con in 1966. I will not be able to attend because of my work schedule, but there will be an FFF spy present to report for next issue. Joe's new address: 12315 Plover, Lakewood, Ohio.

John Boardman says two sf programs are currently broadcast over WKCR and WKCR-FM (NYC vicinity). WKCR is a closed-circuit AM station local to the Columbia campus, while WKCR-FM broadcasts an educational schedule to the public at 89.9 mc. One of the programs is "Dreadful John at Midnight," at 12:00 AM every Tuesday. The other program is Fred Lerner's "Exploring Science Fiction," on alternate Wednesday evenings at 8:30.

I recently submitted a short article to BROADCAST ENGINEERING, a technical mag of the broadcast industry, with the hope of adding a new rejection slip to my collection from PLANET STORIES and STARTLING. A few weeks later I was shocked and disconcerted to receive a check instead. I swiftly exchanged it for real money before someone changed his mind.

Thomas S. Gardner, writer in the sf field in the '30's and an active fan and reader in the field for some 30 years, was found dead in his Rutherford, N. J. home on November 11. The death was listed by authorities as a suicide from swallowing an unknown amount of nicotine sulphate. He was 65 and had been employed at Hoffman-La Roche in Clifton, N. J., since 1946. In recent years he had been a member of the Eastern SF Association. Less than two months ago, he sold the bulk of his sf collection to Gerry de la Ree.

One of the most important fannish documents in a long while is almost ready for distribution. Dick Eney is publishing a lengthy article by Alva Rogers which is a critique on, supplement, and otherwise concerned with Francis T. Laney's well-known "Ah, Sweet Idiocy!"

Mike Deckinger says two new fantasy films have been released, which he considers above average in quality: "The Haunting" and "Liss of the Vampire." ... Former NY fan Elliot Shorter, now in the Army, will go to Georgia for six weeks of training as an MP. ... English fan Peter Singleton expects to be in the hospital for another two years. #

THE FANZINE FIELD

by Mike Deckinger

KNOWABLE #5 (John Boardman, 592 16th Avenue, Brooklyn 18, N. Y. 11218, irregular, 25¢) John's ponderous and over-labored Story continues in this issue, taking up nearly ten pages with the further account of the adventures of Sir Tinley the Purest and his squire Dumbert. Much of the background is derivative from other aspects of heroic fantasy, and if you normally go for this sort of thing then chances are you won't object too strongly to The Story. If there is a point to this weighty conglomeration I've lost it, but John seems to enjoy writing it, and that's justification enough. There are two pages of John's DisCon impressions, which oddly enough contains the first criticism of a deplorable Japanese cartoon series called "Astro-Boy." Everyone else seemed so overcome by the sheer novelty of its presentation that they overlooked its basic -- and many -- faults. "Science Made Too Easy" has a few good lines, and a skimpy lettercolumn closes things. KNOWABLE remains on the same quality level that prior issues have established. It's not really bad, but there appears to be no effort towards improvement.

ENCLAVE #4 (Joe Pilati, 111 South Highland Avenue, Pearl River, N. Y. 10965, bi-monthly, 35¢) This is a fanzine to watch. If it continues to grow at its present rate of expansion, it will be a sure Hugo contender in the years to come. Joe, a refugee from satire-comic fandom, has finally concentrated on a fanzine that is more of a fixture of our fandom. The results are impressive and highly favorable. This issue is the best ENCLAVE to see print and the largest (66 pages). The material consists of a meticulously detailed, though strangely uninvolving, appraisal of ANALOG by Paul Williams, a jazz column by Ted White, some "Mother Goose Rejects" of Don Edwing's, which should have been ENCLAVE rejects as well, a flurry of book reviews, film reviews, and record reviews, none of them really bad, and a long and entertaining lettercol. The repro is excellent, Joe manages to project his opinions with a minimum of confusion, and there is a steady, assured air about the fanzine that enhances its readability. ENCLAVE has captured an accomplished staff of columnists: Ted White on jazz, the Coulsons on folk singing, Bob Stewart on films, Skip Williamson on anything (and beginning next issue Jung and Thoughtless from Cinder). Skip Williamson proves he's a better cartoonist than columnist by getting himself involved in a needless semantic tangle over theology, Thomas Paine, and a few other things which are never satisfactorily resolved or even explained. And Paul Williams easily establishes himself as the most worthy recipient of the Robert Jennings Oak Leaf Cluster for Sheer Wordiness and Typewriter Tremor.

CRY #170 (CRY, Box 92, 507 Third Avenue, Seattle 4, Washington, 25¢, trades, letters, bi-monthly) CRY is still the same old CRY as ever, and let us all prostrate ourselves and fervently offer the deep conviction that it remains this way, with not a smudge or wrinkle to tarnish

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its image. Of course, Wally Weber's "Minutes" is gone, the victim of CRY's altered schedule, but Wally is still here, and that's sufficient. Here too is John Berry, as always, an ATOM cartoon cover, some good editorial chattering, the famous lettercolumn, which is not up to the high standards of a few years ago, and other odds and ends. "CRY of the Readers" has become less of a selective clique and more of a comment-and-complain forum. The change shows and will probably remain permanent. This issue leads off with Wally Weber's DisCon report, which snubs the social activities by skipping mention of the parties. Considering the fact that the parties were among the best I can recall from four world-cons, this is a disservice to the readers that deserves correction. Not that I expect anyone to recall with crystal clarity how the parties went, most of the attendees didn't seem to be in the mood to recall anything, except where the last drink went. And John Boardman was the character in the Black Dunce Cap and Priests Robes who summoned up the demons that put a halt to the impromptu swordplay between Fritz Leiber and L. Sprague de Camp at the opening.

HYPHEN #34. (Walt Willis, 170 Upper M'Ards Rd., Belfast 4, N. Ireland, bi-monthly, 15¢) This is a special issue of HYPHEN and entirely devoted to the Chicon section of Walt's trip and travel report. It represents Willis at his best and most productive, offering some cogent criticisms of our national institutions like Greyhound and the Pick-Congress, and some astute reporting and commentary on the convention and attendees, including the famous Heinlein Arrivals. Now that AXE has folded, the remainder of the travel report will be appearing in HYPHEN, which is just one more reason why you should get it if you don't already. There is a short supply of typical Willis puns (Why does a Chicon cross the road?), none quite so devastating as those of yore, but then Willis was under a terrific strain throughout the convention and unable to adequately employ his pun-making faculties. Next issue (it says) HYPHEN will return to its usual format; the absence of such is painfully evident here, despite the high quality of the con-report. Walt's acute reporting style and his captivating sense of humor make this report definitely worth obtaining. #

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