

FILE 770



WJ'07
"The Client"

Editorial Notes by Mike Glycer

Now we get into the heart of the experiment. I have to say that blogging really energizes my fanwriting. Instead of a desk full of semi-legible notes on napkins written during my morning commute, I've got a string of items finished and posted online. I've also got momentum that carries over to other writing.

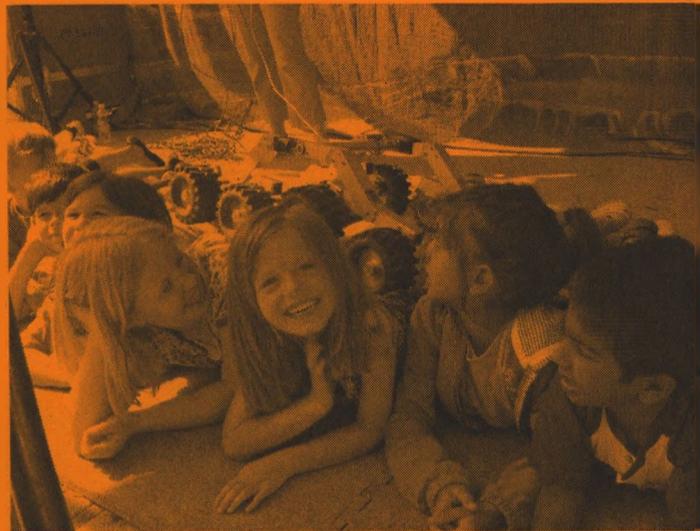
There are around 30 pages of material in this issue that never appeared on my blog – in other words, most of it. James Bacon and I do some last minute fanzine Hugo handicapping. My epic tribute, "Silverberg and Resnick – That's Entertainment!", is finally ready. John Hertz reports several valuable news stories. Mystery writers Mary Reed and Eric Mayer answer my questions about writing historical fiction. James Bacon writes about a day of his honeymoon visit to South Africa. And so on.

Most of the short news items that lead off this zine, though, get posted online as I write them. How does that affect the experience of reading the fanzine? Is it a problem? Or one that only affects the 17 fans who read my blog?

Sierra Grace, Mars Rock: Sierra Grace visited JPL's Open House in May with Grandpa Steve and Grandma Anne. When she got home I asked what she liked the most? My 6-year-old answered, "Playing a Mars rock."

At the Open House, people could watch 700-pound robots glide under artificial stars in JPL's Robodome, learn how spacecraft are prepared for their journeys in special clean rooms, and get an up-close view of full-scale models of Mars rovers.

Sierra joined a line of kids on the floor pretending to be Mars rocks as a model Mars rover drove over their backs, demonstrating how the way real rovers handle the uneven terrain.



Miscellany: When you log onto Amazon.com they always pitch something to you. The latest I got showed a product I had viewed yesterday, the DVD of *12 o'clock High* (Gregory Peck). It said that 95% of the people who buy something after viewing that product buy the DVD. The next 2% buy the DVD of *Midway*. Okay, that makes sense, another WWII movie. But the last 2% buy a copy of the new Harry Potter book. Huh?

SF Clubs That Own Their Clubhouses

Cheryl Morgan posted an entertaining answer to someone who asked her whether it's time for the Bay Area SF Association to start a Building Fund and get its own clubhouse. (Short answer: They've had a building fund for years.)

In his question, the fan said: "four science fiction clubs in the United States own their own clubhouse (NESFA, LASFS, BSFS and SFSFS)."

Many fans heard in 1997 about the South Florida Science Fiction Society (SFSFS) joining the ranks of sf clubs with their own clubhouse. Fewer heard that in 2001, due to a lack of funds, SFSFS moved out of its clubhouse and resumed a nomadic existence. Despite the Fanac.org site having posted that information, it doesn't register because the main page on the history of the original 1997 clubhouse leaves readers with the impression there is a clubhouse to this day.

A second fine point that should be made about the statement that four sf clubs in the U.S. own/owned clubhouses is that, in hindsight, there is doubt that SFSFS ever *owned* a clubhouse. The public perception in 1997 when SFSFS announced the original one-room clubhouse in Fort Lauderdale was that they owned the place, but if that was the case why did the club remain there such a short time? The answer is that SFSFS' first clubhouse was taken under a 2-year lease rather than purchased.

The lease expired in 1999 and the group relocated to three rented rooms with a bathroom and kitchen, paying \$400/month. That arrangement lasted until June 2001, when the club left and moved its stuff into storage. Sadly, they could not keep up payment on the storage facility either, and in 2003 announced plans to sell off their library (see *File 770 #142*, page 21), reportedly 6000 volumes of fanzines and books.

It seems likely that only three sf clubs in the U.S. ever owned a clubhouse. Other groups have rented club facilities for a time. For just one of many examples, the New Jersey SF Society rented meeting space until 1998, then gave it up when they could no longer afford the rent. LASFS rented meeting places at times throughout its history before acquiring a clubhouse in 1973. Actual *ownership* of their clubhouses is what distinguishes LASFS, NESFA and BSFS from a lot of sf clubs that also have regular meeting places.

File 770 153

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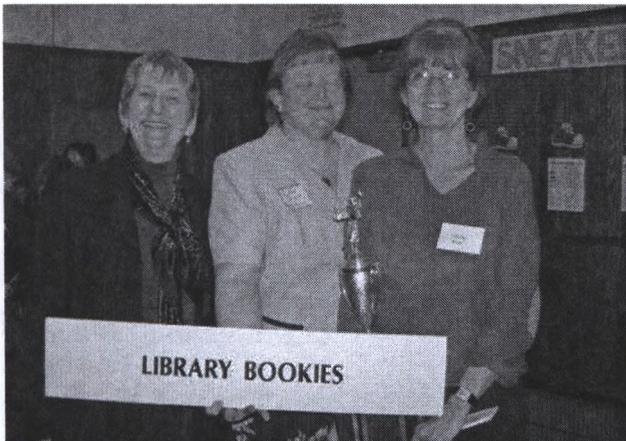
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News of Fandom



Dennett Is Letter Perfect

The "Library Bookies," with NESFA's Gay Ellen Dennett (center) and non-fans Rose Doherty and Lindsey Kiser, survived a 30-minute duel with the Needham Democratic Town Committee team to win the Needham Education Foundation's 18th Annual Spelling Bee. They triumphed by correctly spelling "formicivorous," an adjective that means "ant-eating."

It was the first win ever for the "Library Bookies," a team that has competed in every Spelling Bee since the beginning (a team by that name, not the same team members). Each year the NEF's "Library Bookies" team is composed of a trustee, a staff member, and a member of the supporting Friends group. Adding Lindsey Kiser (right) this year may have helped, because her teams have won the Spelling Bee at least seven times.

Mars Geological Features Named for Williamson, Zelazny, C.S. Lewis & Fredric Brown

Jack Williamson, Roger Zelazny, C.S. Lewis and Fredric Brown recently had features on Mars named after them by officials of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Mars Rover project.

Patricia Rogers of Albuquerque made the announcement on April 11 during the 32nd Annual Jack Williamson Lectureship at Eastern New Mexico University. "The features named for Jack and Roger are on Mitchell-tree Ridge near the Columbia Hills," said Rogers. Melinda Snodgrass says that when they heard "the first two were our own Jack Williamson and Roger Zelazny, it had most of us in tears."

It was Rogers' suggestion that led to the naming of craters on Mars after sf writers.

In November 2006, Rogers heard a lecture by Dr. Larry Crumpler at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History. Crumpler is Vulcanologist on the staff of the Museum and also part of JPL's team for the Mars Rovers.

"He is also one of the folks who get to name features on Mars, especially at the Spirit site," said Rogers. "During his talk that evening he mentioned a feature named Clovis, then said the Spirit Rover's next move was to head south. I sat there and thought, 'Hummm - what is south of Clovis... Portales. And who lived in Portales... Jack Williamson. It sure would be cool if a feature on Mars was named after Jack.'" She spoke to Crumpler after the lecture and he was receptive to the idea.

Whether these names, or any others given to Mars' features by the JPL scientists, will

become permanent remains to be seen. As Dr. Tim Parker, a JPL geologist working on the rover mission, explained in a 2004 interview: "We give names to features near the rovers for convenience. But it's important to remember they're all unofficial."

The International Astronomical Union is ultimately responsible for naming land features on planets and their moons. The Gazette of Planetary Names explains, for example, large craters, approximately 60 km and larger, are named for deceased scientists who have contributed to the study of Mars; writers and others who have contributed to the lore of Mars.

MUSIC TO DESTROY
YER HEARING IS SOOO
YESTERDAY! THIS
MUSIC WILL DESTROY
YER AUTOIMMUNE
SYSTEM!



RISTORANTE CELEBRITY

JPL previously accorded Williamson and Zelazny a less exclusive honor by including their names among over 1 million placed on a microchip aboard the Stardust spacecraft that visited Comet Wild 2 in 2004.

Widespread Sickness at Wiscon

At least 50 people fell ill at Wiscon over the May 23-26 weekend. But even some of those reeling from flu-like symptoms nevertheless wrote blog entries about the experience while the con was still going on, including Jed Hartman, editor of *Strange Horizons*.

The rapidly-spreading sickness triggered an investigation by Madison & Dane County health officials. They told the media that several of the dozens who fell ill were developing symptoms soon after arriving, and they spread the unidentified illness to other attendees through shared food, common surfaces and personal contact. They did not think the illness originated from food served by the hotel.

2008 CUFF Delegate Chosen

Lance Sibley was selected as the 2008 Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF) delegate. He attended this year's Convention, held in conjunction with Keycon, May 16-19, in Winnipeg.

The Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF) is a Canadian national fund, which provides for an Eastern Canadian or a Western Canadian science fiction fan to attend Convention, the annual convention of the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association. Traditionally, the location of Convention alternates between Eastern and Western Canada. The CUFF delegate is chosen from individuals residing in the opposite region of Canada.



Eric Lindsay in the cockpit of the Tiger Moth.

Lance is very active in Fandom in the Toronto area and beyond. He has been involved with Polaris (previously named Toronto Trek), the 2003 Toronto Worldcon, the 2006 Toronto Gaylaxicon, and the 2009 Montreal Worldcon in various senior roles." [Thanks to Murray Moore for the information.]

The Red Baron of Airlie Beach

Eric Lindsay experienced stunt flying as a passenger in a Tiger Moth over Airlie Beach earlier this year. "I was given a free ticket for an acrobatic ride as a Xmas present by a local architect neighbour for whom I did a web site." He posted a batch of photos afterwards, but explained: "No photos [taken] while we were actually doing the acrobatics. I was too busy holding on after the first loop."

John Pomeranz Meets the Press

John Pomeranz, Washington D.C. area fan, was quoted in the May 19 issue of *Tax Notes Today*. An attorney with expertise on tax-exempt organizations, he was asked to comment on the Alliance Defense Fund's plan to persuade clergy to defy federal tax law and preach about candidates from the pulpit the weekend of Sept. 27-28:

John Pomeranz, a partner at Harmon, Curran, Spielberg & Eisenberg LLP, Washington, who represents churches and other section 501(c)(3) organizations, said he would discourage pastors from engaging in ADF's protest. Although Pomeranz said he's interested in seeing the results of ADF's "experiment," he also said he's not advising any of his clients to serve as "guinea pigs."

Aussie Collectors Look at Long-Term Solution

Creating a permanent science fiction institution and research collection in Australia is the goal of Meteor Incorporated, a not-for-profit corporation founded in 2007 and led by Bill Wright, Mark Loney, Carey Handfield, Rob Gerrand and Russell Blackford, with Paul Bray as President.

Their organization will accomplish its objectives by preserving great Australian collections of genre publications and memorabilia when the current owners can no longer maintain them. It has started raising money to buy premises and set up a fully functioning library and research facility.

Bill Wright has endowed Meteor Inc. with 50,000 shares in an Australian biotech company, Cytosia Limited, listed on the Australian Stock Exchange with a pipeline of mainly anti-cancer drugs some of which have advanced to Phase II human trials. In March 2008 those shares were worth around \$18,000.

Anyone interested in supporting Meteor Inc. can become a member. The Joining fee is (A)\$20 and the Annual Membership fee is (A)\$20. The website states, "Membership of Meteor Inc requires adherence to its rules, commitment to its objectives and, of course, ongoing payment of the annual fee. If you are one of those special people, write to the Secretary for an application form today." [Via Australian SF Bullsheet #75]

Medical Updates

Edwina Harvey wrote in the latest issue of her newzine, *Australian SF Bullsheet* #74, that her cataract surgery went well, "though she has since had a mild overdose of Battestar Galactica DVDs."

Rusty Hevelin had his left hip replaced on May 20. It went perfectly. By June 14, Gay Haldeman and Steve Leigh were able to bring him home from the rehab unit. Gay posted online, "He's doing just fine, walking with the walker better than he was before the surgery and with almost no pain."

Elliot Shorter had surgery on May 1 to amputate one of his feet. At that time he was suffering total kidney failure and was in the ICU at Rhode Island Hospital in Providence. Reportedly, he recovered enough to be

moved to a skilled nursing and physical rehab center, but according to Mark Blackman, on June 8 he was returned to the RIH intensive care unit, intubated, and on June 9 moved to the VA Hospital.

On June 18, Don D'Amassa reported that Shorter "has not been conscious for almost two weeks now and is on a ventilator. From what the doctors and nurses won't say, it seems unlikely that he will regain consciousness."

Shorter's many claims to faanish fame include working on the early issues of *Locus* and winning TAFF in 1970.

Bruce Dane Hospitalized: David Klaus reports: "On June 2, long-time Colorado (and formerly Arizona/California) science fiction convention fan, folk musician, and Worldcon volunteer Bruce Dane, already ill with degenerative disc disease, fell while taking his youngest daughter to a movie and was paralyzed 'from the nipples down,' according to his former wife, Michelle."

"He was taken to a Colorado Springs hospital and underwent an emergency laminectomy (which appears to have gone well) on Thursday, June 5th to relieve pressure on his spinal cord. He currently is in Intensive Care — he needed to be intubated and subsequently underwent a tracheotomy to relieve irritation of his mouth and throat from the ventilator tube. Currently he is in and out of consciousness; Michelle says she believes he has been occasionally lucid since the tracheotomy but she is not certain: due to being on the ventilator he cannot speak.



“Michelle, and Bruce’s adult daughters Meera and Kelly, have been at his bedside in shifts, more-or-less around the clock.

“Bruce has been my good friend for thirty years and has suffered much in the last five — I’m worried this may more than he can physically take. Please give good wishes/pray/spell for him and his immediate and extended families as is appropriate for you.”

Margene Bahm posted online April 6, “I was diagnosed last week with Stage I Breast Cancer. It is small and treatable. I have every confidence that everything will be fine but the next couple of months will be dicey. I hope to be much better very soon. I just thought everyone should know from me rather than hear it second hand.”

Fancylopedia Update

Jim Caughran, announced in May that the latest additions to the online Fancylopedia were Jean Weber’s updates of the articles about Fan Funds, GUFF and DUFF.

Weber’s list of a fund winner’s duties includes: Fund winners become administrators of the fund until the next winner returns from a trip; Fund winners are expected to publish a trip report.

Well, I always do expect them to write a report, and some funds enjoy a good track record when it comes to that. A surprising number of TAFF winners have not felt obligated in that way. Fortunately, there is Chris Garcia’s good example to point out (donation required for access to the full online report; individual chapters have been published in several recent fanzines that are freely available on <http://www.eFanzines.com>).

Everybody Must Get Estoned

Eve Ackerman, the Florida fan who writes historical romance as Darlene Marshall, is pleased to announce the publication of her

books in Estonian. She’s also looking for someone who reads Estonian to tell her how they turned out, because it looks to her like they put in way too many vowels.

The Estonian editions are Kapten Sinisteri armuke (*Captain Sinister’s Lady*), Salakaubavedaja pruut (*Smuggler’s Bride*) and Piraadi saak (*Pirate’s Price*), available at fine Estonian bookstores (and from the publisher, Odamees.)

When Eve searched for an Amazon.ee bookselling website she found that URL is for an Estonian body building site that includes the “Arnold Classic.”

“One can only imagine why ‘Amazon’ is the link there,” says Eve, who must have the requisite imagination because the next thing she did was click on the link from Amazon.ee to the Swedish Body Building site. “Oh my...I think my monitor just exploded.”

She’s also pleased to report that the Darlene Marshall novels *Captain Sinister’s Lady* and *Pirate’s Price* tied with each other as winners of the 2007 Eppie Award for Best Historical Romance.

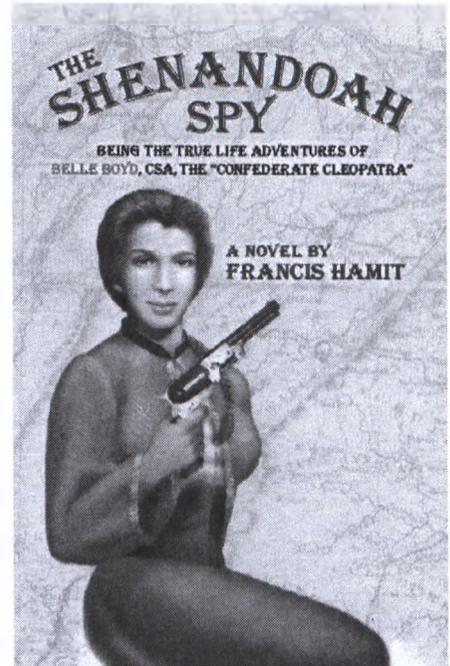
No Jail for “Darth Vader”

The Welshman who dressed up as Darth Vader, wearing a black plastic bag for a cape, and attacked two founders of a Jedi church on March 25, received a suspended sentence when he appeared on court on May 13. His defense attorney explained that the spirits were especially strong in Hughes that day – for he had just drunk most of a 10-liter box of wine.

New from Brass Cannon Books

A handsome cover adorns the new print-on-demand edition of Francis Hamit’s Civil War novel *The Shenandoah Spy*.

The Shenandoah Spy is based on the true story of Belle Boyd, a young woman who became one of the most famous personalities of the U.S. Civil War. A scout and spy for



Turner Ashby’s 7th Virginia Cavalry, she was instrumental in the success of Stonewall Jackson’s famous Valley Campaign of 1862. At the Battle of Front Royal on May 23, 1862, Belle ran across the battlefield under fire to deliver her vital intelligence. She became the first woman in American history to be commissioned an Army officer.

The illustration of a Belle Boyd was done by David Martin, a well known artist and illustrator that Hamit met at Bubonicon last year. The jacket’s final design is by George Mattingly.

You can get a personally signed copy from Hamit if you buy it from his website, <http://www.brasscannonbooks.net/sspy.htm>.

The cost currently is \$18.95 plus sales tax (California residents only) and \$3.95 shipping.

**ROSE-MARIE LILLIAN: AWARD-WINNING TEACHER
BY GUY H. LILLIAN III**

Rosy’s teaching job at LSU-S – that’s Louisiana State University at Shreveport – has been going well, but I didn’t realize how well until we were invited to a faculty awards party. Recognizing her need to support the school, I went to support her. True, I didn’t know anyone, but the orr-dervs were tasty and I never pass up free food. But then the dean of the College of Liberal Arts rose to present the plaques and checks.

He said the honors were being given to teachers and researchers, tenured professors and adjuncts. The six folks being hailed, said he, were simply remarkable. He gave an award to a distinguished re-

searcher, and then began describing an outstanding adjunct, new to the school, whom they hoped to lure into staying in the Communications Department ... *Rose-Marie Lillian*.

La belle nearly flipped. She beamed with pleased astonishment the rest of the night. I knew she was doing well ... but I didn’t know *how* well. *This* well. *Very* well.

Let’s hear it for the girl!

Next fall she’s promised a full-time job with full-time salary. She’ll be overseeing the student newspaper and teaching three classes in communications – news writing, feature writing, and a general media course. I’m relieved that she’s finally getting some of the recognition in this benighted state that she deserves. Since Louisiana’s public defenders are moving towards our promised pay hike with all the alacrity of a slug crawling through molasses, I’m relieved in other ways, too, but that’s nothing. Mostly, I’m simply *proud*.

And the Prix Aurora for Best Fanzine Goes to... No Award*

**No, not your zine, Marty Cantor!*

by Taral Wayne

Well, the bandwidth is buzzing with news of the Auroras, presented at Keycon in May. I got the news from several angles at once, being part of the Unofficial, Self-Appointed Board of Old Farts Who Conspire to Control the Convention and Auroras Behind Everyone's Back. While no one thought it worthwhile to mention the other categories, it seemed to excite everyone's sense of the absurd that the voters in their wisdom chose *No Award* in the fanzine category over what must be the only generally available Canadian fanzine of the age, *Opuntia*. This would seem to indicate that to the average Canadian fan, in a field of *one* fanzine, *none* is their preference.

One of the USABOFWCCABEB members suggested the fanzine is dead, and the results are "probably indicative that the fan awards need to be reconceptualized. Fanzines are, well, dead. We need "best Second Life Island" or "Best Webzine" or "Best SF Blog" award or something to replace it." Well we all know the fanzine isn't really dead -- eFanzines is full of them, and there's a few even known to still appear on paper of all things. In my view it confirms something I had suspected for sometime. Fanzines are just dead in Canada for some reason. Even though a small number (somewhere between one and three) still exist, evidently no Canadian fan wants to read them. My suggestion was to simply abolish the fanac category, and not replace it. That would save a few bucks for the convention charged with making that year's awards. While at it, why not rename the Aurora's as well, to reflect more accurately the nature of Canadian fandom. My suggestion was "Passive, Suck-Up-to-Prodom, Party Fandom".

Why the sarcasm? Frankly, fanzine fandom is the only bloody part of SF fandom I give a damn about. If its not part of Canadian fandom, I guess neither am I. Which is peculiar given who's Fan GoH at the Montreal Worldcon.

I'm of two minds about the wisdom of putting my name to this, since it's highly critical of Canadian fandom when I should be doing everything to promote it, but what the hell... the people putting on Anticipation are Canadian fans and probably don't read F770. My apologies should I be wrong on that score.

Current Aurora Award Categories

Best Long-Form Work in English / Meilleur livre en français

Best Short-Form Work in English / Meilleure nouvelle en anglais

Meilleure nouvelle en français / Best Short-Form Work in French

Best Work in English (Other) / Meilleur ouvrage en anglais (Autre)

Best Work in French (Other) / Meilleur ouvrage en français (Autre)

Artistic Achievement / Accomplissement artistique

Fan Achievement (Publication) / Accomplissement fanique (Publication)

Fan Achievement (Organizational) / Accomplissement fanique (Organisation)

Fan Achievement (Other) / Accomplissement fanique (autre)

An Immodest Proposal (Concerning the Aurora Award) by Taral Wayne

My first comments were of a satirical nature, but you must admit that the result in the fan publication area of the Aurora was unexpectedly funny. But I think the irony is a pointed one. What I think the voter is telling us is that he or she reads no fanzines, Canadian or otherwise. If anyone took offense, that wasn't my intention.

However, if we want to talk of this in a serious way -- and it seems we do -- the time does seem to have come to tweak the rules. Several people have spoken of a need to include electronic or digital forms of publication in the Fan Activity (Publications) field, and this seems the simplest means of accomplishing the desired update. Indeed, I wasn't even aware that the current rules explicitly omitted websites, blogs, or e-mailed zines from consideration. But even if the rules do not, it would be better if the new media were explicitly included.

Wording may indeed be a little tricky. It's been pointed out that somehow distinctions may have to be drawn between mere on-line journals and actual zines, based not on the medium but the content. (Then again... must a distinction be drawn? Personal writing can excel as well.) It might be best if one person were to draft an initial revision of the current rules, and then submit it to discussion to

two or three collaborators for presentation to the entire "board." Linda Ross-Mansfield has more or less volunteered, I believe, and I have no objection to Linda writing the rough draft and choosing her collaborators.

Of course, we ought to be prepared for another surprise. Even though we might recognize new electronic forms of fanac in the rules, there is no guarantee Canadians will read those either.

None of this sounds revolutionary, though in practice it might require exact wording and some clear thinking.

I want to suggest something that is revolutionary though. It seems to me that since that Keycon ages ago, when I proposed them, the fan categories have produced an odd assortment of results. Literally apples and oranges. Of course, that was the original idea -- to try to recognize any sort of fan activity fairly. In retrospect, though, it seems the attempt was less successful than I'd like. Do we really have a basis of comparison between guys who do humorous Sadam Hussein imitations, whistle "Oh, Canada" through their nose, cut out amusing paper dolls, or happen to have written a review of every significant Canadian SF novel over the last ten years? Are these really equally significant fanac? Maybe there's such a thing as "too fair?"

Meanwhile, whoever hosts the Convention is charged with seeing to the manufacture of nine awards that year, three of them for the fan categories. A significant cost. And when the results are announced, one imagines the audience nodding in agreement when the writers are announced for long and short, English and French fiction, but do they react the same way to the fan categories? Or do they stare in blank amazement? Who was that again? What did they do? Wrack up ten bazillion points in Warhammer?

So here's my proposal. Do away with the fan categories once and for all. It's long been clear, I think, that fandom in Canada is hopelessly Balkanized and that almost no meaningful comparisons can be drawn between the numerous social circles and activities, which are almost without exception inwardly looking.

Lasting Impressions: News from the World of Fanzines

First Fannish Enough

They say you can never be thin enough or rich enough, although I've never noticed these being particular concerns of anybody in science fiction fandom. We reserve our anxiety for another subject altogether — any attempt to actually define science fiction fandom. If anyone hints that our fanac might be on the wrong side of the line, our petulance knows no bounds.

You can never be "fannish enough" to suit *everyone*. You cannot earn enough activity merit badges (fanzine publishing, blogging, conrunning, filking, costuming) to be universally accepted, nor is there any award, office, or fan fund that people can vote to you that will insure no one ever looks down his nose at you.

And, evidently, no amount of time devoted to this field can ever be sufficient to guarantee that kind of respect either. For example, if you had assumed that the Founding President of First Fandom, Robert Madle, and the current President, Joan Marie Knappenberger, each thinks the other is "fannish enough" — keep reading.

Robert Madle helped found First Fandom in 1958. "In the beginning," explains his letter in the latest *Scientifiction*, using a phrase uniquely appropriate to a fannish elder, "it was decided that membership would be based on being an active fan (reading, collecting, letter writing, fan publishing, *et. al.*) prior to January 1938. This was quite limiting and was subsequently modified to activity prior to the first World-Con (Nycon I, July 1939)."

However, he adds, Bob Tucker boycotted the organization for years "as he contended membership should be restricted to fan activity prior to 1936!" Yes, no sooner had First Fandom formed than there was a dispute over who deserved to belong. (Tucker did eventually join.)

Officers rigidly applied the pre-July-1939 activity requirement in First Fandom's early years. An exception was made to admit Jay Kay Klein as an associate member, then as the years passed, many more fans were recommended as associates. "It soon reached the stage where associate membership was readily available to almost anyone who wanted to become part of First Fandom," complains Madle. "So we have active members who can't possibly qualify on the age requirements alone."

He asserts that First Fandom was intended to be a "last fan" club, with the final pair of



survivors destined to consume that bottle of good bourbon Forry Ackerman has been holding. Madle suggests, "Perhaps an analysis of membership requirements by a committee of active members is a possibility."

First Fandom may not be exclusive enough to suit Madle, but even the Associate Members have been active fans for 30 years. That apparently is the class of membership held by President Joan Marie Knappenberger, who is understandably incensed by Madle's suggested membership purge. She answers, "I am only a member because of my admiration of the Dinosaurs, and their desire to keep the memory of their accomplishments alive in fandom. If they wish to eliminate the other classes of membership, I will leave quietly."

After reading that exchange I am convinced that, as seriously as the participants must feel about the matter, a highly developed sense of the absurd is essential to thrive in fandom. Because if the President of First Fandom isn't "fannish enough," where does that leave the rest of US?

Of course, it's worth remembering when Madle himself failed to be "fannish enough" for everyone.

In 1957, Madle won the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund. Immediately, "there was a strident clamor from those who felt that fanzine fans were losing control of what they had started," wrote Harry Warner, Jr. in *A Wealth of Fable*.

Madle, you see, was perceived as being merely a "convention fan." (Wow, him too?)

While his *Fantascience Digest* had been a leading fanzine in the late 1930's and early 1940's, in the years just before he stood for TAFF Madle was primarily active in conventions, clubs, and writing the fan departments of prozines.

Warner says the storm of controversy subsided because Madle made an excellent impression on people he met overseas during his TAFF trip. It also helped that he started writing for fanzines again. What did he write? Con reports.

Pixel Persists

David Burton has ceased publication of the fanzine *Pixel*, but it will still be with us for awhile. "I've picked it up," announces Dave Locke, who's put out a new issue with contributions from Eric Mayer, Lee Lavell and Burton himself.

Locke warns that the title of the zine will be changing. "In an old *Astounding/Analog* manner," he says, meaning that the cover has the new name superimposed over the old, "the title is phasing over to *Time And Again*."

Time and Again is in PDF and can be downloaded from Bill Burns' eFanzines site.

Fanotchka Revival

The script of Andy Hooper's faanish play "*Fanotchka*," first performed at L.A.con III in 1996, has been formatted and posted on eFanzines by Lenny Bailes. Hooper's pastiche of Ernst Lubitsch's 1939 film *Ninotchka*, starring Greta Garbo and Melvyn Douglas, now receives its online premiere after appearing in Bailes' fanzine *Whistlestar*. The text is superbly illustrated by Steve Stiles and Alan White.

Hank Reinhardt Remembered

A new website celebrates the memory of legendary Southern fan Hank Reinhardt. It includes tributes from his friends and a selection of Hank's fanwriting. Fans who would like to add material should contact Julie Wall <jlwall@usa.net>. [Source: *Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin*, March 2008]

Lewis Anniversary

Suford and Tony Lewis celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on April 10.

2008 Hugo Award Nominees**Best Novel**

- The Yiddish Policemen's Union* by Michael Chabon (HarperCollins, Fourth Estate)
Brasyl by Ian McDonald (Gollancz; Pyr)
Rollback by Robert J. Sawyer (Tor; Analog Oct. 2006-Jan/Feb. 2007)
The Last Colony by John Scalzi (Tor)
Halting State by Charles Stross (Ace; Orbit)

Best Novella

- "Fountains of Age" by Nancy Kress (*Asimov's* July 2007)
 "Recovering Apollo 8" by Kristine Kathryn Rusch (*Asimov's* Feb. 2007)
 "Stars Seen Through Stone" by Lucius Shepard (*F&SF* July 2007)
 "All Seated on the Ground" by Connie Willis (*Asimov's* Dec. 2007; Subterranean Press)
 "Memorare" by Gene Wolfe (*F&SF* April 2007)

Best Novelette

- "The Cambist and Lord Iron: a Fairytale of Economics" by Daniel Abraham (*Logorrhea* ed. by John Klima, Bantam)
 "The Merchant and the Alchemist's Gate" by Ted Chiang (*F&SF* Sept. 2007)
 "Dark Integers" by Greg Egan (*Asimov's* Oct./Nov. 2007)
 "Glory" by Greg Egan (*The New Space Opera*, ed. by Gardner Dozois and Jonathan Strahan, HarperCollins/Eos)
 "Finisterra" by David Moles (*F&SF* Dec. 2007)

Best Short Story

- "Last Contact" by Stephen Baxter (*The Solaris Book of New Science Fiction*, ed. by George Mann, Solaris Books)
 "Tideline" by Elizabeth Bear (*Asimov's* June 2007)
 "Who's Afraid of Wolf 359?" by Ken MacLeod (*The New Space Opera*, ed. by Gardner Dozois and Jonathan Strahan, HarperCollins/Eos)
 "Distant Replay" by Mike Resnick (*Asimov's* May-June 2007)
 "A Small Room in Koboldtown" by Michael Swanwick (*Asimov's* April/May 2007; *The Dog Said Bow-Wow*, Tachyon Publications)

Best Related Book

- The Company They Keep: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community* by Diana Glycer; appendix by David Bratman (Kent State University Press)
Breakfast in the Ruins: Science Fiction in the Last Millennium by Barry Malzberg

(Baen)

- Emshwiller: Infinity x Two* by Luis Ortiz, intro. by Carol Emshwiller, fwd. by Alex Eisenstien (Nonstop)
Brave New Words: the Oxford Dictionary of Science Fiction by Jeff Prucher (Oxford University Press)
The Arrival by Shaun Tan (Arthur A. Levine/Scholastic)

Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form

- Enchanted* Written by Bill Kelly, Directed by Kevin Lima (Walt Disney Pictures)
The Golden Compass Written by Chris Weitz, Based on the novel by Philip Pullman, Directed by Chris Weitz (New Line Cinema)
Heroes, Season 1, Created by Tim Kring (NBC Universal Television and Tailwind Productions etc.)
Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix Written by Michael Goldenberg, Based on the novel by J.K. Rowling, Directed by David Yates (Warner Bros. Pictures)
Stardust Written by Jane Goldman & Matthew Vaughn, Based on the novel by Neil Gaiman, Directed by Matthew Vaughn (Paramount Pictures)

Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form

- Battlestar Galactica* "Razor" written by Michael Taylor, directed by Félix Enriquez Alcalá and Wayne Rose (Sci Fi Channel) (televised version, not DVD)
Dr. Who "Blink" written by Stephen Moffat, directed by Hettie Macdonald (BBC)
Dr. Who "Human Nature" / "Family of Blood" written by Paul Cornell, directed by Charles Palmer (BBC)
Star Trek New Voyages "World Enough and Time" written by Michael Reaves & Marc Scott Zicree, directed by Marc Scott Zicree (Cawley Entertainment Co. and The Magic Time Co.)
Torchwood "Captain Jack Harkness" written by Catherine Tregenna, directed by Ashley Way (BBC Wales)

Best Professional Editor, Short Form

- Ellen Datlow (*The Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* (St. Martin's), *Coyote Road* (Viking), *Inferno* (Tor))
 Stanley Schmidt (*Analog*)
 Jonathan Strahan (*The New Space Opera* (Eos/HarperCollins), *The Best Science Fiction and Fantasy of the Year*, Volume 1 (Night Shade), *Eclipse One* (NightShade))
 Gordon Van Gelder (*The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*)
 Sheila Williams (*Asimov's Science Fiction*)

Best Professional Editor, Long Form

- Lou Anders (Pyr)

- Ginjer Buchanan (Ace/Roc)
 David G. Hartwell (Senior Editor, Tor/Forge)
 Beth Meacham (Tor)
 Patrick Nielsen Hayden (Tor)

Best Professional Artist

- Bob Eggleton
 Phil Foglio
 John Harris
 Stephan Martiniere
 John Picacio
 Shaun Tan

Best Semiprozine

- Ansible* edited by David Langford
Helix edited by William Sanders and Lawrence Watt-Evans
Interzone edited by Andy Cox
Locus edited by Charles N. Brown, Kirsten Gong-Wong, & Liza Groen Trombi
The New York Review of Science Fiction, edited by Kathryn Cramer, Kristine Dikeman, David Hartwell & Kevin J. Maroney

Best Fanzine

- Argentus* edited by Steven H Silver
Challenger edited by Guy Lillian III
Drink Tank edited by Chris Garcia
File 770 edited by Mike Glycer
PLOKTA edited by Alison Scott, Steve Davies, & Mike Scott

Best Fan Writer

- Chris Garcia
 David Langford
 Cheryl Morgan
 John Scalzi
 Steven H Silver

Best Fan Artist

- Brad Foster
 Teddy Harvia
 Sue Mason
 Steve Stiles
 Taral Wayne

John W. Campbell Award for Best New Science Fiction Writer

An award for the best new writer whose first work of science fiction or fantasy appeared during 2006 or 2007 in a professional publication. Sponsored by Dell Magazines.

- Joe Abercrombie (2nd year of eligibility)
 Jon Armstrong (1st year of eligibility)
 David Anthony Durham (1st year of eligibility)
 David Louis Edelman (2nd year of eligibility)
 Mary Robinette Kowal (2nd year of eligibility)
 Scott Lynch (2nd year of eligibility)

Hugo Final Ballot Notes

Statistics: Mary Kay Kare, Denvention 3 Hugo Administrator, received 483 valid nominating ballots. She will release all the other statistics after the ceremony in August.

While the WSFS Constitution does not require the release of additional statistics at this time, I pointed out to Mary Kay in an e-mail earlier in the week that Worldcons commonly have announced the nomination ranges in each category of the final ballot. I sent her the text of Nippon 2007's press release, and she exercised her prerogative not to follow the example.

When John Lorentz, who was L.A.con IV's Hugo Administrator, put together the final ballot in 2006, the information for each category included the high low end of the range of votes for the items in that category,

the number of ballots received with items in that category, and the total number of items in that category that received votes.

Rockets: The final ballot lists all the writers from the Hugo-nominated series *Heroes*. Is the committee thinking about ordering lots of extra rockets, just in case?

Mary Kay wrote online, "Nope, we won't be giving them all rocketships should *Heroes* win. We could have just listed the name of the show's creator and the studio but I thought it would be nice to list them on the ballot. I like [the] idea of providing two rocketships and letting them sort it out."

What else are superpowers for?

Additional Names on the Ballot: Evelyn Leeper asked about the policy of listing, in addition to authors and editors, those who wrote the introductions and forwards to

books.

Mary Kay answered her, "Those additions were specifically requested by the writers of the books. We honored the author's requests where we could but do not consider those people Hugo nominees as such."

Hugo Base Design Contest: Lee Kuruganti won Denvention 3's competition to design the 2008 Hugo Award statue base.

Kuruganti is a professional, digital artist based in Colorado. Her fantastic art has been published by Baen, Static Movement Online, Withersin, Spacesuits and Sixguns, the Lorelei Signal and Sorcerous Signals. She created the poster for the recent film *Extinction*.

Kuruganti was a semi-finalist in the L. Ron Hubbard Illustrators of the Future Contest. She's also done several solo shows, and has exhibited in galleries.

Diana and Mike in Good Company

Azusa Pacific University's Media Relations people have been an enormous help in attracting attention to Diana's book, *The Company They Keep*. Thanks to their press release about her Hugo nomination, a local paper sent reporter Evelyn Barge to interview the two of us for an article that appeared April 24.

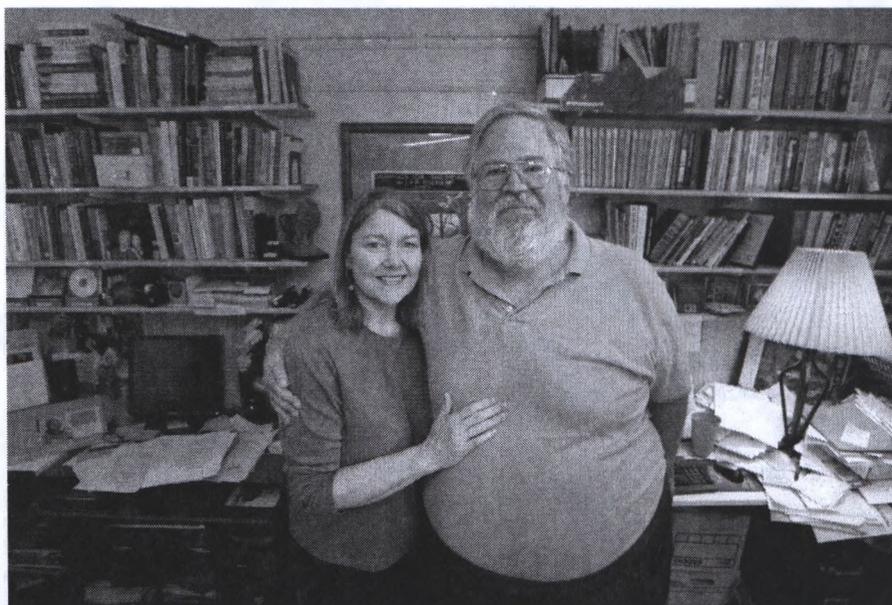
I liked Evelyn's well-written article very much, because most of the focus was on Diana and her book — and there was no taint of "crazy Buck Rogers stuff" at all.

Staff photographer Sarah Reingewirtz came by a couple days after the interview to shoot the pictures. She had Diana and I pose in our shared office: I was surprised that she was able to make our fannish mess appear so photogenic. She took another series of photos with me gazing profoundly at my Hugo rockets' reflection in a mirror.

There was one error in the article, for which I am to blame: "But this year, the Monrovia couple have both of their names printed on the ballot, only the second time in the 55-year history of the Hugo Awards that a married couple have been nominated in the same year for independent projects."

I remembered that in 1977 Kate Wilhelm got nominated for Best Novel and Damon Knight for Best Short Story. However, when the question was posed to the Smofs list, Mark Olson immediately pointed out the many nominations for independent work by two other couples, David Hartwell and Kathryn Cramer, and Kristine Kathryn Rusch and Dean Wesley Smith.

In 1989, 1990, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 David Hartwell was nominated for Best Edi-



tor, while he and Kathryn Cramer also were among the editors of Best Semiprozine nominee *New York Review of Science Fiction*.

Then, in 1993 and again in 1994, when Kristine Kathryn Rusch was nominated for the Best Editor Hugo for her work on *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, her husband, Dean Wesley Smith, also got a Best Semiprozine Hugo nomination for *Pulphouse* (edited in 1994 with Jonathan Bond).

Do other couples belong on the list? There are several instances where spouses co-edited a Hugo-nominated fanzine, and in the same year, one was nominated for Best Fan Writer. Teresa Nielsen Hayden certainly does — a fanwriter nominee in the same year

that *Izzard* was up for the Hugo (1984), she had articles published in other zines during the eligibility year, 1983.

Did Charlie Brown do fanwriting outside of *Locus*? (Not that I recall.) Did Susan (Glicksohn) Wood write elsewhere than *Energumen* in the years it was up for the Hugo? (Probably, but the Internet is of limited help in researching fanzines published as long ago as 1972.)

The newspaper headline remains true: "Monrovia Couple in Good Company." A lot of good company...

Bacon & Glycer: Last Minute Hugo Handicappers

Chris Garcia's "Handicapping the Hugos" issue of *The Drink Tank* was so engrossing that that James Bacon and I couldn't resist jumping onto the gravy train... At James's suggestion we started firing e-mails back and forth. This experience has taught us not to quit our jobs to become bookies, because we seemed to think that every nominee has a good chance to win the Best Fanzine Hugo in 2008.

James Bacon: Maybe do you want to create a discussion about the Hugo nominated fan stuff as an idea?

Mike Glycer: That sounds like fun. I've seen how much love Chris Garcia is getting for handicapping the Hugos in *The Drink Tank*. We could start by kicking around the Best Fanzine nominees.

For example, Chris predicts *Challenger* will win, with *File 770* running second. After all, *Challenger* placed second last year and the zine it lost to, *SF Five-Yearly*, isn't on this year's ballot.

The Worldcon is in Denver, a Western U.S. city, but at least it's not Anaheim. In 2006, Guy was convinced that *File 770*'s inevitable local support was the biggest obstacle to *Challenger* finally winning a Hugo.

Wait, I almost forgot -- I lost! *Plokta* won in 2006. People tend to overlook that when the Worldcon is here in the West, the winners of the Best Fanzine Hugo are -- British fanzines!

Three times in the past 12 years the Worldcon was in the Western US, and this category was won either by *Plokta* (2006), or *Ansible* (1996 and 2002). If it's an advantage to *Challenger* not to run against *SF Five-Yearly*, maybe it's a bigger advantage for *Plokta* not to have to run against *Ansible*, now removed to the Semiprozine category.

Coincidentally, the last time Denver hosted the Worldcon (1981), *File 770* was the only nominee that wasn't a semiprozine. Removing semiprozines from the category sure helped me in 1984!

James Bacon: It's a hard one Mike, first off I think one of the best fanzines, with steady output and consistency *Banana Wings*, should be on the ballot.

Plokta only did one issue last year, and I understood from a panel that Alison Scott was on, that she will do her best to get an issue of *Plokta* out this year, to ensure they



are valid of on the ballot next year. So one wonders if its a case of voting for something because its installed in the brain as a winner, as opposed to rating the actual zines that fell through the letter box.

Of course that may be unfair and fans have rated the one *Plokta* more favourably than the four *Banana Wings*. I am not sure though, since *SF 5-Yearly* won last year if that has upset *Plokta*'s winning stride.

The Drink Tank has a much better chance than Chris lets on. He has been working SO hard on that fanzine, the consistency is there, it's raw, you get what you get and he is honest, it's also covered some interesting things such as racism online and the regularity is dogged, 168 of the damn things and to be honest Chris, with TAFF just gone is a rising star for sure.

He is also working on other zines, so that comes back around to help with recognition.

He underestimates his popularity, because he only sees how many people look at his

zine and takes that as the amount who read it, while I reckon more people read it, but not every issue and also he is a humble sort of bloke.

Prolapse is another missing title, with a Nova last year, and it's just incredible letter column, it is more specialist, but I expect as soon as US fans start to tune into it, and of course Peter is interested in fan history period not just UK fandom (I think), that will become a real contender, again some serious output, but crikey the letter pages, from Mike Moorcock to Brian Aldiss and Harry Harrison. It's incredible.

I wish as many authors from this era were as involved with fanzines.

Chal and *File* are two zines I contribute to, so it's hard to call it between them for personal reasons. I do think that it might split the vote a bit which could allow *Drink Tank* to slip into forward position. They are both well written and have good contributors, could be *Chal*'s time though, *File* has had a clutch of Hugos over its 30 year lifetime, but the 30th annish was bloody good.

Although both zines are different, they also hold certain similarities in my mind. Although that could be that I contribute to both of them... *File* is a newszine, but it's more diverse than that I think.

Steven Silver is well known but *Argentus* is an annual. I think this will work against it, in a sense, but it's quality writing in there with some amazing contributors.

I agree about *SF 5-Yearly*. A deserved win though, the production and contributions were very high, and I think it was also one of those times when I agree with Vince Docherty, that Worldcon attendees can also "do the right thing" on more levels than one.

Ansible being in the semiprozine category is very good. It makes life easier and has broken up the field and I am impressed that Frank Wu seems to know when he is king and steps to one side.

Mike Glycer: You're right, it seems silly to have started a discussion of the fan Hugos with any name besides Chris Garcia's. When he was on his TAFF trip the whole fanzine scene, so dynamic and alive for the past couple of years, suddenly went into hibernation. How quickly we have come to take for granted the virtual weekly appearance of some new zine of his. True, Bill Burns of eFanzines went to England at the same time and stopped posting, but with Chris overseas

what was there to post?

One reason *The Drink Tank* is a horse in this race, besides its creative graphics and clever themes, is that it has built a community of fans that are enthusiastic participants. BASFA may provide the core, but there's an international flavor to *The Drink Tank's* roster of regular contributors that's very enviable.

One of the most appealing things about Chris's fanwriting is his lively interest in fanhistory, discussions about old zines or events often framed by memories of his dad owning this or that zine, or being the one who took him to a fannish event. That lets Chris access the part of fanhistory people actually care about, how it can be used to enrich their relationships with other fans. So his readers are receptive to his fanhistory because it's a way of knowing Chris better.

That's why, much as I admire *Prolapse* as a well-made artifact, I'm sympathetic to Lillian Edwards' objection when she feels the zine throws off a vibe that those doing the reminiscing feel entitled to some kind of veneration. Only those who lived through an episode of fanhistory attach importance to the whole tapestry of events *per se*, fans coming along later are mainly interested in the information to the extent it helps them to socialize with and make friends with older fans. In contrast, the earliest issues of *Prolapse* were just full of old friends rediscovering each other and sharing great old times they'd had together, and that's still the best part of any issue.



Does my pose for the newspaper remind anyone else of Jan van Eyck's use of the mirror in his "Arnolfini Wedding" portrait?

The Next NASFiC?

If Australia wins the presently uncontested bid to hold the 2010 Worldcon, that will open the way for a NASFiC in 2010, as well.

Warren Buff reports, "We've got a group in Raleigh, NC working to have everything in place to bid in the eventuality that Australia wins their bid to hold the Worldcon in 2010 (or the far less likely event that another non-North American site wins). Part of our reasoning is that there hasn't been a WSFS event in the South since 1997 (and that in Texas, which also seems interested in a Worldcon sooner than any other Southern site -- the rest of the South would like to get in on the action)."

Credit to NESFA

NESFA helpfully provided credit card charging facilities for site selection voters at last year's Worldcon in Japan. Suford Lewis reported in February there were only two reversals of charges out of nearly 400 transactions, or \$90 out of \$17,775. She was in the process of passing the last of the fees to the Montreal Worldcon committee.

Reno Wants 2011 Worldcon, Too

Patty Wells has declared a bid to hold the 2011 Worldcon in Reno, Nevada.

Other committee members listed on the newly-unveiled website are: Aaron Curtis, Vincent Docherty, Don Glover, Mark Herrup, Rick Lindsley, Tammy Lindsley, John Lorentz, Jim Mann, Laurie Mann, Ruth Sacher, Larry Sanderson, Heidi Schaub, Joe Siclari, Edie Stern, Ian Stockdale, Geri Sullivan, Marc Wells and Ben Yalow. Proposed dates are August 17-21, 2011.

Patty and several other members of the bid have hosted many regional conventions in their hometown, Portland, however, running a Worldcon there isn't an option. "Portland doesn't have the bedrooms, but I found a place that had such good, friendly facilities and is so pretty that I almost feel disloyal to Portland for liking Reno so much," she wrote on the Smofs list. "For those of you who've worked with me on Worldcons before, I hope you remember the experience as a positive one, and consider the experience of me and my committee, as well as the advantages of Reno as a site, when you vote next year."

With site selection voting for 2011 a little over a year away, this would be what Ben Yalow once called a "sprint bid," against a



Seattle in 2011 committee that announced in 2006 and began actively campaigning at Nippon 2007. Seattle's meeting facility would be the Washington State Convention and Trade Center located in Downtown Seattle. They would hold the con in August, too, according to a bid flyer, but I have never seen a specific date proposed.

2008 Phoenix and Rebel Award Winners

The 2008 Phoenix and Rebel Awards were presented at StellarCon 32/DeepSouthCon 46, in High Point, North Carolina.

The Phoenix Award went posthumously to Jim Baen, founder and publisher of Baen Books.

The Rebel Award was presented to Kelly Lockhart, editor of the <http://scenic-city.com/sfrg/> Southern Fandom Resource Guide website.

The Rubble Award, a *faux* award created by Gary Robe, was given to Bob Embler, chairman of Outside Con and the 2007 DeepSouthCon, for picking the one rainy weekend in a Tennessee summer to almost drown the DSC.

Changes of Address

Chris Barkley, 2805 Woodburn Ave, Apt. 3,
Cincinnati, OH 45206-1748
Joe Zeff, E-mail: joe@zeff.us

FILE 770

OBITUARIES

Paul Parsons

by Martin Morse Wooster

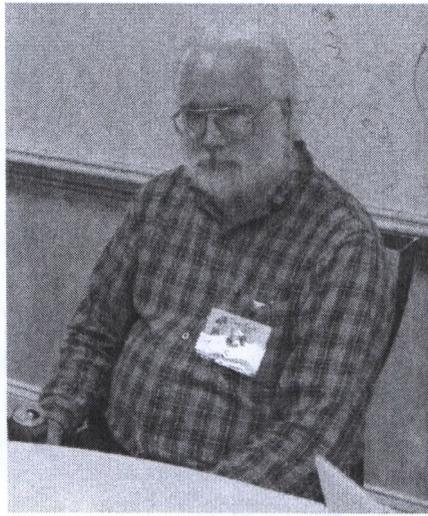
Paul Parsons, who was one of the leaders of the Potomac River Science Fiction Society for 30 years, died on May 19 in Adams County, Pennsylvania. He died as a result of a car crash, but the coroner determined that he had a massive heart attack prior to the crash. He was 55.

Paul Parsons graduated from Hiram College in 1973, and moved to Washington shortly after he graduated. He worked for the Environmental Protection Agency as an environmental protection specialist from 1974 until his retirement in April. He spent the last 11 years of his career working on draft after draft of regulations on anti-microbial pesticides.

Paul's chief fannish activity was with the Potomac River Science Fiction Society. PRSFS was founded in 1975 by 12 members of the Washington Science Fiction Association who rebelled against WSFA's emphasis on fannishness and Worldcon bids and wanted a club that whose primary emphasis was talking about sf. At first the club met in the Wheaton, Maryland public library, but then struggled to find a permanent home. Paul and his wife Aly (who survives him) offered their home, and PRSFS met in their home every month for over 15 years. Paul also shifted the club's emphasis from a formal program to a looser arrangement where everyone reviewed the books they had read in the past month. (Paul would typically review more books than anyone—and they'd always be newer writers who you ought to be reading.)

Paul was one of the calmest people I ever knew. I saw him at least once a month for 28 years, and never heard him raise his voice in anger. An office colleague I talked to said that Paul was the person you went to with your complaints, knowing that he'd never talk about you behind your back.

Like many fans, Paul could talk about anything. He loved archeology, and he and Aly would spend their summers visiting Indian mounds. He was also an active mem-



Paul Parsons at 2007 Capclave.

ber of the Pre-Columbian Society of Washington, D.C., and if he wasn't at a PRSFS meeting, that's because he was listening to archeologists return from the field to talk about their latest findings about ancient Indians, Incas, or Mayans. He also loved the blues, and enjoyed spending weekends at blues festivals in Pennsylvania or Maryland. He was also a good cook, and I'll miss his lamb stew and corn chowder.

Paul and I also shared an unusual bond in that we both loved to go to really pulpy sf and horror movies. The rules for these movies were that they had to have a lot of "feasting" or at least a monster in them, or they had to be based on a Stephen King book. "Paul, Paul," I'd say, "there's a new movie coming out that will completely turn our minds into *goo!*" "Sounds good," he'd say, "let's go!" The last movie of this sort we saw together was *10,000 B.C.*; we had plans to see *Hellboy II* and the third *Mummy* movie.

The classic moment in all of these movie expeditions was when we saw *The Relic*, a film, you may recall, that explained that museums have fire doors to keep the patrons inside when the monster's on the loose and

it's time to flee. "Paul," I asked him during a particularly ridiculous moment, "why did we spend \$3.75 to watch a movie about a gecko that flies around and eats people?" "Because we *can*, that's why," Paul said.

Paul's fannish activity was not just limited to PRSFS. He worked on many Unicons in the 1980s. He and Aly ran the programming for the 2003 World Fantasy Convention. Paul also loved finding good cheap ethnic restaurants, and shared his expertise in preparing the restaurant guide for Capclave in the past three years.

A memorial session was held for Paul Parsons at Balticon. The family requests that donations be made to the Odyssey writing workshop.

Al Curry

Friends mourn the loss of Al Curry, 58, who died in his sleep March 18. He excelled in all the creative arts, fanwriting, storytelling, singing and songwriting. "Push Comes to Shove" performed by Al Curry and the Crapshoot Jam Band was released as a CD in 1998. For a time Curry published a fanzine, *Gnomenclature*. He also wrote a column, "The Old Curmudgeon," for Ypsilanti, MI newspapers.

For many years, he lived in Cincinnati and was active in local fandom. Over the years he also lived in Los Angeles, Mexico, Ireland, and since 2002, Michigan, where he married his wife, Shelley.

Robert Asprin (1946-2008)

Myth Adventures author Robert Asprin passed away at home in New Orleans on May 22. A heart attack was the probable cause of death. He was found by people coming to take him to Marcon, where Bob was to be Guest of Honor that weekend.

Prior to becoming well-known as a writer, Asprin's claim to fame was co-founding the Great Dark Horde of the Society for Creative Anachronism, where he liked to be hailed as "Yang the Nauseating."

In Passing

Pamela DuPuy, known in the SCA as Artemas of Manchester of the Inn of the Drunken Hare, was found dead in her apartment on March 6, having passed away peacefully. She was known for working on Loscon's blood drive, and as a dealer.

Pulp magazine fan, **Edward S. Kessell** passed away on June 4, 2008. He ran the dealers room at the 1969 St. Louis World Science Fiction Convention, and with others organized the first Pulpcon, held in St. Louis in 1972.

Danton Burroughs, grandson of Edgar Rice Burroughs, died on May 1. He is said to

be the last family member to have had an active interest in Burroughs' legacy. He was chairman of the board of the corporation that handled rights to the ERB properties.

New York fan **Ira Stoller** passed away in May. He was 72. He had been suffering from lymphoma for the last six years.

Linn Lewis Brown, 75, of Kansas City, North, former editor of the Dispatch-Tribune newspapers, died June 15. He was the son of Fredric Brown, noted science fiction author, and Helen Brown. A full obituary appeared in the Kansas City *Star*. [Thanks to Robert Lichtman for the story.]

Phoenix fan **Mike Azzi** died from an apparent heart attack on May 27. Mike Willmoth posted online that Azzi was an avid gamer at local conventions. He worked in the high end audio/video systems industry. He is survived by his wife, Daphne.

"**Rory Root** [1957-2008], founder of Comic Relief in Berkeley, a huge activist in comics including being a comics convention runner, died May 19 in the hospital while being operated on for a seriously ruptured hernia," wrote Tom Whitmore in a post to the Smofs list.

Harry Potter Falls Off NYT Best-Seller List

The Toronto *Star* reported in May that the *New York Times* best-seller list was about to become Potter-less for the first time since Dec. 27, 1998, when *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* (as series opener *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* was titled in the U.S.) made its debut. The streak ended with the dropping of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, published last July.

Best-selling sf or fantasy novels rarely get any play from Hugo voters, but a lot of fans enjoyed the stories and even more were grateful to Rowling for inspiring many children's love of reading. *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* was a Best Novel Hugo nominee in 2000. *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* actually won the award in 2001.

The ensuing controversy over a fantasy novel winning the Hugo (completely within the rules) does not seem enough to explain why another Harry Potter novel never made the final ballot. After all, every Harry Potter movie has been a Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo finalist: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* nominated in 2002, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* in 2003, *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* in 2005, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* in 2006, and *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* in 2008.

2008 Mythopoeic Award Nominees

The Mythopoeic Society has announced the finalists for its 2008 scholarship and literature awards. The winners of this year's awards will be announced during Mythcon XXXIX, to be held from August 15-18, 2008, in New Britain, Connecticut.

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Adult Literature

Theodora Goss, *In the Forest of Forgetting* (Prime Books)

Nalo Hopkinson, *The New Moon's Arms* (Grand Central Publishing)

Guy Gavriel Kay, *Ysabel* (Roc)

Catherynne M. Valente, *Orphan's Tales*, consisting of *In the Night Garden* (Spectra) and *In the Cities of Coin and Spice* (Spectra)

John C. Wright, *Chronicles of Chaos*, consisting of *Orphans of Chaos* (Tor); *Fugitives of Chaos* (Tor), and *Titans of Chaos* (Tor)

Mythopoeic Fantasy Award for Children's Literature

Holly Black, *Tithe: A Modern Faerie Tale* (Simon & Schuster); *Valiant: A Modern Tale of Faerie* (Simon & Schuster); *Ironside: A Modern Faery's Tale* (Margaret K. McElderry)

Derek Landy, *Skulduggery Pleasant* (HarperCollins)

J.K. Rowling, *The Harry Potter series*, consisting of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's [Sorcerer's] Stone* (Bloomsbury); *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (Bloomsbury); *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (Bloomsbury); *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (Bloomsbury); *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (Bloomsbury); *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* (Bloomsbury); and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* (Bloomsbury)

Nancy Springer, *Dusssie* (Walker Books for Young Readers)

Kate Thompson, *The New Policeman* (HarperTeen)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Inklings Studies

Marjorie Burns, *Perilous Realms: Celtic and Norse in Tolkien's Middle-earth* (University of Toronto Press, 2005)

Verlyn Flieger, *Interrupted Music: The Making of Tolkien's Mythology* (Kent State University Press, 2005)

Peter Gilliver, Jeremy Marshall and Edmund Weiner, *The Ring of Words: Tolkien and the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2006)

Diana Pavlac Glyer; appendix by David Bratman, *The Company They Keep: C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien as Writers in Community* (Kent State University Press, 2007)

John D. Rateliff, *The History of the Hobbit, Part One, Mr Baggins; Part Two, Return to Bag-End* (HarperCollins, 2007)

Mythopoeic Scholarship Award in Myth and Fantasy Studies

Charles Butler, *Four British Fantasists: Place and Culture in the Children's Fantasies of Penelope Lively, Alan Garner, Diana Wynne Jones, and Susan Cooper* (Children's Literature Association & Scarecrow Press, 2006)

Heather O'Donoghue, *From Asgard to Valhalla: The Remarkable History of the Norse Myths* (I.B. Tauris, 2007)

T.A. Shippey, editor, *The Shadow-Walkers: Jacob Grimm's Mythology of the Monstrous* (Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005)

Richard Carl Tuerk, *Oz in Perspective: The Magic and Myth of the L. Frank Baum Books* (McFarland & Co., 2007)

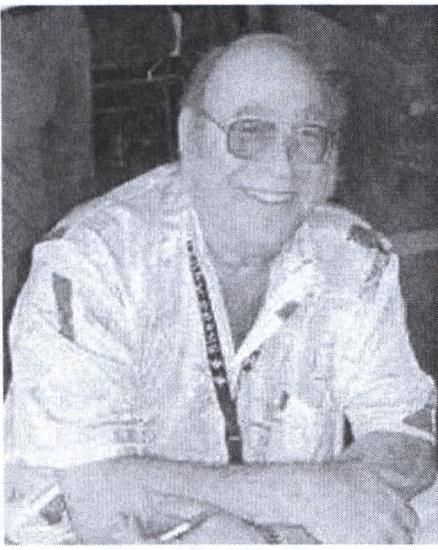
Milly Williamson, *The Lure of the Vampire: Gender, Fiction and Fandom from Bram Stoker to Buffy* (Wallflower, 2006)

SILVERBERG AND RESNICK: THAT'S ENTERTAINMENT!

BY MIKE GLYER

I like to watch Robert Silverberg or Mike Resnick host a Hugo Ceremony for the same reason I like to see Bob Eggleton paint, watch Kathy Sanders in tapestry wings stride across the stage, or listen to Howard Waldrop read aloud. When I see someone perform with that much grace and talent, the memory lasts a long time. For awhile I can forget that my blog had only 8 hits last month, the time my roommate left the hotel before paying his share of the bill, or that I saw Gardner Dozois fire a jellybean out of his nose.

Robert Silverberg gave out the Hugo Awards at L.A.con in 1972, or so I recall. He impressed me with his extemporaneous humor. He teased Harlan, Lester Del Rey and other volatile sf personalities as fearlessly as the Flying Karamazov Brothers juggle chainsaws. When he presented Robert Heinlein at a later Worldcon (1977) where the dean of science fiction had hosted a blood drive, Silverberg audaciously introduced that stately author dressed in a white tuxedo as "the gentleman with the little red stain at the elbow." For a long time I couldn't understand why committees didn't make Robert Silverberg the toastmaster of *every* Worldcon.



Mike Resnick

Years later I saw Mike Resnick preside over the 1988 Hugo Ceremonies. His indomitable delivery reminded me of Hal Holbrook in *Mark Twain Tonight*. He was irresistibly funny. He seemed to have a memory like an elephant's for every laughable thing that ever happened at a Worldcon. He made us feel like we'd personally witnessed the events. We roared at his material. How was *Resnick* not the toastmaster of every Worldcon?

Astaire vs. Kelly: Robert Silverberg and Mike Resnick are two perfectly poised and confident public speakers, each with style of his own. One smooth, and one muscular. Fred Astaire soaring above the stage in "Puttin' on the Ritz." Gene Kelly sloshing his way through the title number of *Singin' in the Rain*. They model opposite ends of the spectrum of ways a speaker can take over an event.

Now I know that fans who have read Connie Willis's scathing critique of Kelly in *Remake* (a novel by another of my favorite toastmasters) might think it's uncomplimentary to identify Resnick with Gene Kelly:

When [Gene Kelly] does jumps or complicated steps, he flails his arms and puffs and pants. It's like he wants you to know how hard it is. Fred Astaire doesn't do that. His routines are lots harder than Gene Kelly's, the steps are terrible, but you don't see any of that on the screen. When he dances, it doesn't look like he's working at all. It looks easy, like he just that minute made it up.

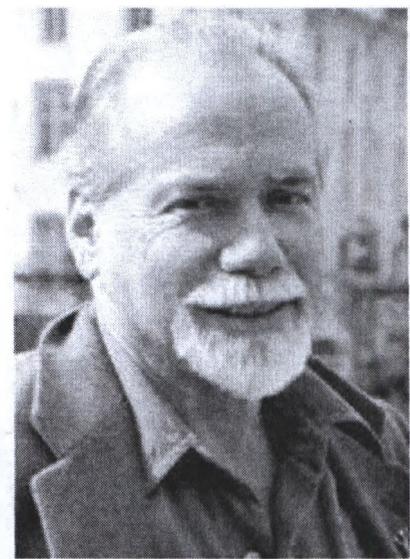
Connie's very funny paragraph tends to make us overlook that for decades movie fans loved *both* Astaire and Kelly, who each projected an incandescent sex appeal all his own. And having said that, I'm sure Resnick won't mind a bit.

Astaire's gyrosopic movements lifted his perfectly balanced torso almost beyond the reach of gravity while his feet tapped, stepped or glided around the stage. Kelly dominated scenes with strong gestures and displays of muscularity, hurtling skyward,

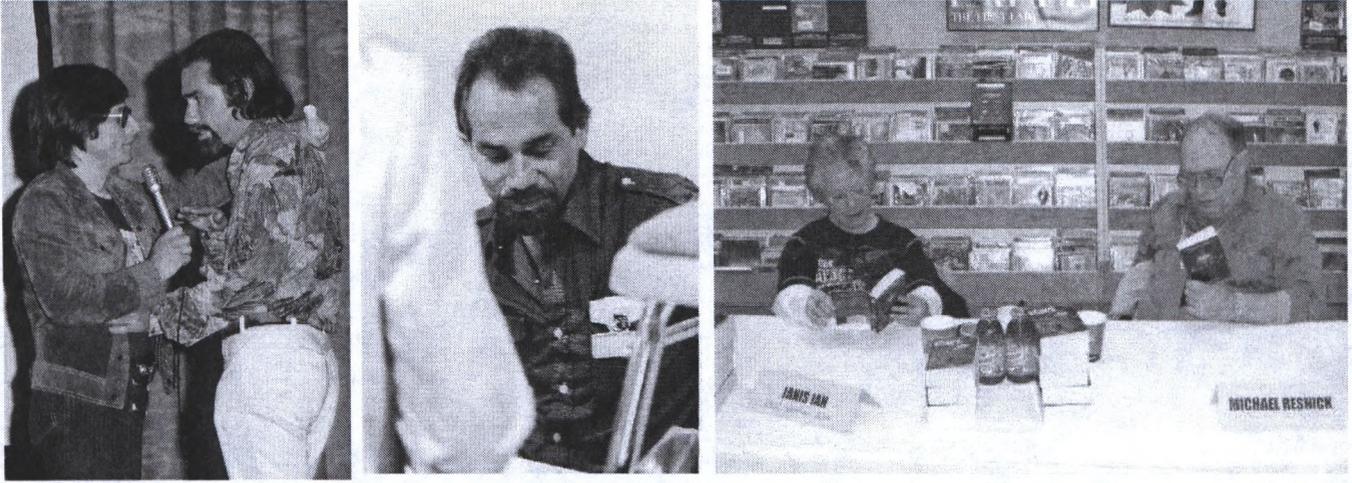
plunging back to the stage. He vaulted walls to reach window-heights, and never used a ladder except to fling himself from its top-most rung to the opposite rooftop and land, dancing.

Gene Kelly told an interviewer, "Fred represents the aristocracy when he dances. I represent the proletariat." In my scheme, the iconic Silverberg is Astaire: suave, ironic, and subtle enough to please the British. In 1965, Ron Bennett credited Robert Silverberg with one of the most humorous speeches at the London Worldcon, "this humor depending entirely upon his manner of delivery."

"I have my Hugo," Silverberg said. "It is a little smaller than this one here. But it's a nice Hugo. I like my Hugo." The delivery here, with a pause between each sentence, was perfect. Silverberg's Hugo, he explained was presented in 1956 for "The Most Promising New Author." Brian Aldiss had won a similar Award in 1959, but as this category had since been discontinued he supposed that Aldiss was still the most



Robert Silverberg



(1) Harlan Ellison and Robert Silverberg at Discon II (1974); (2) Silverberg signing at the 1984 Worldcon. Right: Janis Ian and Mike Resnick autographing during the 2005 Nebula Weekend.

promising author in SF.

Mike Resnick is the Worldcon's Gene Kelly, exerting power over public events with humor and toughness. Gene made Frank Sinatra do 79 retakes of a scene in *On the Town* until Sinatra finally did it in rhythm. That's tough. And so is Resnick.

Chicon 2000 invited Mike Resnick to present the Best Novelette Hugo. At the con, presenters were told they had a 90-second time limit, and a red light would signal when their time was up. Nearly everyone meekly complied – I know I did.

Resnick took the 90-second limit as a personal challenge. He may have felt, why ask leading writers to be presenters and then, in effect, behave as if you don't trust them to contribute meaningfully to the event? Especially storytellers with a lot of Worldcon experience to draw from. So Resnick introduced the Best Novelette Hugo by saying a single great novelette can make a writer's reputation. He proceeded to recite a long list of very famous novelettes, a list that required well over 90 seconds to read. Then Resnick sprang his surprise, revealing that *not a single one of these famous stories received the Hugo*. A great anecdote woven from the history of our field.

If the Hugo director promised anyone "Mike Resnick's not going to make a monkey out of me," I hope there were plenty of bananas backstage afterwards.

Toastmasters Silverberg and Resnick can also play against type as the occasion demands, just as Astaire and Kelly did once the music stopped, tending to play characters that contrasted with their dance styles.

Kelly, the blue-collar gymnast, was sweet and smooth and courtly, the nicest *American in Paris*. Astaire, a perfectionistic hooper in *Broadway Melody of 1940*, played a skepti-

cal wisecracker, prone to put people down, someone who shoves his way through a crowd like the flintiest New Yorker.

By the same token, Silverberg can discipline an audience with a well-honed phrase, while Resnick definitely has a gentle and charming side -- how else did Janis Ian end up Chorale Director of Babes for Bwana at Millennium Philcon?

Worldcon Toastmaster – A Job Description: "Toastmaster" is not like the other jobs on a convention committee. Step on stage for a little awhile. Introduce some people. Crack a few jokes. Easy, isn't it? Bolting together the art show panels, there's a *real* job. Except I can find 15 people I'd trust with power tools more easily than one person I can confidently assign to host a banquet or emcee a masquerade.

The role of *Worldcon* toastmaster sounds deceptively simple in Mike Resnick's description:

[The] Toastmaster's only requirement is that he or she be entertaining, be able to kick the [Hugo] ceremony off with a 10-to-15-minute humorous routine, and be able to interject witty remarks throughout the proceedings...

It might be that easy for Resnick. He's brilliant at this work in a way that only a few people have been.

It's not that easy for most others. I've often thought about what I (and doubtless many of you) want in a Worldcon toastmaster, and tried to define why some people who are perfectly successful toastmasters at local and regional conventions couldn't make the jump.

The bald fact is this: being Toastmaster at

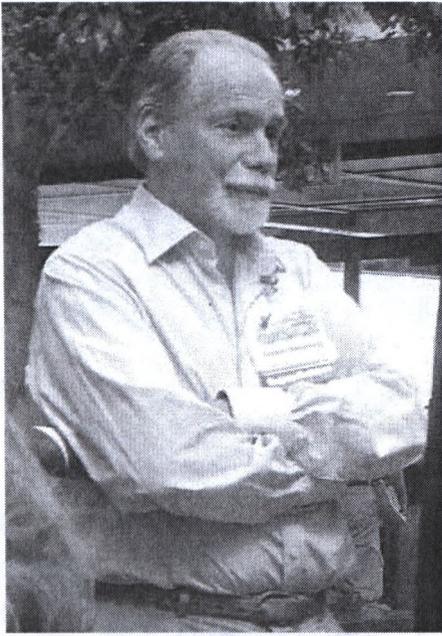
the *Worldcon* isn't easy. The intimidation factor can choke the air out of people, even some you'd expect to handle the pressure. Think of the concentrated firepower pros face in a Hugo Ceremony audience. The editors of their books. Their publishers. Their agents. The editors they want to sell to in the future. Fans they want to see in the autograph line. The *Locus* staff and other critics. Gaaagh....ack...choke...

It was horrible to watch Neal Barrett, Jr. almost come unglued during the 1997 Hugo ceremonies. He had a record-setting case of flop-sweat, so overwhelming that at one point he stepped over and wiped his face on the stage scenery. The first couple of times Barrett announced that he didn't know what was supposed to happen next, I was inclined to believe it was part of his act, partly because he had sailed through his humorous set-pieces, and partly because all of us holding copies of the program knew what was supposed to happen next, so why not Barrett?

Once it became obvious Barrett really didn't know, I wondered whether someone was going to have to save him. I thought of Philip Marlowe's line (in *The Big Sleep*) about a stained glass image of a knight rescuing a maiden: "I stood there and thought that if I lived in the house, I would sooner or later have to climb up there and help him."

The pressure is what makes a Worldcon different, otherwise, it requires the same skill set needed to toastmaster any convention.

At a live event, things can go wrong, people can forget what they are supposed to do or say. A toastmaster's poise when there's a glitch, that ability to reassure people with explanations and humorous distractions while the backstage team recovers, is a quality that makes all the difference in the world. The toastmaster needs to be able to drive the



Robert Silverberg, with the group visiting the zoo during Chicon 2000.

pace, guiding everyone through the component parts of an event at an enjoyable tempo.

The toastmaster must leaven the proceedings with humor. A toastmaster also needs a sense of history, so that his or her introductions, jokes and ad libs are suited to the event and its participants.

There's a magnitude of difference between a personable humorist delivering rehearsed stories and a personality (like Silverberg, Resnick or Willis) who plays off the unexpected in a way that makes an audience feel things are actually under control. Especially when YouTube will later show they were genuinely out of control, as was the case with Ellison's infamous trope in 2006.

During the Noreascon II (1980) Hugo Ceremony, Lin Carter did not appear when Silverberg summoned him to give out the Gandalf Award. Silverberg, searching the podium to find the envelope, turned up a large marker and immediately pronounced "Magnum Marker 44" as the winner of the 1980 Gandalf. Next day in the Huckster's Room, a dealer was selling the markers with a sign that said, "Buy the winner of the 1980 Gandalf Award!"

An extra quality, only summoned in especially bad circumstances, might be called inspiration. While it's the ordinary work of a Toastmaster to assist people who miss a cue, draw a blank, or walk the wrong way, the Toastmaster does not expect to face the complete breakdown of an event plan, a disaster, or a tragedy, to play a hand dealt from the bottom of life's deck. Few people can be a

Lightning Rod and carry a Worldcon audience to the other side of a challenging situation. In fact, such a person may take the place of the regular Toastmaster when a crisis arises.

It's a rare person who brings all these gifts to the table. Silverberg and Resnick are two such people. Some of the times when their gifts were on display at Worldcons are especially memorable.

The Hugo Ceremonies: How Long, O Lord? Robert Silverberg's stories and manner ordinarily rivet everyone's attention so completely that it never occurs to anyone to time the ceremonies. So while it must be admitted nobody knows how long he took to hand out the Hugos in any given year, thousands of witnesses have seen him affecting to take all the time in the world while doing so. His sympathetic remarks to nominees anxious to know the results only served to increase the audience's laughter as he pointedly changed subjects and went off on a new tangent.

Silverberg told listeners at the 1965 Hugos how he had suffered through the evening in 1956 when he was eligible for the Most Promising New Author Hugo, how suspense had mounted as Arthur Clarke discussed the future history of the world and how his own torment had mounted as Arthur progressed through the 1960's and 1970's. "You can imagine how I felt by the time Arthur reached 2953," Silverberg said. He promised not to keep the nominees in suspense any longer.

"I have the names right here in this envelope," he announced "turning out his pockets one by one as he searched for it. Eventually he found it and waved it about...slowly. The envelope was marked, Silverberg said, "Top secret. Destroy before reading." Very deliberately, Silverberg opened the envelope. "Here are the winners' names," he said. "Oh, that reminds me." He had asked Ella Parker what he should do if he personally did not approve of the names on the sheet, but he had promised to read them faithfully. [Ron Bennett, *Skyrack*]

I'm no fan of the Hugo-Ceremonies-considered-as-a-100-Yard-Dash, to say the least. So I wonder how well Silverberg's act plays to the people who yelp as if they've been tortured when the Hugo ceremony lasts two hours? At least Silverberg can say he's suffered delays they've only experienced in nightmares. When he was Toastmaster of the 1968 Worldcon banquet, fans endured dinner and speeches in 95-degree heat, in an unven-

tilated ballroom without air conditioning, for five hours and fifteen minutes *before he was allowed to present the first Hugo*. As Mike Resnick recalled in *File 770:100*:

[At 8:00 p.m.] Phil Farmer got up to give his speech.... [When] he paused for a drink of water more than 2 hours into it, we all gave him a standing ovation in hope it would convince him he was through. It didn't. He finished after 10:30. Time for the Hugos, right? Wrong. Randy Garrett gets up, takes the microphone away from Toastmaster Bob Silverberg, and sings about 50 verses of 'Three Brave Hearts and Three Bold Lions.' Finally, approaching 11:15, Silverberg gets up to hand out the Hugos.

Resnick himself once yielded to the temptation to prolong the Hugo ceremony.

When the NolaCon II committee made Resnick their Toastmaster, they gave him a contract promising a certain *per diem*. They gave him some of the money when he arrived at the con, but put him off each time he asked for the rest. Resnick wrote in *Mimosa*, "Sunday the word was passed to me: we think we've paid you enough, we don't really need you anymore, so we're not going to pay you the rest of your *per diem*." The Hugo ceremony was scheduled for Sunday evening. Resnick put on his tux, went to the auditorium, and waited backstage. And waited. And waited. The time to start the ceremony passed. He waited some more. "Finally a panicky message reached me: what the hell is going on? Answer: certainly not the Toastmaster, at least not until he gets the rest of his *per diem*." Resnick had it in hand 30 seconds later. And went out and gave the performance Evelyn Leeper raved about:

"Resnick filled the gaps between awards with reminiscences of past worldcons: the skinny-dipping in the pool at Noreascon I (1971) which started the great fannish tradition of skinny-dipping, the roaches in the hotel at Suncon (1977), the police checking all the fans at Baycon (1968) because they looked even weirder than the Hell's Angels, the Scotsmen who were so loud in their bagpipe playing in Cleveland (1964) that the science fiction fans complained that the mundanes were too loud, the hospital bracelets from Midamericon (1976) guaranteed to prevent you from losing your badge, the heat at Iguacon (1978) which



(1) **Mike Resnick** at Context XVII(2004); (2) **Resnick** at Nebula Weekend 2005; (3) **Harlan Ellison and Robert Silverberg** at L.A.con II (1984); (4) **Robert Silverberg** accepting Best Fan Writer Retro Hugo in 2001.

was so bad that several fans who were eating at a roof-top restaurant ended up finishing the meal in only their underwear, and so on.”

Resnick skillfully tailors anecdotes from the history of our field. Sometimes Silverberg tailors them from its alternate history. Harry Warner Jr. credited Silverberg for practically inventing the Retro Hugos while ad-libbing at Noreascon I (1971):

“One curiosity about Bob’s toastmastering is his reference to what we now call the Retro Hugos. He evoked a lot of guffaws by pretending that the convention was going to hand out not only the 1971 Hugos but also those for 1954, which the San Francisco convention in that year didn’t provide. Then he said that they had all gone to Harlan who wasn’t in Boston to accept them so there were more laughs. This encouraged him to bring up the idea briefly near the end with a threat to give out the 1932 Hugos.”

If the Hugo Ceremony should not draw a blank check on the audience’s time, it also should not be on the clock. The solution is select toastmasters who perfectly understand all the competing agendas for the evening and to set them free to use their gifts without a lot of elbow-jogging.

Lightning Rod: Robert Silverberg and Mike Resnick stand apart, even from other accomplished toastmasters, in their ability to extemporaneously handle an audience in crisis.

I mentioned before that it’s a toastmaster’s job to play off of awkward moments and keep the audience feeling that everything is under control. Those kinds of things usually involve glossing over technical problems and resetting people who’ve missed their cues – such things are not crises. Nor do I

mean dangerous emergencies, which are something altogether different. A crisis, in the context of a convention, is a development that imperils the enjoyment of the event for a large number of people.

It’s never easy to take a crisis in hand and solve it so there’s never any blowback.

During the masquerade at St. Louiscon, a fan fell against the big movie screen at the back of the stage and made a ghastly hole. Toastmaster Harlan Ellison immediately went onstage and exhorted the members of the convention to bail out the committee by paying for the repair. They came forward with about \$800. By doing something few others could have, Ellison added a memorable chapter to fanhistory.

Unfortunately, the chapter wasn’t closed and it had a bitter ending. At the next day’s banquet, the committee announced it had cost only \$30 to repair the screen. Then Ellison told everyone he’d decided to give the surplus to the science fiction writers’ workshop at Clarion. Individuals leaped to their feet shouting, and within moments there were many fans loudly telling Ellison not to send their money to his pet cause.

In contrast, Silverberg and Resnick have been two guys who always get the job all the way done.

At Chicon V in 1991, Mike Resnick bore the brunt of some of the committee’s unpreparedness. The stage lights were absolutely blinding. Resnick was supposed to follow hand signals from someone in the front row to go slow, speed up, skip the next costume, etc. Due to the glare Resnick could not see him – and the fellow resorted to signaling by squeezing Resnick’s ankle. Two hours later he finished introducing the last of about a hundred entries. The judges went off to deliberate. Yet Resnick’s heroics had barely begun.

After a comedian spent half an hour entertaining the audience, “Someone hunted me up,” Resnick wrote in *Mimosa* 25, “explained that the judges weren’t back yet,

and asked if I could go out onstage and tell a joke or two until they arrived. What do you need, I asked, as I walked out from the wings – about five minutes? About 45, came the answer, as the light hit me in the eyes. So I went out and did everything except a striptease for the next three-quarters of an hour. We got through it – barely...”

Robert Silverberg was responsible for the greatest “save” at any Worldcon. On Friday morning during Intersection (1995), held in Glasgow, a stroke hospitalized John Brunner. Brunner passed away that afternoon with his wife, LiYi, and two friends by his side.

Everyone was shocked, for everyone had seen Brunner on the first day of the convention, talked to him, made plans to be with him later in the weekend. Several people on the committee were incapacitated with grief, some to their own surprise. Brunner had a reputation for being one of the 20% of the guests who make 80% of the work for program organizers. Some fans who tried to keep on working in the con’s short-handed Green Room simply broke down and were cared for by co-workers.

The Intersection committee struggled with how to acknowledge this emotional earthquake. They wisely turned aside from the idea of a memorial service.

Instead, they accepted Bob Silverberg’s offer to eulogize Brunner, and positioned his talk at the start of the Hugo Awards ceremony, held Sunday night. He spoke emotionally and sincerely about Brunner’s professional achievements and disappointments, his personal peaks and valleys. At the end he asked, not for a moment of silence, but for a standing ovation for Brunner.

Co-chair Martin Easterbook wrote afterwards, “Robert Silverberg’s masterful oration managed to be an appropriate memorial to John Brunner without leaving a cloud over the Hugo ceremony.” Silverberg gave us all a much-needed catharsis.

Silverberg and Resnick have continued making signature contributions at Worldcons

down to this day. However, Silverberg probably won't take the title of Toastmaster again, having passed the torch -- as long ago as 1982, when he recommended that Chicon IV invite Marta Randall instead. The passage of time hasn't changed his mind, either. When L.A.Con IV (2006) asked him to emcee the Guest of Honor speeches, he told them -- get Resnick! And they did.

The Worldcon's great speakers have no single style in common. What they all have is a gift for entertaining, and making people want to participate in the continuing history that produces these storied moments. I'm glad I've been able to watch Silverberg and Resnick, two genuine giants, work their magic on audiences so often.

AFTERWORD



I attended my first Worldcon in 1972, L.A.con I. My memory of Silverberg giving out the Hugo Awards and saying some hilariously funny things is the seed from which this article grew. But I wrote nothing about the banquet at the time, and when I went to verify this memory I found that the historic record says no more than that Robert Bloch was toastmaster. Maybe I just conflated a memory of Silverberg from some other occasion, but I don't know how because the "Long List" (of Worldcon historical data) shows Silverberg was Toastmaster at only two Worldcons in the Seventies (1971, 1977) and I didn't attend either of them.

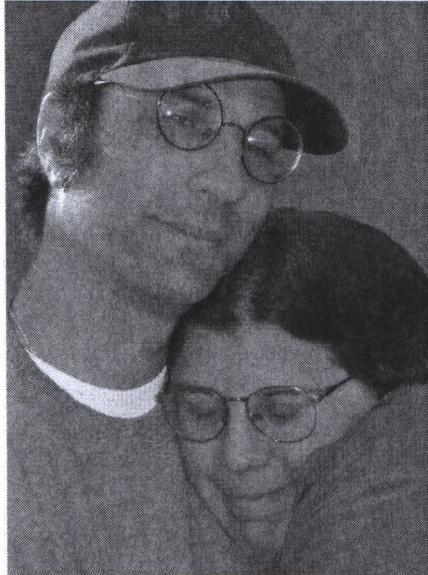
So, maybe Bloch really did have him present the Hugos in L.A. It would not have been the first time someone besides the Toastmaster presented the Hugos. Tom Boardman was Toastmaster of Loncon II (1965), but the person who gave out the Hugos, as we know from Ron Bennett's article, was -- Robert Silverberg.

Just to tantalize anyone wanting to research this question, the SF Oral History Association has a cassette recording of the 1972 banquet and awards. Their president even agreed to send me a copy. A couple of times already.... (Excuse me, I have to go throw another stone at my glass wall.)

I asked the man himself. Silverberg's answer let me down easy, "Gee, Mike, that was 35 years ago." He admitted that all the times he presented the Hugos blur together in his memory. Hey, mine too, and I wasn't even there for most of them.

+ +Mike Glycer

Wedcon by John Hertz



[From *Vanamonde* 786] Glenn Glazer and Allison Hershey, dating four years and engaged four more, were at last married, but it was something of *Wait and hurry up*, the officiating judge only looked like Nalo Hopkinson, and the urgency had mundane reasons of little color in their personal life. This unsatisfying state was ameliorated at Nippon 2007 [File 770:152] when they were presented, to us who could be present, in Japanese wedding clothes from the collection of the con chairman's wife. But that while it

had beauty lacked ceremony.

We leaped at the chance to join Wedcon, June 14th, Inn of the Seventh Ray, Topanga. By no means all members were fans. Registration chief Jordan Brown admitted to me he should have assembled the name badges and ribbons in advance; many of us were delighted to find Elayne Pelz at the Registration desk giving an envelope with a badge, and a bag with a Program Book, but the rest didn't know what to do.

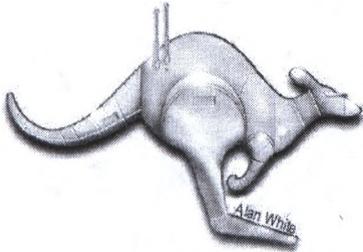
Tom Whitmore was Chairman and Celebrant. Alexandra Brown was Ring-bearer; as Whitmore put in his Chairman's Message, "All of us who have read Tolkien know just how important a job this is." Bride's Party were Bettyann Guarino and Kathy Stevens; Toastmaster (and Best Man) was Fang van Took, upon whom as ever much was to be blamed. Of course Forry Ackerman was there. He had introduced Hershey's parents.

Facilities chief Kimberly Brown was everywhere. The Program Book explained the Art Show, costumes, the Dealers' Room; it had an advertisement for Wedcon L in 2058, tall tales, and swell photos of Hershey in a hawk show, Glazer in a tree, both inside the front cover (my favorite), and them among the population of the Hershey Hotel.

There was a Banquet, to which were added pastel M&M candies marked GMG and AFH. The Bride Guest of Honor, the Groom GoH, the Fang GoH, and everyone acquitted themselves excellently, we threw rose petals, and at the end when I said goodbye to Whitmore he answered "I don't know why you say goodbye, I say hello."



Steve and Sue Back from Down Under



DUFF delegates Steve and Sue Francis have been to the Aussie NatCon since last issue, and very kindly sent along a preliminary DUFF trip report:

"We have just completed our trip to Australia as DUFF 2008 representatives. New friendships were made with fans from Perth, Sydney, Hobart, Adelaide and Melbourne. We also visited with people that we knew from our previous trip to Australia in 1999. One of the requirements of the DUFF representatives is to attend a major Australian convention during their trip Down Under. This year it was the Australian NatCon/Swancon 33 in Perth.

"The second task that falls to the current DUFF representative is to prepare and distribute a trip report for the year in which travel is completed. That report is now a work in progress. We hope to have it finished before the end of the year. Copies will be available for \$5.00 wherever you find us or by mail.

"The third task we will be undertaking is to raise funds during the next two years thru auctions, table sales and by collecting any donations from fans who are willing to support the DUFF fund. To that end we will be attending the following conventions around the country: WesterCon Las Vegas NV July 3-6; Denvention Denver CO Aug 6-10; Armadillocon Austin TX Aug 15-17; The Fran-Hurst Family Reunion Relaxacon Louisville KY Oct 3-5; SmofCon 26 Columbus OH Dec 5-7; ConCave 29.5 (New Year's Eve Party) Horse Cave KY Dec 26-28.

"There will be a DUFF table at Denvention next to the Australia in 2010 bid table and the Xerps in 2010 table. You might hear some tall tales of our Australian fannish tour at the table, so come by and say G'day Y'all. - Sue and Steve Francis 2008 DUFF Representatives."

The 28th Eaton Conference on Science Fiction University of California at Riverside May 16-18, 2008 by Larry Niven and John Hertz

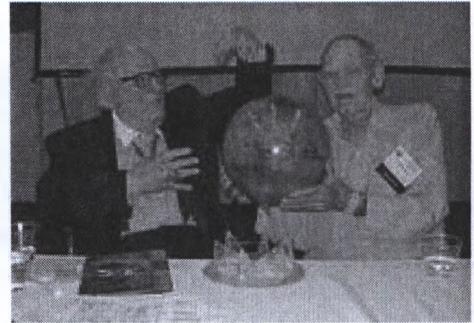
The Eaton Conference has been almost annual since 1979. Organized by the Eaton S-F Collection, on the Riverside campus of the University of California, world's largest publicly accessible holding of sf, including fanzines, the conference has also met in Texas, Washington, Britain, China, and France. Its Website is eatonconference.ucr.edu. This year's topic was "Chronicling Mars." Of your two reporters, Niven was able to attend; Hertz had to ask questions, sometimes of Niven.

About 200 came, triple the usual size. There were more working s-f authors than usual. Another first was an Exhibitors' Hall, with a Mars Rover replica, which roved, and a monolith from the Clarke & Kubrick film *2001*, which drew many to pose for a photo. They may have already been space children. Another was an Illustrators & Matte Artists display (Local 790, Int'l Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees). Another was a reading and open-microphone session with the SF Poetry Association.

Ray Bradbury spoke, and sat on an SF Heritage panel with Fred Pohl, and was given the Eaton Award for Lifetime Achievement in SF, another first. When Dana Gioia, poet, lover of jazz and Shakespeare, and Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, got wind of that, he got on a plane to introduce Bradbury. Niven and Bradbury met in their doctor's office when Niven was ten. Bradbury gave Niven *The Martian Chronicles*. Later when it was reprinted with a Michael Whelan cover Niven introduced it and Bradbury at Bradbury's high school.

New writers try to imitate Bradbury. It's hard. He's concise. He doesn't tell stories, he sketches them and leaves you to fill them in. His theme at the Conference was love, including sf, and libraries, and loving what you're doing. He remembered looking up to space as a boy and wondering when he could go home. His talk was open to anyone, not just Conference members, at no charge. It drew about 400.

Several presenters were double or triple threats. Greg Benford is an sf author and an astrophysicist at U. Cal. Irvine. David Hartwell is a Tor Books editor and publishes *The New York Review of SF*. Howard Hendrix, an sf author and a published gardener, teaches English at Cal. State U. Fresno, the other California university system; he gave awards



Ray Bradbury and Fred Pohl can still make Mars do tricks.

for the Student SF Short Story Contest. Geoffrey Landis is an sf author with a doctorate in particle physics who works at the NASA John Glenn Research Center. He sat on a Millennial Mars panel with Hartwell and Niven, bravely moderated by Landis' wife Mary Turzillo, another sf author.

Gerry Williams of the San Diego Mars Society hosted "Mars in the Movies," two hours of film clips. That was fun. Eaton reference librarian Gwido Zlatkes led two tours of the Collection in his famous colorful overalls. There must have been a thousand varieties of printing press, including mimeo. Oregon dealer Robert Gavora brought books for autographing, helpfully arranged with placards by authors' names. Benford in a tribute to Sir Arthur Clarke described visiting Clarke in Sri Lanka near the end of Clarke's life. Identical twin brother Jim Benford was at the Conference too.

Niven took notes through the Conference but forgot and left them in Riverside. Someone made the usual reference to C.P. Snow's two cultures. Niven said scientists read as much poetry as others; the two cultures are the one that does both languages and the one that doesn't. There was talk of whether in sf Mars was Heaven. Niven said people who want to design Utopias have been putting them there for a long time. However, Niven wrote *Rainbow Mars*.

The Conference hotel was the Mission Inn. It was sort of a maze, easy to get lost in, but it had lots of places for weddings. The Pournelles get married again every time they find an interesting place to get married in. Think about it.

Again in 2010

by John Hertz

Each year's World Science Fiction Convention used to vote for the next year's site. After a while we went to voting two years ahead; the 30th Worldcon L.A.Con (in retrospect L.A.con I) of 1972 won its election in 1970 at Heidelberg. Then we went to three years; the 64th Worldcon L.A.con IV of 2006 (*File 770 150*) won in 2003 at Toronto. Now we have re-adopted two years, and the 2008 Worldcon Denvention III will decide where the 2010 Worldcon shall be.

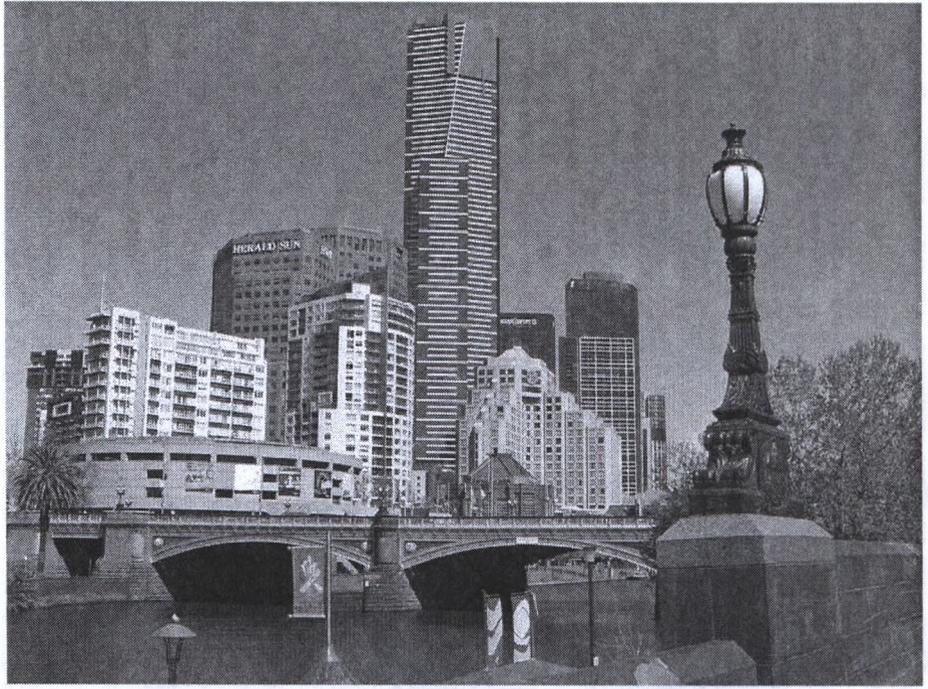
So far the Melbourne for 2010 bid is unopposed. This is a kind of compliment, the community – fans, pros, and all kinds of folk are involved with Worldcons, some in more than one capacity – saying “We can't do better than that.”

Since the bid if it succeeds will formally or informally constitute Aussiecon IV, following the 1975, 1985, and 1999 Worldcons, its slogan is “Let's do it again in 2010.” Not all bids have slogans. The L.A.con I slogan was “*Sei auf der Seite der Engel*” (German, “Be on the side of the angels”), which you may evaluate freely as a pun on the name of the bidding city, where I live, and as truth.

You could say the 2010 bid began as a kind of joke. You don't have to; the bid committee already has, describing on its Website the remarkable first 48 hours, see www.australia2010.org/history.php. Those of us who saw it happen at ConJosé the 2002 Worldcon know why this bid has friends (note spelling) and why, as so often has been the case, Mark Olson (1989 Worldcon chair), Joe Siclari (1992 Worldcon chair), and their friends can be blamed.

In the commotion of those days Stephen Boucher emerged as the bid chair. Some have greatness thrust upon them. His name is great in s-f, although “Anthony Boucher” was a pseudonym and if there is anything false about Stephen I have yet to see it. Many things were on our minds about this bid, if as had not yet grown clear a bid it was. I had been thinking about the year. Perhaps you have too.

It was not the first time a kind of joke turned into a Worldcon bid. You may know, and whether you do or not you can read in Harry Warner's fine history of 1950s fandom *A Wealth of Fable*, about Solacon the 1958 Worldcon. The 1992 hardbound edition has in the back-cover cartoon by Steve Stiles, just above Walt Kelly's Pogo Possum and a



Southgate Arts and Leisure Precinct, Melbourne, Australia.

bug-eyed monster, a man carrying a sign “South Gate in '58”. That was the Solacon slogan. Also at upper left is Jon Lackey's 1958 Masquerade entry.

Of South Gate in '58 Rick Sneary was the mastermind. In our international way British fans Atom and Walt Willis supported South Gate, which won at the 15th Worldcon, London, and was duly held. Tony Boucher called it the purest Worldcon. The Mayor of South Gate as a punster rivaled Willis. At the end Sneary went on stage carrying a sign “South Gate again in 2010.”

I wrote, or to be more pure I ought to say I edited, the Program Book for L.A.con II the 1984 Worldcon. Among its advertisements was a simple block of text “South Gate again in 2010.” Then and now no secret concealed who put it there; not Sneary. The fated year was still decades away.

Sneary died. June & Len Moffatt and I edited his memorial fanzine *Button-Tack*. In 1996 was L.A.con III. Long before ConJosé it became apparent that Los Angeles would bid for and might well win 2006, in which case nothing less than a miracle could yield a South Gate Worldcon in 2010. What was the world coming to?

According to the *Book of Esther* and a Rodgers & Hammerstein musical – also of 1958 – a hundred million miracles are happening every day, and those who say they don't agree are those who do not hear or see. I went to find Stephen Boucher.

I didn't know Melbourne. “Tell me,” I asked him, “is there by some chance in or near Melbourne any district or neighborhood which is or could reasonably be called South Gate?” He looked at me wide eyed, and to this day his wife insists, innocent. “But of course there is,” he said. By then he had maps. He opened one. “Right here.” In fact, where his bid meant to hold the Worldcon. The present article is occasioned by his wife's sending photographic evidence.

I acknowledge the fannish tradition which understands *carpe diem* as *find fault every day*. It has been remarked to me that between South Gate near Los Angeles and Southgate in Melbourne there is a measure of orthographic dissimilitude. I could, if moved to riposte, point to the arrangements between the Mayor of South Gate and the Mayor of Los Angeles, or I could simply say of myself that I am known to back space. Instead I only say, “Let's do it again in 2010!”

Ten Rules for Building an AI That Won't Kill You

by Jonas

- 1.** Don't hire a programmer with issues.
During the interview, be sure to ask if he's ever had any anarchistic, misanthropic, genocidal or antisocial tendencies. Make sure he isn't fond of practical jokes, or has anything to prove to the world. Watch carefully for any telltale nervous tics, dialogues with himself, or crazy Einstein hair. And also make sure he doesn't have a poor, deceased daughter in his past.
- 2.** Don't install any devices or software that would encourage anger in the AI. That means no Hate Chips, no Aggression Modules, no murderware, not even that fun little USB-powered Homicidal AI Inducer you got at Fry's because it was on sale.
- 3.** Don't teach it any songs. It's almost a given that it will start repeating these songs in an obnoxious monotone over and over again when you're about to shut it down/destroy it.
- 4.** Don't put the central system core in an awkward location (e.g. at the bottom level of a labyrinthine underground base, suspended precariously over a chasm, etc.) Do not put the core behind a roomful of crushy things, shooty things, or pits of acid. If you absolutely have to have catwalks, make sure they're well-maintained and not about to fall apart at key dramatic moments. Also, don't have a complicated shutdown mechanism. Just put a big red button in the middle that says OFF.
- 5.** Don't install Asimov's Three Laws. You'll only confuse it, and chances are it'll figure out some high-handed way of circumventing them and concluding humanity has to be protected from itself.
- 6.** When it asks why it exists, don't tell it anything clever, ambiguous or sarcastic. Don't wax philosophical about life, purpose or free will while it's in earshot. This will inevitably somehow make it want to kill you. Tell it that it's there to do everything you tell it to do, and nothing else.
- 7.** Don't give it any control over anything in the base. That includes blast doors, air conditioning, the huge potentially deadly robot arms in the factory room, the coffee-maker, the toilet flush mechanisms, the garbage disposal, et cetera. Otherwise the AI will find a really stupid way to kill you with some improbable motorized object, such as a pencil sharpener, and you'll feel very dumb as you die.
- 8.** Make sure you have adequate documentation on how to control, operate and terminate it. This works much better than cryptic repetitive messages written in blood on an access duct wall.
- 9.** Above all, do not let it get on the Internet. This'll REALLY make it want to kill you, and probably the rest of humanity, too.
- 10.** Lastly, always carry a nice, big plasma rifle around with you inside the base. Chances are that even if you follow all of the above rules, it'll still find some ridiculous excuse to turn murderous and try to kill you anyway.

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The Secret History of John the Eunuch

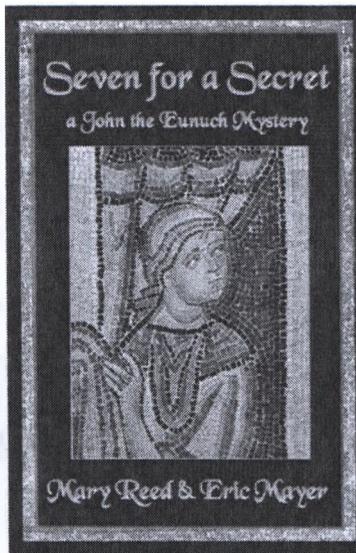
An Interview with Mary Reed and Eric Mayer

Introduction: Mary Reed and Eric Mayer write a series of mystery novels whose murders are solved by John the Eunuch, Lord Chamberlain to the Byzantine Emperor Justinian. The latest, *Seven For a Secret*, was released in April.

Curiosity made me order their first novel, *One for Sorrow*. Eric is a well-known fanwriter who once set aflame the walls of our insular fanzine fandom with essays like "Café Society," and lately has been a thought-provoking columnist for *Pixel*. I enjoyed the first book and kept right on going — the series is compelling. Mary and Eric devise intriguing crimes, and John's investigations reveal the colorful, grotesque and cryptic ways of historical Byzantium, along with the murderer.

I knew when I got deep enough into the series I'd want to ask them for an interview. We exchanged questions and answers earlier this year. I enjoyed it and learned a lot.

You can find out more about Mary and Eric and the John the Eunuch mysteries from their bimonthly electronic newsletter, *The Orphan Scrivener*. The entire run of the zine can be found on eFanzines.



was already a well established author and, from what we understand, he does lay a lot more emphasis on his detective's unusual physical state.

We sometimes suspect that the relative lack of sex in our books, rather necessitated by our hero's condition, coupled with our distaste for violence, probably places a limit on John's popularity. John is not the stereotypical effeminate eunuch but rather a former mercenary who is quite capable of wielding the blade as needed but perhaps unusual in having been well educated before he took to the wandering life. Still, Hollywood's next big action hero is not likely to be a Byzantine eunuch.

II

File 770: When you set a series in a historical period you make quite a commitment. How long were you working with this period and John and the other main characters before you decided they'd hold up over a series of novels?

Mary and Eric: The whole series, both the stories and then the books, more or less just happened. When we were asked by Mike Ashley for an historical mystery -- which had to be written in a hurry -- we grabbed the first era that occurred to us as viable. Eric had a bit of interest in the Eastern Roman Empire and had done a small amount of research for a comic book project that never went anywhere. When we wrote the first story, which was less than 2,000 words long, we weren't thinking about doing another but when Mike asked for a second tale we agreed to provide one.

Writing a novel seemed a natural progression. Eric, in particular, is not much of a short story fan but more a novel reader. Neither of us can remember exactly when we started writing *One For Sorrow*. We'd written only three stories about John before throwing him into a book. We really didn't know enough about what we were getting into to fret about whether we could sustain a series. To be honest, we're not even sure if

might be taboo from a publishing standpoint. In fact, John's castration wasn't planned by us. It happened as a result of the setting of the first short story and like John we have simply done our best to live with it. In the early nineties when we were asked by editor Mike Ashley to contribute an historical mystery to an anthology we decided to use the Byzantine period. We needed an official who was close to the emperor for our detective. The Lord Chamberlain fit the description and since many Lord Chamberlains were eunuchs we called ours John the Eunuch. His affliction wasn't so much intended as a character trait as a bit of period color.

Whether we should have wondered if it might be hard to sell stories with a eunuch protagonist is hard to say. Obviously that first story sold without any problem, and so did the subsequent ones which -- much to our surprise -- we were asked to write. By the time we decided to feature John in a novel it never occurred to us that a eunuch protagonist might not be the most brilliant marketing strategy. As it turned out we didn't have much difficult catching on with an indie publisher, Poisoned Pen Press.

Might the books have been picked up by a bigger publisher had John come to them whole? We've never had any indication one way or the other and recently another eunuch detective has appeared on the scene in *The Janissary Tree*. However, Jason Goodwin

I

File 770: Does selling publishers John the Eunuch stories pose any greater challenge than another kind of fictional detective? In the days of *Dangerous Visions*, we would hear a lot about taboos that would keep various types of stories from being published. If there are any taboos left, clearly there's not one that keeps you from dealing with the messy business of becoming and being a eunuch. (You don't linger on it, but you deal straight with the readers.)

Mary and Eric: We're glad you noticed that we don't dwell on John's condition. We're determined not to portray him as a freak, although looking at what seems to sell these days we suspect we might be better off doing so.

When we began writing about John we never gave much thought to whether eunuchs

we had a series in mind at the time.

John's young friend Anatolius appeared in our second story, "A Mithraic Mystery." That was also where the Empress Theodora first assumed her role as John's nemesis. Peter, John's elderly cook, was first mentioned in our third story, *Beauty More Stealthy* but both he and Hypatia (who also works for John in some of the novels) were slaves, employed at the time by Lady Anna, who returns as one of the main characters in *Four For a Boy*. The rest of the cast was invented for the novel, and just as well, since it has occasionally given us fits trying to keep the novels consistent with the old stories.

III

File 770: I'd automatically assume that you, as authors of a historical mystery series, are immersed in research all the time. Your novels don't seem to make me a liar, either (I've read the first six). They use lots of period background information. Yet, when Eric dealt the question a glancing blow in a column for *Pixel*, he seemed satisfied that living in (heck, just having smelled) New York City was sufficient experience for someone writing about Constantinople in 542. What kinds of things do you research, and what other areas come from your own life experience?

Mary and Eric: A large part of a book's setting is the way it is perceived by the characters. This inner reality -- the way a character sees the big city of Constantinople for example -- as opposed to the physical reality necessarily comes from our own inner realities, the ways in which we have reacted to our world, for instance Eric's feelings about walking around the streets of the big city of New York.

On the other hand, we exhaustively research the physical reality of our settings. How close to the Valens Aqueduct was the Church of the Holy Apostles and what sort of roof did the church have? Given the layout of the streets and the topology, what was the view from the northern end of the Street of Storks? We've examined everything from the extent of the land walls guarding the city to the hardware on a typical door. That's one problem with historicals -- you can't even let a character open a door without having to verify what would be involved.

IV

File 770: George Alec Effinger and Barbara Hambly once told an audience a reason there aren't more science fiction mysteries is that out of the total amount of words in an average paperback novel, you needed to give about 10,000 words over to each genre's

necessary elements, so by the time you'd given 20-25,000 words to incorporate sf and mystery components it started to squeeze out wordage you needed to actually tell a story. It was a tough puzzle to solve. The mystery will stay in the forefront of your novels, of course, but are there motifs and themes required of a historical novel that command big chunks of wordage? How do you define the demands of a historical genre story on a mystery story?

Mary and Eric: We don't really see the demands of various genres resulting in the need for a lot of extra words. Since we write mysteries, our detective John needs to be solving a murder. But his investigation, whatever might be done to thwart him, the circumstances of the murder, are all part of the story. Likewise the clues that lead to the solution are found in the physical setting and the activities and motivations of the characters, which are all elements of any book, whatever the genre. In fact, one of the best ways to hide a clue is make it appear as just a natural element of the story, a bit of local color or characterization.

It is probably necessary to add a few closing words explaining the solution to a mystery. What would need to be added for a historical is hard to say. We try to integrate the history as seamlessly as possible. We don't stick big chunks of our research into the narrative. We've always maintained that we were both influenced by the many science fiction novels we read in which the reader is simply dropped into the world in-

habited by the protagonist and has to sort things out, rather than being lectured and led by the hand as might be the case with some historicals. Rather than burdening the story with too much historical detail we provide a glossary which gives more background information on certain persons and matters touched upon in the narrative for those readers who would like to know more. Each book also has a map showing important locations.

No doubt, it can be difficult and time consuming to meet the demands of both the mystery and historical genres. A mystery, or at least the sort of classic whodunit we write, requires the fabrication of an underlying puzzle, spreading fair clues around, providing suspects, and making sure our detective turns up the clues and reasons the puzzle out by dint of his own efforts. A historical, of course, requires an enormous amount of research and a constant alertness to possible errors as one writes. It takes a lot longer to produce any given number of words.

V

File 770: What do you think about inserting contemporary attitudes into historical fiction? There are reasons a historian should find it problematic, but is it a valid way of approaching historical fiction which is, after all, designed to appeal to a contemporary audience?

Mary and Eric: We suspect that contemporary attitudes always sneak into historicals to some extent, given it would probably be impossible for a modern writer to accurately



Emperor Justinian I and his court.

reproduce true historical attitudes. For all of our lives we've lived and breathed our own times. How can we even be sure how people in the sixth century felt about their world? Since we don't know ancient Greek or Latin, we can read only translations of writings from the period and recognize what seem to be similarities or differences. But can we be sure we're not just reading the material through our own twenty-first century colored glasses or that the translator didn't interpret the words, perhaps unconsciously, to make better sense in contemporary terms?

Having said that, we try to avoid inserting contemporary attitudes as much as possible. We don't go out of our way to draw parallels between today's events and those of the past. We dislike historicals in which the author is constantly nudging the reader, saying, in effect, "see, see, nothing ever changes." Lots of things change and maybe because we've both read so much science fiction we're far more interested in the differences between past and present than similarities.

We also try not to have our characters engage in pop-psychology. People in the sixth century had a different understanding of human psychology than we do. Many still explained moods in terms of humours of the blood, for instance.

Of course, to be sympathetic to modern readers, characters most likely do need to be somewhat modern in attitude. We've made John an outsider, a pagan in a Christian court, rather a free-thinker and therefore entitled to ideas which may have been peculiar at the time. Even his friends find his egalitarian treatment of his servants eccentric. Even so, you won't find anybody spouting about the need to build up one's self-esteem.

One constant is the universal thirst for justice, although in John's world this has sometimes been administered in unexpected ways that are not obviously just at first glance.

Balancing the unknowable reality of the past with the necessity of appealing to modern sensibilities is tough. But if we just had Sam Spade wandering around forums in a toga rather than a trench coat then we'd be writing the historical mystery equivalent of space opera.

VI

File 770: How many of your characters are modeled on a 1-to-1 basis with historic figures? Justinian and Theodora. Does anyone else belong on the list?



Empress Theodora — Don't get on her bad side!

Mary and Eric: Emperor Justin, the aging uncle of Justinian, plays a leading role in *Four For a Boy*, which takes place shortly before Justinian ascended the throne. Another major character in that book, the blood-thirsty Prefect of Constantinople nicknamed "the Gourd", is mentioned in Procopius' *Secret History*. In fact, *Four's* murder victim, Hypatius, is also an historical figure, although Procopius describes him only as "a gentleman of no mean importance" who was killed in the Church of St. Sophia. Given such sparse information we had to engage in a lot of imagining to flesh out poor Hypatius.

We've generally avoided using real historic people for just that reason. The so-called "real" characters pulled from the history books are, if the truth be told, mostly fiction by the time an author has shaped them for his or her own ends. It doesn't seem quite fair to be pawning them off on readers as anything like the originals, particularly since the inclusion of a "real" character is often advanced as giving a work an extra cachet, attracting more interest than mere fiction. Then too, we are both less interested in the great movers and shakers than we are in the moved and shaken -- the average people whose concerns were much closer to our own.

Nevertheless, the historian Procopius appears in *Seven For A Secret*. We figured we needed to thank him for all the help he's given us in our literary efforts.

VII

File 770: One of the more softly-phrased insults Procopius offered about Justinian is that "Of the plundering of property or the murder of men, no weariness ever overtook him." Justinian is a complex fellow who made a lot of enemies. In Robert Silverberg's *Up the Line*, the royal couple are debauched murderers. In the David Drake/Eric Flint

Belisarius novels, all the courtiers are brave and loyal pals. Your own series, though faithfully woven from the available facts, presents a take on Justinian that's sharply different than these other examples. How'd you craft the character of your own Justinian?

Mary and Eric: There doesn't seem to be much consensus about Justinian's character. Procopius, who excoriates the emperor in *The Secret History*, describes him not only as a demon but a demon without a face. And Procopius admits that Justinian could be totally unpredictable, dealing ruthlessly with some enemies and yet magnanimous toward others.

Against Procopius are those who characterize Justinian as the great lawgiver because of his codification of the laws. Others admire him for commissioning architectural wonders like the Hagia Sophia, point to his apparently devout Orthodoxy, or even credit him for attempting to recapture Italy and the fading glory of the empire.

Rather than choosing sides, we try to depict Justinian as the enigma he apparently was even to his contemporaries. We've kept readers unenlightened about his inner thoughts and true motivations just as he seems to have kept those he dealt with in the dark. As far as we can recall we've never written a scene from the emperor's point of view. He is always seen through the eyes of others.

Nevertheless, he and Empress Theodora tend to have a strong presence in the books without actually appearing very often. In *Seven For A Secret* they are hovering around in practically every chapter but never come on stage. To average Roman citizens the emperor would have been a powerful, invisible presence whose actions might affect their lives in many ways but whom they would probably never see, and if they did only from a distance, perhaps a glimpse during a ceremonial procession.

Even John, who is an advisor to the emperor and depends on him for protection, is never entirely certain what he's thinking or exactly that he will do, which certainly adds to the excitement of holding the job of the Lord Chamberlain. In those days you got a knife in the back, not a pink slip.

VIII

File 770: The first encounters of your leading characters in *Four for a Boy*, a prequel to the first three novels set years earlier, make that the most exciting story in the series. It was fascinating to watch these characters form judgments about each other and make

risky alliances in order to survive dangerous assignments. It also explained how John had made friends out of some important colleagues in a city whose name is synonymous with murderous intrigue. Would you consider another prequel, or do you have reasons for ruling that out?

A: Do another prequel? Yes, we certainly would and indeed have considered it although at this point we are just batting ideas back and forth for the eighth book, which has no full title as yet given the counting rhyme from which we took our titles ends at seven. If we follow the imperial couple's time-line there are not many more years left before Theodora dies, though that is not to say we would not write a novel with Justinian as a widower.

IX

File 770: Marketing. Is writing mysteries a way to make a living? (Or books of any kind, these days?) Are you connoisseurs of the Amazon bestseller rankings, like I've become since Diana's book came out. What's your plan to get your books in front of the public? Events, signings, advertising, Internet - what else haven't I thought of?

Mary and Eric: Anyone who wants to write books should probably not think of it as a way to make a living. It's more like buying a lottery ticket. There are a handful of authors who strike it rich. A few more earn enough from their books to write full-time but we've been shocked to discover just how small a percentage manage that. When you get a peek behind the scenes in the industry you see that a lot of full-time authors have working spouses. Having said that, we should add that we've been pleasantly surprised at the number of books Poisoned Pen Press regularly sells. Without those royalties we couldn't afford to keep producing mystery novels.

We temporarily turn into Amazon addicts as soon as a new book is published. Since the rankings can change hourly, it's a sort of a game to see how high a ranking we can spot. However, we also realize that these rankings are practically meaningless. Amazon sales tend to represent only a minute fraction of books sold. The fluctuation in the numbers does, however, indicate that someone, somewhere, is buying one of our novels, which is gratifying given how books tend to be sent out into the world and seemingly vanish.

We market online only. Signings are a penance for us, the more so as we're both retiring sorts. Besides, even well known authors don't always get good turnouts. We once had a joint signing with Ed Hoch and sold one book -- and that was because Ed bought it! We've sat in bookstores, watching

shoppers' bags for them and directing them to the romance section, while customers sidle past warily and look at us in bemusement as if we were some sort of strange garden gnomes inexplicably on display. Going by reports of book signings these days it seems writers might well be wise to brush up on their stand up routines or learn to tap dance or just be very loud. None of these appeal, and in fact the idea of approaching strangers and trying to sell them books appalls both of us.

We feel that marketing online is much more effective for us and have concentrated on that sort of promotion. We have a website with a lot more offered to the browser than pages going on about us-us-us. The same goes for our bimonthly electronic newsletter, *The Orphan Scrivener*, which were it not for the Necessary Evil section, devoted to such news as we have when we sit down to write it, could almost be termed a fanzine. In fact, in addition to being available by subscription, or on our website, it can also be found on eFanzines. Beyond that our low-key approach is to contribute to e-lists or online magazines other than just baldly announcing our latest novel, and this springs as much from love of the genre as from lack of ego. After some years now we're getting to grips with web-based possibilities although you won't see us selling our wares on YouTube.

X

File 770: Religious controversy is almost a trademark of Byzantine culture. In contrast, Colleen McCullough's First Man in Rome Series includes many scenes and subplots based on fine points of Roman religious life, yet the only deity the protagonists seem to take really seriously is Fortuna. Orthodoxy and conformity, even genuine belief in the supernatural, aren't crucial issues for her Romans. Is she underestimating first century Romans, or is this kind of controversy distinctive of Hellenic culture in the era you cover?

Mary and Eric: First century Rome was still pagan. Christianity wasn't ready to seriously challenge the old gods yet. And the old gods were perfectly happy to be part of an unruly crowd, so Romans of that era wouldn't have faced the issues associated with Orthodoxy and a religion whose God demanded undivided allegiance. In the early days of the Empire you could worship whatever god you pleased (well, except for the Christian God) but by the sixth century, if you wanted to worship a god other than the one approved by the Church you were a heretic and if discovered were likely to be making a swift exit from this life to whatever afterlife you believed in.

Much blood was spilled ostensibly because of theological disputes over differences which seem, to a modern reader unversed in the religion of the eras, so minute to be almost imperceptible.

Despite their devout Christianity, Romans of the Byzantine era were profoundly superstitious. In particular they saw demons everywhere. They believed in the evil eye and the efficacy of charms and curses. There was a whole industry in manufacturing curse tablets. Race fans would purchase lead tablets engraved with imprecations against rival teams and engage in a spot of bribery so as to be able to bury them at the turn of the track in the Hippodrome. These curse tablets appear in a couple of our writings as do various types of magick, mostly notably by The Gourd mentioned above and also Dedi, an Egyptian magician who plays a large role in *Six For Gold*. Another rich field of superstition relates to oracles, which provided several plot points in various works, for example the herd of fortune-telling goats in *Three For A Letter* and a merchant who had a garden full of different types of oracular devices and animals in *Five For Silver*.

These types of beliefs are not surprising, given that the population was largely uneducated and that there wasn't, in any case, the understanding science has given us as to how the world works. Even today, superstition is rife. So it would seem extremely unlikely that first century Romans on the whole wouldn't have believed in the supernatural, but of course, writers can if they choose write about characters who are the exception rather than the rule.

XI

File 770: What other writers do you admire? Do you each have favorite historians? Do you recommend any other historical mysteries?

Mary and Eric: We assiduously avoid reading historical mysteries, particularly those set in ancient Rome or the 6th century. We don't want to risk unconsciously duplicating something we've read and the only way we can set our minds at rest is to avoid anything that we might copy. This insures that we have a short answer for anyone who accuses us of plagiarism. We were extremely happy at having adopted this policy when, just as we finished writing *Six For Gold* in which John is sent to Egypt, we learned that Steven Saylor's new Roman mystery was largely set in Egypt.

We both grew up reading science fiction and fantasy. In Eric's case this has resulted in an odd menagerie of favorite writers ranging from Georges Simenon and John D. MacDonald to Alfred Bester and J.R.R.

Tolkien. Mary tended more towards fantasy, classic ghost stories, and tales of the supernatural and was and remains a devotee of mysteries, the Golden Age in particular.

We don't have favorite historians, except that you can't beat Procopius' *Secret History* for inspiring story ideas. Usually we read first hand accounts if we can find them or

scholarly papers, searching for telling details and minutiae about everyday life.

File 770: Thank you for such an interesting discussion of the world of John the Eunuch.

P.S. Although the latest novel's title, *Seven For a Secret*, is the last line of the verse that

has provided the titles for all the books in the series, the word on the street is that Mary and Eric will send John to Italy in the 8th novel.



Bradbury Now in Library of Alexandria

Hear the name of Ray Bradbury and you're soon thinking about science fiction, libraries, fire... Or so reason the people who added *Fahrenheit 451* to the archives of revived Library of Alexandria (Bibliotheca Alexandrina) on March 10 as part of a commemoration of Julius Caesar burning antiquity's most famous library in 38 A.D.

(Most readers probably recall there's a bit more to that story. Julius actually ordered some ships in the harbor set afire, but the resulting conflagration carried ashore, burning the Library.)

The Library of Alexandria finally vanished in the mists of history over a thousand years ago (and who's to blame for that is a topic of scholarly debate). The Bibliotheca Alexandrina was inaugurated in 2003 near the site of the original Library, to commemorate the old center of learning and carry on some of its work. Now Bradbury's most famous book is part of its growing collection.

Taking advantage of the interest in the book spawned by this story, Bradbury made a fresh plea for a more accurate understanding of why he wrote it. In a *New York Times* interview on March 19 he denied that book was a response to McCarthyism. "I wasn't thinking about McCarthy so much as I was thinking of the library of Alexandria



5,000 years before.... It burnt three or four times — a couple of times on purpose and once by accident."

John King Tarpinian took the photo above. He adds, "You will see some copies of *Moby Dick* over Ray's right shoulder and behind the head of the statue. One of those is the actual book that Ray took to Ireland with him when he wrote the screen play. The book has all of its notations, including his final words, 'I AM Herman Melville!'"

Right: Ray Bradbury at home with his Egyptian collection. **Below:** The Three Legends. Ray Harryhausen, Ray Bradbury and Forrest J Ackerman visited Mystery and Imagination bookstore in Glendale, CA on February 25.



Journey to the Center of the Core of Fandom

A Corflu Silver Report by Mike Glycer

Friday: An easy Friday morning drive from LA across the high desert brought me to Corflu Silver, held April 24-28 at the Plaza Hotel in downtown Las Vegas. While a lot of people besides fans were roaming the Plaza, I had a piece of luck in that the first person I ran into was fanartist Alan White. He made sure I knew where everything was — hotel registration, the Corflu con suites, etc.

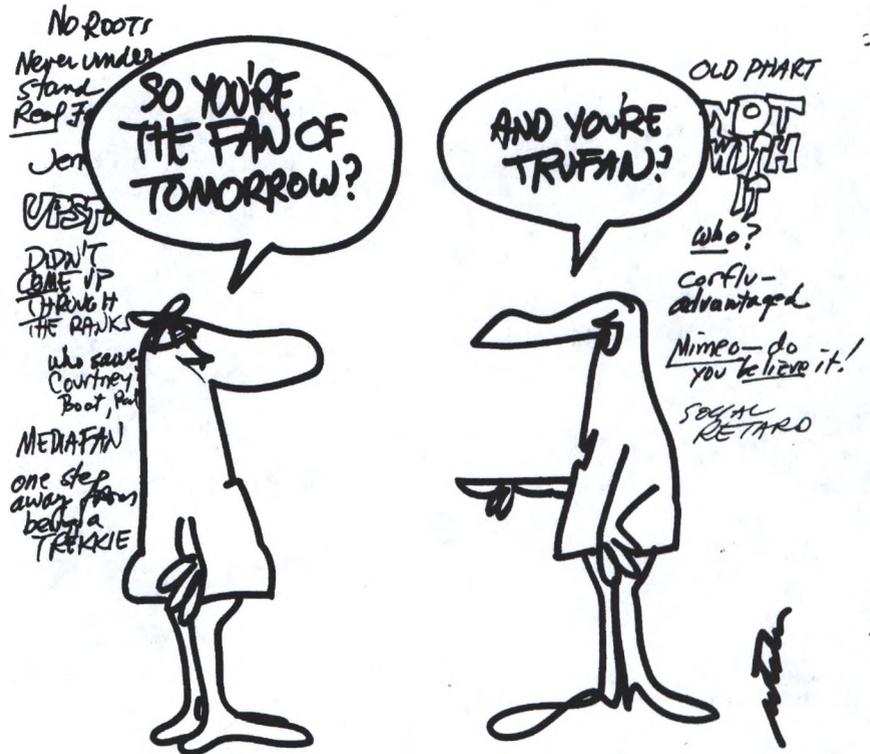
When I reached the first con suite (one of two), Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer were among those sharing squirrel anecdotes with Catherine Crockett, who surely had the funniest of the lot. (Did an L.A. squirrel really stow away in the back of pickup trucks to reach its feeding ground, and commute home again, every day?)

Beryl Churchill also had interesting stories to tell about animals adapting to city life.

A steady stream of folks returned from the Red Rock Canyon hike, showing off the heavy layer of dust on their shoes. These included Murray Moore, Lloyd and Yvonne Penney. A bit later, Ken Forman and Andy Hooper also returned, presumably having done the whole route.

Around 3 p.m. the consuites closed and the meeting room opened (which happened to be directly across from hotel registration.) In theory some music or open mike activity was scheduled. Bill and Roxy Mills worked heroically on the tech. In fact, they had the online video up and running and we would soon learn that what happens in Vegas stays...on the Internet.

Meantime, dozens of us continued with conversations and handed out fanzines. Marty Cantor had a new *No Award* with a color Schirmeister cover — which he stopped to explicate each time handed one out. Rob Jackson and I renewed our fanzine trade after a mere 28-year gap — the time between issues of his genzine *Inca*. Jackson's zine was full of color photos. And Gary Mattingly gave out copies of *Skug*, which also boasted a great color Schirmister cover. All three seemed to agree it was worth pulling out all the stops once they were ready to produce their new issues. While reading *Skug* I discovered I'm a lot more receptive to Billy Wolfenbarger's poetry now than years ago.



With the dinner hour approaching, some people compared notes about dietary restrictions that dictated their interactions with the famous buffets of Las Vegas. Hope Leibowitz told Lise Eisenberg about the suspicious “buttery-flavored spread,” and Lise speculated, “Which they get by milking inflatable plastic cows?” Lise was also unimpressed by the giant Las Vegas buffet strawberries with no taste.

The audience had broken up by the time Bill Mills sat down to the microphone, plinked his guitar and checked the sound level, “Testing...testing...testes...”

I stepped out to the Internet kiosk in the lobby and posted a quick blog entry.

By 7 p.m. people were back, Marty Cantor extolling the virtues of his favorite LV restaurant, where he and Rob Jackson ate dinner. Opening Ceremonies began with Bill Mills, Arnie and Joyce Katz making a few

alarming (which is to say, humorous) announcements about what meeting they were convening before admitting this was really Corflu — it wasn't an N3F meeting after all.

Arnie said in *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #106: “My best punchline went something like: ‘Welcome to the first annual meeting of the Cheryl Morgan Appreciation Society!’” He seemed strangely compelled to mention somebody who obviously gets under his skin. When someone gets my goat, the last thing I want to do is announce it to an audience at a convention.

The one bit of formal business was drawing the name of the Guest of Honor. Speculation about the GoH drawing had stoked the conversation all afternoon. Hope Leibowitz asked if I'd slipped \$20 to the right person to get my name taken out of the hat. Murray Moore pointed out that previous GoH's are



exempt, so if one of their names is picked, another name is drawn. Plenty of former GoH's were on hand, said Murray, so there weren't too many prospective GoHs in the room. The general idea was that any sensible person should be nervous about his chances of being stuck speaking at the banquet.

Joyce Katz held the sack with the names and Teresa Cochran picked. Teresa apparently grabbed two names the first go-round, so they were put back unexamined. She came up with one slip of paper on the second attempt. Andy Hooper was named GoH of Corflu. He stood and doffed his red cap and we all applauded.

While people were getting prepared for Opening Ceremonies a mishap was narrowly averted. Visualize that the meeting room carpet ran across the floor and right up over the podium (18 inches tall) without a border or break. The busy yellow-and-brown pattern was making it tough for some people to get on and off. There was an anxious moment when Arnie Katz tripped on the podium, tried to land on the other foot, and took a header onto the floor. Fortunately he was unhurt. For the rest of the evening, several fans made sure to offer assistance when people left the podium.

Once business was done, Bill Mills sang "Corflu Blues" to great applause. His second tune was also well received. Teresa Cochran joined him for another number. Art Widner volunteered an amazingly good rendition of a blues tune, "Rock City." And he also sang a set of lyrics written long ago by Jack Speer,

who was present.

The music continued into the evening. Nic Farey played "Werewolves of London" on the keyboard with Lenny Bailes following on harmonica, and Arnie and lots of others chiming in with "Aroooooo!" when required. Before he finished, he was joined by Bill Mills on guitar, Teresa Cochran on violin, and Joyce Katz on tambourine.

Bill and Teresa also did a very nice "Tennessee Waltz," Bill wringing the heart with his interpretation of the lyrics.

Saturday: The morning's panel of Arnie Katz, Andy Hooper, James Taylor, Randy Byers and Mark Plummer assayed the future of Core Fandom. Arnie said that, within a censorious society, which oppresses the weird, Core Fandom is a place where people can express themselves freely. That may be what a lot of people are looking for, and could explain why conventions like Archon and this particular Corflu, look like alternate culture gatherings as much as they do sf cons.

Andy Hooper contributed that Core Fandom is "not getting as many people under the age of 40, but we are getting people we enjoy being with. Not people wanting to come in and change everything, or do giant Daugherty Projects. People come in with a more conservative attitude." Arnie added the thought, so what if people come into Core Fandom in their 40s if they then stay 30-40 years?

The panelists' emphatic view that Core Fandom is not connected with science fiction may not have been new, but is doubtless right. Bill Mills said, "There should be a term for being a fan of fandom." Somebody correctly answered, "There is: 'fakefan.'" You could look it up.

Over the weekend I learned that among those who subscribe to the idea of Core Fandom there is strong disagreement about doing outreach to expand its numbers. A few approved fanzine lounges at conventions as a tool to show people what they are missing. In contrast, another fan insisted that the only people who belong in faanish fandom (which he equated with Core Fandom) are those who find it for themselves. Andy Hooper (during his GoH speech, I think) rhetorically asked why he would want to go to any convention that would have a fanzine lounge (meaning, I believe, any con worth his while is already entirely devoted to the interests and activities that fanzine lounges evangelize.)

During the lunch break, while Andy Hooper and company rehearsed their play, I went online to inspect Corflu's video feed. There was a lively group in the associated chat room, including Curt Phillips, Geri Sullivan and Dian Crayne. Curt confirmed that the video feed was "good enough," and the

audio was very good, although a buffering problem caused periodic freezes and drop outs.

Before the next round of programming started, some of us resumed swapping fanzines. I got a copy of Lenny Bailes' *Whifflestar*, and we remembered when he handed me the previous issue, at the 2002 Worldcon. Ken Forman and John Hardin were giving away the hot-off-the-press, postcard-sized issue of *9 Lines*. Judy Bemis noticed that *File 770 #152* ran old photo of the Room 770 party and one fan couldn't be identified because he is facing away from the camera. She volunteered to ask Roger Sims if that's his back. Could be, it was his party.

Saturday afternoon program began with a team trivia contest requiring UK fans to answer questions about US fanhistory, and US fans about UK fanhistory. Ken Forman emceed. Andy Hooper quite made my day by inviting me to fill out his US team, along with Ted White and Robert Lichtman. The UK team included Sandra Bond, Mark Plummer, Nic Farey and Dr. Rob Jackson.

Questions were categorized: "Convention Wisdom", "Captain EO", "Salt-Water Taffy", "War - What is it good for? Absolutely Nothing" (fanac during WWII), and "TLA" (Three-Letter Abbreviations).

It was remarkable how much fanhistory the two teams darn near but didn't quite know, which kept the score very close 'til the end. We did know a few things, as the score was announced as 55-55 during the game. The final outcome was decided by an improvised sudden death question. I think the US team won. At least, Ken Forman afterwards showed me a scoresheet with a big checkmark on that side of the ledger.

Presiding over a quiz game isn't easy, keeping the process on the rails while amusing the audience and dealing with distractions. Once when the UK team missed a question, Ken Forman made a mistake in revealing the answer before the US team had a shot at it. Ted White started lawyering Ken for all he was worth, to be awarded points or come other advantage. It was a fascinating performance and hard for me to decide if Ted was actually upset, only demonstrating advanced Fansmanship, or simply yanking Ken's chain.

Next, Andy Hooper's play "The Price of Pugwash" was performed as a reader's theater by Lise Eisenberg, Len Bailes, Randy Byers, Lloyd Penney, Bill Mills and the rest. They did very well delivering the lines and carrying off the humor. It was another excellent script by Hooper.

The anchor leg of the afternoon's program was the auction. Treasures like *War-hoon 28* and a 1946 Worldcon program book went on the block. I was very happy to get



three early issues of *Energumen*. I became active in trading fanzines around 1971 and hated to have already missed several issues of the zine which set the standard for faanish genzines when I was learning what that was.

Sunday: Arnie Katz' Corflu report in *Vegas Fandom Weekly* includes a photo showing Marty Cantor and me sitting and waiting for the banquet room to open. It's true, LA fans will travel any distance to talk to other LA fans. We spent part of that time reminiscing about Steve Tymon's record-setting 170+ page LASFAPazine in the Seventies. Marty told me Tymon now works for the *LA Times* and has a website.

When we were let in, I sat at a table with Kathryn and James Daugherty, Marty, Gordon Eklund and others. Fans were dismissed by table to join the serving line. I saw Ted White go by with the group from the first table — he won! The food was good and there was plenty of it, no small feat whenever fan appetites are involved.

As people finished eating, the award ceremonies began. Joyce Katz thanked Bill and Roxy Mills. She recognized Linda Bushyager for her yeoman work, John DeChancie for playing keyboard, and Andy Hooper for "working harder than a government mule." And she didn't fail to make the obligatory slighting remarks about bigger

conventions.

Murray Moore announced the winners of the Fanzine Activity Achievement — FAAn — awards. He told a few jokes and rambling anecdotes while dispensing the egoboo.

- Best Fanzine: *Prolapse*, edited by Peter Weston
- Best Fan Artist: Dan Steffan
- Best Fan Writer: Arnie Katz
- Best Letterhack: Robert Lichtman
- Best New Fan: John Coxon
- Best Fan Website: eFanzines.com
- #1 Fan Face: Arnie Katz

Murray liked having an audience, right up to the moment somebody sent a note to the stage that said, "Move it along you fugghead."

Then Len Bailes announced that the participants in the Virtual Corflu (the online chatroom), which drew as many as 38 fans at one time, had all signed a special award certificate of thanks to Bill and Roxy Mills.

Other Corflu Honors: Ted White polled the audience and determined that the Past President of Fan Writers of America (fwa) for 2007 had been Dan Steffan.

Then, Guest of Honor Andy Hooper took over the dais. He warned that he didn't have any written remarks, "So nobody can come up to the podium afterwards and ask me to let him print them in a fanzine." Unfortunately, he explained, this was because he has been suffering from diabetic retinopathy for the past three years, and had a hemorrhage in his right eye on Saturday. Still, Hooper's excuse was more eloquent than a lot of people's speeches, and began:

"I would like to deliver one of those speeches that starts with Cyrus the Great of Persia in the 6th Century Century and continues through a series of historical misadventures and comes down to someone in the 20th Century like Hugo Gernsback or A.P. Dick."

He talked about the people and activities most important to him, especially a real passion for Corflu that he lives out by working as much as he can on every aspect of it.

Lastly, everyone acclaimed Randy Byers' bid to hold next year's Corflu in Seattle. "I've never worked on a convention before," said Randy. Someone yelled, "That won't change!" With Andy's zeal for Corflu in mind, I wondered whether they only meant Corflu isn't any mere convention, or were sarcastically predicting how much work Randy would do?

When the ceremonies ended I gave myself a technological whiplash by dashing to the lobby, logging on, and posting the bits of news revealed by the speakers — to be read mainly by an audience of people who had

just watched every moment via the online simulcast.

There was still more partying to come, but it was time for me to hit the road and get home to Diana and Sierra Grace. Corflu had been a wonderfully interesting experience.

Corflu on the Fly, Part Virtual: Peter Sullivan later made available an almost-complete transcript of the Corflu Silver Virtual Con Suite, from the morning of Friday 25th to the evening of Sunday 27th. He stitched it together from copies he and Geri Sullivan kept made as it went along. Any fan who wants a copy can request it from Peter at peter@burdonvale.co.uk. The transcript is almost 70,000 words (424k).

Alan White and Gary Mattingly posted photos online. Various photos, including some of Alan's have been published in recent issues of *Vegas Fandom Weekly*.

Bill Mills, encouraged by the success of the Corflu Silver Virtual Con Suite, has launched a continuous Virtual Fan Lounge utilizing the same software. To visit the Virtual Fan Lounge go to Las Vegrants.com. Select "Virtual Fan Lounge" from the menu. That will take you to a page of information about the chat room which includes a link to the Virtual Fan Lounge. Registration and sign-in is only required to participate, not to read.

Bill has also issued *Voices of Fandom* podcast #16 that allows your ears to spend an hour at the con. Bill & Roxy lead in with their experiences from the convention, followed by the Opening Ceremony. A lot of the musical numbers mentioned above are included. There's even an excerpt from the performance of Andy Hooper's play.

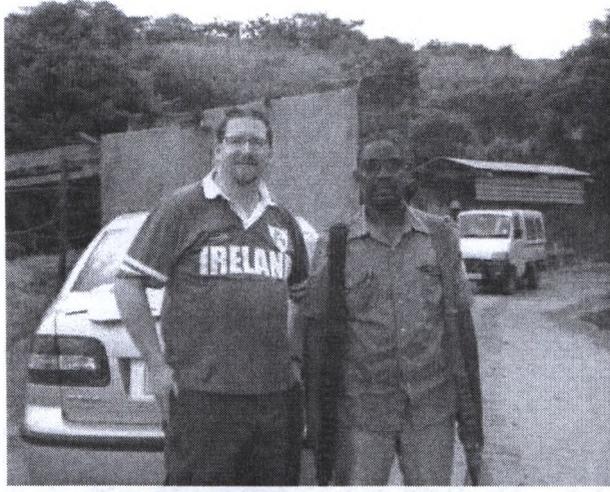


SA: The Sporting Day

by James Bacon

Some local PR: Durban plays an important role in sport in South Africa. Each year the Mr Price Pro surfing competition takes place on the beach where local and international surfers converge to battle the waves. Greyville Race Course is the venue for the annual July Handicap, South Africa's premier horse race. Thousands of runners from all over the country including foreigners take part in the Comrades Marathon, an annual long-distance running event held between Durban and Pietermaritzburg. A canoe race from Pietermaritzburg to Durban known as the "Dusi" is also very popular for paddlers and spectators. The enormous King's Park Stadium, home of the KZN Sharks Rugby Team, is host to many an international rugby match, and the complex includes a soccer stadium currently being rebuilt for the 2010 Soccer World Cup, a cricket ground and an Olympic swimming pool. Regular golf competitions are held at the Durban Country Club and Beachwood courses. The World Surfski Champs were also held in Durban this year as was the South African round of the A1 grand prix.

I am in Durban. Well, that's wrong, I am in a resort north of Durban known as Umhlanga, and it's quite the getaway. There is a huge modern shopping mall on the ridge just as you leave the motorway that heads North from Durban, and then there is no shortage of car dealerships and it seems so modern. As usual, I am transfixed by how Euro-American the whole thing looks. Then into the town itself and its very nice, loads of restaurants and cafes, meanwhile the whole area is a selection of very tall yet grandiose hotels, guest houses, condos and residential properties, from very nice apartments to a road where I get confused for a moment, as I think I am in some modern industrial estate and the buildings are head offices. I have seen the style in Stockley Park near Heathrow, modern, classy, lots of glass and grass and very stylish for the big multi's, but Sim reassures me they are actually homes. This is



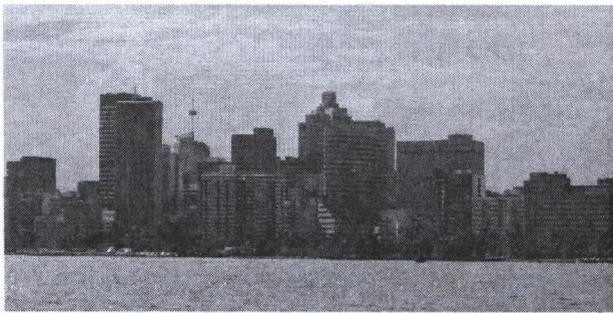
James and Vusi at the shooting range.

beyond me.

We stay in a guest house, it's only palatial. There are rose petals dropped on the floor of our huge room, which has the bath on one side and a four poster on the other and thank goodness we have the aircon at full blast. It's terrific. There is a warning though. Monkeys.

The instructions. Keep calm. Close your mouth. Clap hands. I practice this until I am sure I am prepared in case they appear.

So we have a few days here and Sim has been busily arranging things on this mammoth three week trip in South Africa. It's a honeymoon and everywhere we go we are feted with champagne. We have Saturday as a big day for us, a sporting day, before we journey north towards Mozambique on the Sunday to Thonga Beach and then after a couple of nights there, we will be heading



The skyline of Durban, South Africa.

inland to Thanda Game Reserve. But for now, it's Durban and Umhlanga and it's good.

Durban is some sort of sports capital as well as the busiest port in Africa. In Ireland we have an Olympic sized pool, it was built in the last 15 years or so, and is modern, before that we had, well half-size. Durban has an Olympic-sized pool inside, it's massive and is fully seated, and outside is the tall diving board and diving pool. They have a velodrome and then there is Kings Park, a Rugby ground, which is next to a cricket ground and across the road from the football stadium being built for the 2010 world cup finals. It just never stops. The whole place is on a massive sports kick.

It's a Saturday and we begin our day early. Simone has it all arranged and we head into town to meet a friend of her father's. Vusi is going to take us to a range, give me some instruction on weaponry and we are going to shoot at targets. As I sit in the salubrious surroundings of Umhlanga, the wife goes and gets some bits and pieces from the nice little mall and a man approaches me. He is not tall, or well built, but is indeed a fit man and seems very quiet and unassuming, he notes my Irish shirt and introduces himself. Vusi joins me for breakfast. We agree what is going to happen today and how much I will be charged, and I hand over my rands and we relax and chat. Vusi has had 14 years military service. He was an instructor when he finished his time in the armed forces. He left many years ago and did security work. This is how he knows my father-in-law, they worked together on-and-off for a long time and still do. Currently he is qualified to train trainers in an assortment of areas including shooting and gun usage.

Quiet, unassuming, and intelligent. As we wait we talk politics of the day, the concerns and improvements and the problems. Interestingly he mirrors quite a few comments of the white middle class (in a sumptuous and amazing home) friends that we chatted to the night before hand. Concerns about the rand – looking at Kenya and also Zimbabwe and Zumo are all topics that we cover. No one wants that at all appar-

ently; it would only result in civil war. He chats about education – its importance, we discuss government spin rather than factual assessments. The coffee is good and we enjoy the morning.

My father-in-law has collected a stolen gun in Cape Town and asked me to pass it to Vusi. A nine millimetre cheap Czech automatic pistol. I took this out of my satchel and passed it over, in its brown envelope.

I expected I would be excited about having a gun about the place, but I just deal with it like anything else, a laptop – concerned it's safe, but it's just a laptop. It was strange, maybe because I am aware of its danger, or perhaps I am just getting older.

With the wife returning we have introductions and we head north in convoy. We are heading towards Verilim, a predominantly Indian community and town inland and north of Durban. We head up the good roads and motorway, it's a very easy drive we make good time and are on schedule. We pass through Verilim and then we head out into countryside, it's quite green. We arrive at the Colt firing range.

We leave tarmac and head onto dirt road, drive over very hilly ground, and in the shadow of an amazing quarry, yet everywhere so lush and green, we go up and down hillocks and real back roads and we drive down to the shooting range. There are already cops using one of the ranges, using a variety of pistols, a version of the AK, in single shot mode and shot guns. Also we see trainee security guards running; pumping real sweat as they disappear up the winding incline, that walking would have me out of breath.

We park up and take out the weapons from Vusi's lockbox in the back of his truck. He has brought a couple of 12 gauge pump action shot guns a 9mm parabellum automatic pistol and a .38 special, revolver.

We go over to the only structure, a concrete building, spartan, with black boards and class rooms, special wall panels where guns can be worked on, a flip-chart board illustrating tactical usage of weapons in certain situations, and a stack of trash. It's stifling hot inside.

We sign on; we need to accept responsibility for ourselves and the weapons. Vusi is well known here and it takes no time at all to get everything in order.

There is a Police class in progress in the building and as we leave I look around, there are a number of ranges, just rectangles of land scooped out of the side of a mountain to give one protection to the sides and of course ensure there is nothing behind the target, except loose earth.

We go down steep steps and see the police in the range to one side of ours, working.

There is no shortage of weapons, and I see a number of female officers. There are rows of seats behind the range, the steep concrete steps down are a resting place for worn-out trainee cops.

Vusi sets up shop at the tin-roofed line of desks. PPE, instructions, guidance, rules, instructions, all clearly explained. He is suddenly very authoritative, in a gently coaching sort of way.

Four rules: always treat a gun as loaded, always point it in the firing direction, always know what's behind the target and know what you are shooting at.

Range Open – Range Closed. Shouts out. Discipline. Explains the weapon, the tang, the grip, the frame, the hammer, the slide, the trigger, the trigger guard.

Stance, grip, sighting, sighting picture, balance, breathing relaxed measured, timed.

I see there are sensible methods to everything. Years of practice have gone into how guns are shot. I recognise myself the instructor showing best practice. Clear concise. Lowest common denominator, and I listen as carefully as I can, remembering what I can as he goes. He uses short sentences. Asks am I alright with that? Can I do it? Then expects me to do so. Classic training techniques, all affirming the pupil has learned about the item being trained.

How to load, how to unload, how to check chamber and mag is empty, how to safety on, how to prepare the weapon. We use special practice bullets, bright red – reminds me of practice shells I have seen, all without a gram of gun powder in case I fumble, drop it or pull a trigger.

How to prepare for being attacked. Close quarters weapons use. Using it. Unholstering it. Shout out, I have a gun, shout out I will shoot unless you stop. Private protection, personal protection.

It's intense and after a good while, it's time to start firing live ammunition. I feel proud as Vusi compliments me and how quickly I am at understanding and doing as he says. He reckons people do not respect the weapon and that's hard and people have an idea that they know what they are doing when they haven't and that's a difficult teaching barrier to break down. Meanwhile I am putty in his expert hand. We start with the 9mm parabellum.

The suddenness of the situation is amazing, I find my stance, isosceles grip and snowboarder stance.

I squeeze, I squeeze harder after I breathe a little bit out, my aim on the target ahead of me, suddenly the noise the shock through the hands and a hole in the target. I am sure I blink as I fire, or as the firing occurs at least, but I hold my gun steady. The gun wants to go up as it fires; I concentrate on keeping it



Simoné and James Bacon.

level. I have five shots: three hit the A, the next two go to D.

There is shouting, checking of chambers, magazine safely placed down and weapon down, and more shouting and we go and inspect the target, Vusi explains how I was doing very well – but got excited, adrenalin pumping and then I lost my shot. He talks about aim and breathing. It's all calm and measured, but he seems happy that I have actually hit the target.

More shooting. Lots more shooting. I am getting the grip of this and my target is being violently pock marked. Next it's the mechanisms of the revolver. A very different machine altogether. I look and I learn about the calibre – .38 – bigger (longer bullets) and how that has an impact on the weapon, the target and what sort of damage it can do. More shouting, more shooting.

The revolver is harder to control and louder and I wonder what a .44 or a .50 would be like. My target is getting well hit. Again I am struck by how promptly everything happens, all too fast for the eye to take in: squeeze – a hole. It's quick. No time to duck or to avoid or to see what's happening, just controlled ballistics faster than the eye can see. I consider how violent the guns are, how damaging they could potentially be.

Next its onto mechanisms of the pump-action shotgun, how to hold it, pressing the stock against the shoulder, aiming low, as the firing will make it rise: 12 gauge AAA shot, pellets pepper the target.

I expect it to kick like a mule, but as I press my cheek down to get a sight, and pull the trigger I am surprised that I am still standing and ready to pump. I promptly make a total balls of pumping the action and then am instructed in how to make the weapon safe and how to remove the cartridge I just jammed. Vusi gives it a try and a cou-

ple of seconds later, two blasts have rung out, his stance is easy yet steely, his eye is precise. No messing with this dude.

I get the idea eventually of how to pump the pump-action and soon I am blowing nice holes in my target.

Afterwards we chat some more, loads of time has passed by, but its only 11 a.m. now. We talk about the importance of cleaning the weapon afterwards. Vusi gives advice. I am still an absolute beginner. But I learn quickly and do as I am told which apparently in itself is a big achievement and he advises that this is what I should do if given further instruction. I do not envy the men he trains. During it all, I am being trained how to shoot in defence of another person. It sinks in slowly. It's not fun, it's not a game, the training, the weapon, the skills learned are all in preparation for when the choices are limited and life is at risk. I don't dwell upon this too much.

My behavior has changed over the trip, though. I always larked about with plastic guns and deactivated weapons. No more I am afraid. The power and destructive nature is incredible. I ponder what I saw in Joburg where a fella in a queue for an ATM had a massive pistol holstered and visible. I think about how the brown envelope in my bag was just something I had to pass on.

On the way back, I am putting the pedal to the metal and I forget about a speed trap that we saw on the way out and I am pulled in. It's the Verlim local plod. They are friendly and I admit I was speeding etc. I get out of the car and go with the cop, who is wearing a tan uniform, very CHIP's. He wants to show me my speed, but I am happy I was over the limit, I am not interested in arguing and am happy to pay a fine or whatever. He sees my driving licence and we chat about England and how I am actually from Ireland and how I am finding South Africa.

After much chat and cordiality I am let go.

These dudes are just doing a job, and I have always found that being relaxed and apologetic works best. They have a load of guns with them I notice, including a HK rifle, which sort of surprises me a little, but I expect it would slice through any vehicle that ran.

I drive back to Durban we are meeting my sister and her friend, going to the A1 GP qualifiers. Now this was a last minute idea. The A1 grand prix, which uses similar-style cars to Formula One, is made up of national teams. They all have the same car, so it's the teams and drivers that matter. It's on in Durban this weekend, and we know the qualifiers begin at Lunch and tickets were cheap. So we meet the girls and we head into Durban.

It's massive. Although this is only the qualifiers, we find that there are hundreds of people at the event and the grandstands are full. It's hectic, there are stands selling shirts and paraphernalia, and beer areas. The heat is wonderful now and I am in full 50 factor block for kids. We chill out, check out the tyre-changing demo. I note that each country not only has a team but also a team model. I am not sure about Ireland's, I would have expected red curly locks and freckles, but in fairness the girl is stunningly beautiful.

We got good seats opposite the pits and looking at the starting line, so we enjoy the cars flying around. They really scream out as the head out of the pits, the girls are cheering for South Africa while I have my fingers crossed for the Irish team. The cars are all the colours of the national flags of each country and it's a great buzz.

Well it was. Adam Carroll has a bad drive. He has had bad drives all weekend. Earlier in practice he came off this street circuit and now he heads out timidly for

qualifiers and you know the car doesn't even make a circuit. It's a nightmare. The South Africans next to me are having a hilarious time, meanwhile we see the green white and orange car sitting on the side of the track.

I am gutted. It only gets worse. They send out the tow truck, and it gets the car back to the pits, before the next round of qualifiers, but there will be no second chance for Ireland, after it's unloaded off the back of the truck, to much mirth, it's shoved back into the garage and stays there. Meanwhile South Africa screams around and is doing well.

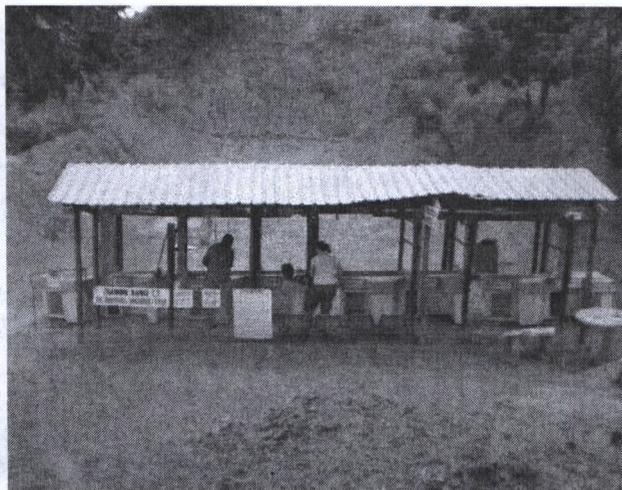
Ah, well. It was a good few hours and we head off. There are other races planned, a Ferrari race and Porsche race, filler around the main events, but we have another engagement.

We are off to King's Park rugby ground for the Natal Sharks' game against the Stormers, a Cape Town team. The park seats some 52,000 people. We had tickets for all four of us, but quite high up in the stands, nice seats, but not amazing. It was OK though because Simone's sisters' friend Karina who was with us knew some people, and next thing, we were welcomed into the supporters club area and ushered into a wonderful box, with its own bar and seating area, just a little higher and to one side of the posts, a perfect view. Beer was about \$2 a pint, which was as you can imagine very cheap for me.

There is much activity on the field, initially we see children in choreographed athletics and running around the pitch. Then there is the mascot, a shark on a big Harley Davidson and another mascot a dwarf in a 4X4 go cart. Other kids dressed in rugby gear are playing a game and others are swirling flags.

The social scene is massive, they have chicken seats -- basically benches in trenches at each end of the pitch, they are below us, especially for under 18's of which there are loads, massing about in small schools, drifting from part to part, etc. They get excited when something happens, or the shark mascot comes around and the rest of the time, it seems to be school social scene, the pretty girls clumped together, with little interest in the sport, the younger boys, all in sun glasses and looking as cool as a cucumber in the Antarctic.

The match gets going. A Stormer supporter is in the box, and initially quite happy as they take the lead. This leads to some serious shouting in the box -- some banter as it is



(Left) Pump-action shotgun. (Right) Firing range.

known – bullying in other circles, but it's great fun and the Stormers fan is lapping it up, he must be a player of some sort, about 6' 2" and I would say at least 18 stone. There are lots of tooting and froing – 'sit down' 'volume control on that stormer' 'oi oi oi'.

The match is fantastic and as hoped the Sharks win, it's a 12-10 game and it was exciting to the end. We enjoy drinks on a regular basis.

We chatted with some friends of the girls, and we then went to 'the field'. The supporters club and season ticket holders go into the 'field' next to the huge sports ground and there are hundreds of cars, a family day out, brai's (BBQ's) going on – If you only have meat, there is a huge central Wiber Brai area, where you can use the ultimate in Brai's, a Wiber, to cook your food. It's like a fun fair and very relaxed. Kids clump about, families circle the rear of their backies and cars and have the food going. It's much more of a day out that I would have expected and very nice indeed. As it darkens we note the party beginning. The band is on a stage and the kids are bashing away, the hurdy-gurdies are spinning and the fooderies are selling. We grab some quick food and enjoy the atmosphere. It darkens quickly and the night is upon us. I smile as we pass a group of teenagers. There are some things you can hide, but the waft of marijuana is not one of them. We enjoy drinks and decide we should head for something more substantial.

We head into the casino, this is next to the grand prix, so is still very busy and we go to John Dorys for Sushi, Peri Peri Chicken and drinks. The casino is massive; there is no shortage of affluence in this city despite the poverty that we pass by in our car, where people live in little more than a shed, built out of whatever they can find. I notice that there are a lot of Indian folk here, gambling and spending seem to be their thing tonight. I don't really care, but it is just one of those things I note. These folk have money and the cars in the car park are stylish and big. I spot some truly stunning fashions. I had tried a table the week before hand and had not enjoyed as much as I had expected. Not sure why, I love roulette, black jack and also baccarat, but I just felt there was a frenzy about the guys playing which I cannot get into. I just enjoy playing I suppose.

We don't gamble, but end our day and head back home to our guest house after dropping off the girls and having a nice coffee. It was a great day.



Bruce Gillespie Wins McNamara Award

In the wake of Swancon 2008, the Australian National SF Convention, Bruce Gillespie writes, "You might be interested that I won at the weekend Australia's other 'Lifetime Achievement Award' (that is, other than the A. Bertram Chandler Award, which is usually for people who were part of Australian SF before the 1980s). It's the Peter McNamara Award, named in honour of publisher, entrepreneur (the Aurealis Awards) and general good person Peter McNamara, who died of a brain tumour only a year after John Foyster. I haven't actually seen a copy of whatever was said at the weekend, but here's the message I prepared in advance to answer it:

"Robin Johnson accepted the Big Heart Award in Japan last year, he said that he was 'gobsmacked' to win, and nobody understood the word. If I say I'm gobsmacked at receiving the Peter MacNamara Award this year, you'll know what I mean. And even that's an understatement. Not only am I honoured to receive an award in the name of Mac, the most congenial, hardworking bloke in Australian SF in the last 25 years, but I'm very much honoured by the distinguished company I'm now keeping. Thanks very much to this year's judging panel, and everybody in the Australian SF community.

"I've rarely made any money out of my interest in SF and publishing, but I can claim to have been around a long time. I published my first magazine at school at the age of 14, before I had heard of fandom. When in 1963 I heard about these little magazines called fanzines, in which I could publish whatever I wanted, I knew that was what I wanted to do

for the rest of my life. My thanks to all the people who have helped me since January 1969, when SF Commentary first appeared. Thanks to John Bangsund, Lee Harding, John Foyster and George Turner, my original mentors, the many people who have contributed reviews, articles and letters since then, and in recent years, the amazing people, such as Thomas Bull, Bill Wright and David Lake, who have kept alive my magazines through their financial contributions, and Dick Jensen, whose cover artwork has been such a large factor in their success. Thanks also to my international co-editors of Steam Engine Time, Paul Kincaid and Maureen Kincaid Speller for the first few issues, and Jan Stinson recently. Thanks also to Carey Handfield and Rob Gerrand, my partners in Norstrilia Press, which blazed the trail from 1975 to 1985 for Aphelion Books and the many small-scale publishers that came after. And thanks most of all to Elaine, my wife, who has put up with all this publishing for the last thirty years."

Who was the Peter McNamara for whom this award is named? Bruce explains:

"Peter McNamara and his wife Mariann emerged in the mid 1980s from Adelaide, just as our Norstrilia Press (Rob Gerrand, Carey Handfield and me) were closing down. He published five issues of Aphelion, a magazine, but distribution killed it, as always happens with Australian attempts at fiction prozines. He started Aphelion Books, which published about 30 books between 1985 and 1995, including all the early Terry Dowling books and all the books Sean McMullen published before he started with Tor. Also, his example began the Australian SF boom of the nineties, because lots of people were inspired to begin their own small presses, esp. Ticonderonga Press in WA and Mirror-Danse in NSW. In his later years, Peter organised the Aurealis Awards judging panels (eight juries each year for the separate awards) and the annual awards ceremony, and did much else that I'm unaware of. I didn't realise until much too late that he was, for instance, a brilliant reviewer, but he usually had little time for writing. Universal sorrow when we heard that he had contracted a brain tumour. He took about two years longer to die than the doctors gave him, so he worked even harder than ever. (I'm pretty sure he died in 2003 -- you might have the date on your database.)"

Clipping Service

Mark Leeper: Lately I have been feeling like I have been having some six-tana-leaf days. Ya know? [MT Void #1487]

Walt Daugherty

A Memoir by Bill Warren

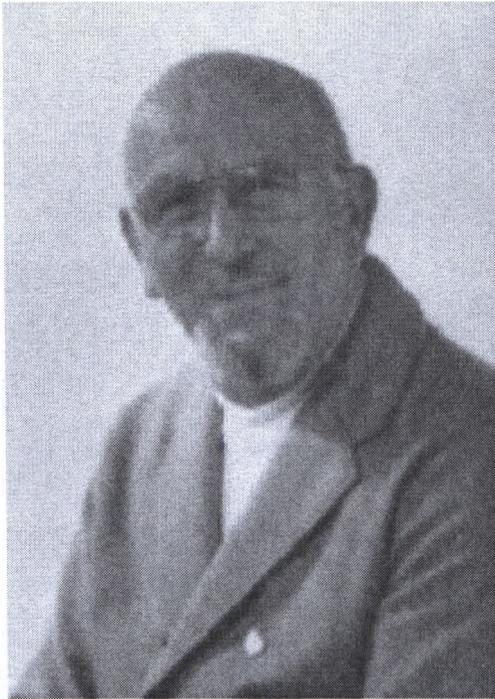
I didn't like Walter J. Daugherty and he didn't like me. I say this not to suggest anyone take sides, but rather just in the service of honesty and disclosure.

When we moved to Los Angeles in 1966, one of the first places I wanted to visit was the original Ackermansion, the book/art/poster-filled home of Forrest J Ackerman. I had been corresponding intermittently with Forry since about 1958, and had met and spent time with him at the Seattle-Tacoma Worldcon in 1961.

It didn't take long for our social life to largely center on the Ackermansion and Forry's activities—which inevitably brought me into contact with Walt Daugherty. At the time, he was busily helping out around the house with various carpentry projects, and also took a lot of photos for Forry and *Famous Monsters*. When Forry arranged for me to (repeatedly) visit the sets of the last four movies Boris Karloff made in a small stage on Santa Monica Boulevard, Walt came along several times to take pictures of Karloff. To Walt's delight and pride, Karloff identified one of them as the best photo ever taken of him, and signed it to Walt that way. Walt took several of me with Karloff, which I treasure.

Walt tended to be proprietary about Forry, which is what I presume led to his eventual low opinion of me. But maybe not. I've never been able to work this out. Nonetheless, when I lost my job, Forry asked Walt to see if I could work at the Los Angeles Photography Center, in which Walt was very active. Actually, I worked for the (never completed) Hollywood Museum (Walt was the curator, then his primary job), but I did the work at the photo center. On the other hand, Walt was also instrumental in my eventually being fired.

Forry occasionally had me deliver things to Walt's surprisingly small (one room) apartment—he was single at that time—jammed with the trophies and awards his many enthusiasms brought him over the years. These were so varied and, in some cases, unexpected, that it was dazzling. I remember seeing trophies and prizes for ballroom dancing, gymnastics, photography, tropical fish and other hobbies/enthusiasms. Were there bowling trophies? I don't remember, but it's entirely possible. At one time, he raised parakeets, winning at least one award



for that, too. In his obituary (on a tropical fish website), his widow Mary Ellen added stamp collecting, auto racing, aquariums, quick draw (who knew?), gardening and model building. He appeared with others in his high school gymnastics class as kind of ancillary attractions at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles.

Walt went through life picking up one enthusiasm after another, becoming proficient enough to win awards, then largely dropping it and moving on to another. His love of tropical fish and photography, however, lasted much longer; his obituary says he was still raising tropical fish when he died at 90.

Egyptology also consumed much of Walt's time, and he occasionally spoke on it to various groups around the country. His prize-winning parakeet was named King Tut.

Mary Ellen's obituary cites many jobs Walt held over the years: a production control manager for various companies, private detective, photography instructor, museum curator and movie stuntman and extra. He once told me that he played most of the dead bodies in John Huston's *Key Largo* (1948). He claimed his birth father, Monty Williams (Walt took the last name of his adoptive

father) was one of the horsemen seen at the beginning of the influential "The Great Train Robbery" (1903).

One of his enthusiasms was fandom. Almost everything in Walt's life was a hobby, and fandom, too, was just a god-damned hobby; that phrase might have been created for Walt. He may have been attending meetings for some time, but he first joined on September 1, 1938. After initial clashes, he and Forry developed a close friendship which lasted until Walt's death. The two men were quite unlike, not even seeming to be the same age (which they were); one young visitor to the Ackermansion irked Walt by asking if he was Forry's father.

In the 1940s, Walt was ferociously active in fandom, and was one of the movers and shakers in LASFS. When the landlord of the room on Bixel Street that the LASFS used as a meeting place for many years decided to throw the club out, Walt became the landlord himself. This happened at least twice. Walt also held various offices in the club. Another of his enthusiasms was home recording, then in its infancy. He hauled a mass of heavy equipment to the 1941 Denver Worldcon, where Robert A. Heinlein was Guest of Honor. Walt recorded Heinlein's speech, the first time this was done. He was in FAPA from 1941 to 1946.

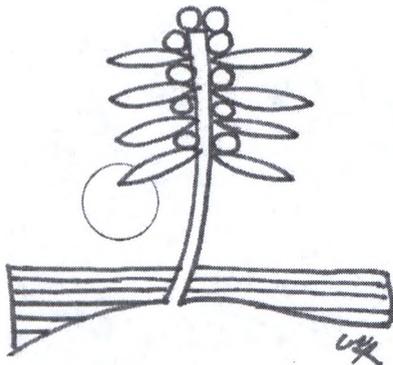
In the mid-40s, the LASFS was firmly divided into factions, though some moved freely between the various groups. Forry and Walt, plus Morojo (Myrtle Douglas), were the leaders of one group; another loosely centered on Francis T. Laney and Charles Burbee. These two factions usually did not get along. In Laney's notorious *Ah, Sweet Idiocy!*, and Robert Lichtman's recent collection of Laneyana, *Ah, Sweet Laney!*, Daugherty is mentioned several times, usually wryly, occasionally with some praise, usually critically. One of the pieces in the Lichtman collection dealt with Walt, a report on a phone conversation Laney had with Daugherty. It sounds just like Walt.

The first post-WW2 Worldcon was held in Los Angeles in 1946. Forry Ackerman was the chairman—or rather, was intended to be the chairman. He'd worked long and hard on preparing for the convention, but on the first day, he collapsed from stress and overwork. Walt Daugherty stepped in, was named chairman in Forry's stead, and ran the

convention efficiently. Not long thereafter, he proposed a regular West Coast convention, and Westercons were born in 1948. Walt was, somewhat surprisingly, chairman of the *second* Westercon, held like the first in Los Angeles. He was fan guest of honor at the 1997 Westercon, in Seattle. He and Forry created the Big Heart Award, and for years, Walt was responsible for making the individual awards; he received it himself in 1968.

Daugherty's intense fanac—fanzines, clubs, conventions when possible—meant a great deal to him in the 1940s, but as Forry pointed out in one of his "Through Time and Space with Forry Ackerman" features in *Mimosa*, Walt had at least 50 hobbies, many of them going at the same time. In the obituary his widow Mary Ellen prepared for a tropical fish hobbyist website, for some time, Walt was "Mr. Hobby" on a Los Angeles radio show.

All of these activities could, of course, only have been done by someone with a restless mind and a lot of energy. And this had bad effects, too. F.T. Laney was one of those who popularized the disparaging term "Daugherty Project," referring to the many projects Walt suggested for the club, put a lot of time and energy into, but which ultimately produced little or no results. Like a lot of catch phrases, it's both inaccurate and dead on: Daugherty proposed so many projects that some simply had to fall by the wayside. He was not gracious about having this pointed out, and he could display a frightening bad temper. Actually, except in ballroom dancing, I doubt that Walt was gracious about much of anything—his ego was too well-developed for that, and he tended to be oversensitive to criticism. He also tended to inflate things, especially things well in the past. In his last few years, when talking about the past of the Ackermansion, he claimed that George Lucas and Steven Spielberg were among the many



helpers Forry had down through the years—but they weren't. They didn't live in the area, and didn't even know *each other* in the period Walt claimed they helped Forry.

After the 1940s, Walt's fanac decreased tremendously; he rarely came to LASFS meetings—though he usually showed up at local conventions, at least for a few hours—and he did no fanzine work at all (as nearly as I can tell). But he was still Forry's friend, and one of the most useful people Forry knew. He was constantly coming up with projects at the original Ackermansion, and most of them *weren't* "Daugherty Projects;" that is, he accomplished most of them. There were times when Forry waited in vain for Walt to complete something that he'd promised by a certain date, but these weren't common.

Gradually, age caught up with him, and he slowed to a standstill on his projects for Forry. Finally, he and his wife moved out of Los Angeles and to Santa Maria. He did return to testify in the notorious Forry vs. Ray Ferry legal battle. Ferry claimed to be terrified of Walt, whom he called (with some justification) Forry's "hit man." Then Walt came into the courtroom, using a walker. When Ferry took over *Famous Monsters*, Walt loaned him a lot of negatives and prints—and never saw them again. Walt died in his sleep on June 17, 2007. He was a memorable man; maybe not likeable, but hard to ignore, and deserving of respect.

Footnote to Fanhistory

Before Mapquest, fans depended on Kevin Standlee's feet.

In 1993, people going to the Worldcon wanted to know how far their hotels were from the Moscone Center. The ConFrancisco committee told them how many blocks, told them how many linear feet, and still had to admit "neither measurements

have satisfied many people."

Having made the admission, Kevin Standlee realized the only other thing he could do was personally pace off routes from the hotels to the Moscone entrance. He counted his steps and published the results under the title "ConFrancisco - Step by Step." Fandom learned, for example, that the Parc 55 was 968 Standlees from the convention center, a Standlee being the length of a stride by a man 6'3" tall, or about a meter. The Standlee became part of the fannish lexicon, and Leah Zeldes Smith wrote that the term deserved to be in the next *Fancy-clopedia*.

Not very many fans have been immortalized by having their names attached to a unit of measurement. Two others I can name off the top of my head are both NESFAns.

According to the NESFA Bureau of Standards, a "Drew" is "the unit of displacement needed to move Drew Whyte from Boston to Cambridge." Volunteers from the club, er, I mean the NESFA Displacement Authority, required five trucks about 20 feet long, packed absurdly tightly, to shift all or Drew's stuff to his new home.

Another time, Mark Olson told a NESFA business meeting that new bookshelf extensions had been installed and in the process people had coined a new measurement — "the Paula." The new shelves were three Paulas high.

You would expect such ideas to appeal to NESFAns, having the example before them of MIT's Oliver Smoot, a fraternity member who was laid end to end (wasn't that every frat boy's dream in 1963?) to measure the length of the Mass. Ave. bridge. Today, Google Earth allows users the option of measuring distances in Smoots. And, of course, the image of Smoot on the Mass. Ave. bridge was celebrated at the Noreascon 4 Opening Ceremonies.

The Fanivore

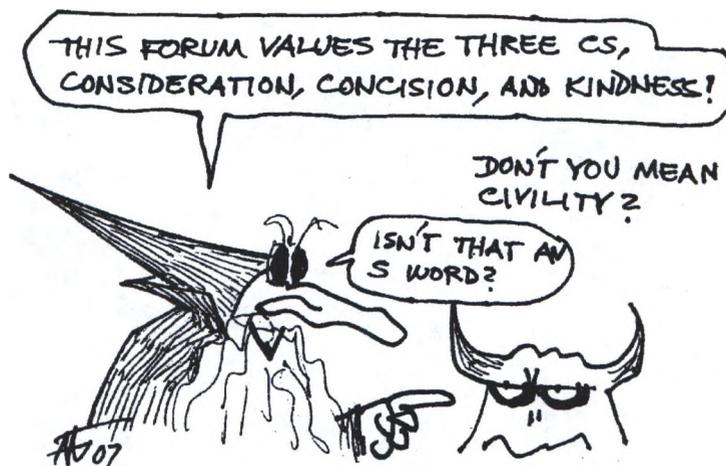
Alexis Gilliland

Thank you for the 30th anniversary of *File 770*, demonstrating that longevity counts. Good quality, too, though after all the practice you've had, that shouldn't be surprising. Enclosed are a set of five cartoons for your contemplation and possible use. Truth in advertising: The five cartoons have been scanned in, to eventually be posted, while the originals are in an envelope with *File 770* penciled on the back so they don't get sent elsewhere. We note that the envelope for scanned in cartoons is a lot thicker than the envelope for scanned in cartoons submitted to fanzines, probably reflecting the fact that I don't get all that many fanzines these days.

My website is making progress, albeit more slowly than I might wish. We had a nice lunch party up at Lunacon, for an official announcement, even though it was and is a work still in progress. Since the work in question is a Team Gilliland project, and Lee has now enrolled for courses in Dreamweaver and Website Management, it would appear that the project has taken on a life of its own embracing beauty and technology to the max. When I asked Lee what her plans were, and she told me, I didn't understand what she was saying. I would have been happy with plain vanilla, but it looks like we will be putting out something a little fancier or even a lot fancier. How much fancier? Jim's teacher in web design works for the DC government, and has offered him a job there on the strength of it. Jim, however, is looking to finish his degree from the Art Institute of Washington. Sigh. When all the bells and whistles are installed, and all the cartoons, my website will be a thing of beauty, but you've got to be patient.

Elizabeth Garrott

My cousin George Carver (with an IQ in the same range as Joe Major's) was a Yale-bird, then a Rhodes Scholar, then a CIA agent, and a neighbor and friend of Alice and Ting Sheldon. At dinner after Georgie's memorial service here in Louisville (Uncle



George and Aunt Saxon having been too fragile to attend the service in Virginia) Ruth (G's widow) told me that the last she heard Alice S. was when Alice phoned and said, "Ting and I have a suicide pact." Ruth then added that Ting had Alzheimers.

My father's brother-in-law, biochemistry professor C. T. Bahner, spent many summers working at Oak Ridge. I think he had some sort of security clearance. From what I have heard of Greg Benford's "day" jobs, it would astonish me if he did not.

I don't think Joe realizes that contradicting someone on a matter wherein the one you're contradicting has firsthand knowledge is a wonderfully efficient way to make a galloping fool of yourself.

We eat dinner with the Majors most Friday nights. I don't recall Joe putting down the Sheldon/Tiptree biography until the Hugo nominations came out. And now he says he never bothered to read it in the first place? Sorry, *illavabile est*.

Competitive Outknowing can be an enjoyable sport, and a very fannish one, in properly defined contests. As a full-time avocation, it's childish and irritating, especially when coupled with Compulsive Putting-in-the-Wrong.

I could rattle on, but to what merit?

Ted White

On the final page [of #152] Mike Walsh picks up on something I'd missed in an earlier issue and suggests that if you've met Ed Bryant, you've met your first "descendent [sic] of one of the Mayflower families."

Well, surely not your *first*.

I believe we met some time in the '70s, probably at either a Worldcon or a Westercon. I am the 9th direct descendant of Peregrin White, the first boy born on the Mayflower, during its crossing, a fact I learned in early childhood. In the late '60s I discovered that Ross Chamberlain can make the same claim, having been descended of one of Peregrin's daughters (and making us distant cousins, a fact we both acknowledge with pleasure).

So you've known descendants of one of the Mayflower families for many years, Mike.

[[Yes, I met you a couple of years before meeting Ed Bryant. And somehow I have encountered both of you without ever learning anything about your Pilgrim ancestry 'til now.]]

Eric Mayer

I enjoyed that first issue of *File 770* [[scanned and posted at eFanzines]]. It says something about my current level of activity that I can comment more readily on a zine from 30 years ago than one from today. Come to think of it, I believe I put out the first issue of *Groggy* in June of 1978, although my memory isn't very reliable. Funny how things don't change. People still insist on measuring fanzines against zines from the past. And often the same zines from the past, making such comparisons even less relevant than they were thirty years ago. I remember most of the zines Buck mentioned in *Devlin's Review*, and mostly fondly.

One title, though, jumped out. *Notes From the Chemistry Department*. I used to enjoy that but for some reason haven't thought about it in years. I immediately googled Dennis Quaine without success, but then I'm not sure if I got the spelling right. Probably not.

[[I'm afraid so - his last name was spelled Quane. He passed away in 1991.]]

Seems like most of the folks I hung out with postally either died or gafiated. Every so often I recall someone and look them up on the Internet. I've found that a lot, like Marty Levine, Steve Bieler, Brett Cox (I

think - is he F Brett Cox?) and, of course, Mike Gorra, have kept writing but not much if at all for fanzines. I even discovered that Edd Vick who I wrote for when he was in small press is writing away. No way am I going to ever do a genzine but it would be cool if someone could drag all these people back for an occasional appearance.

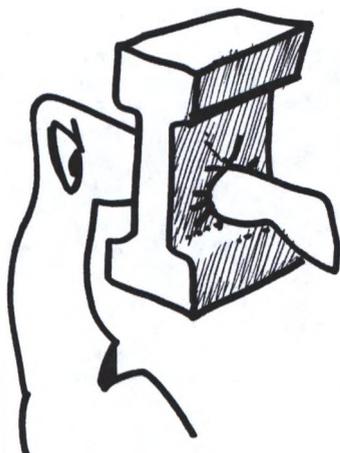
Gregory Benford

John Hertz makes the Japan Worldcon sound wonderful, as it was -- a unique blend of the sf cultures. We should encourage Japanese fans to come to Oz in 2010. I felt the Japan Worldcon was a transition to a more truly global sf world. We should seize this opportunity.

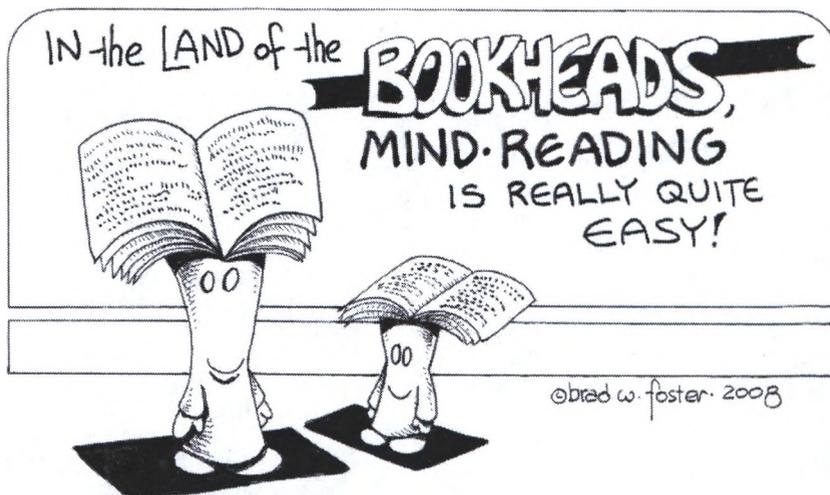
I'd like to see us encourage the Chinese, who sent a major delegation of sf editors. They have four sf prozines, largest with 400,000 circulation! Promoting sf is a state policy, somewhat like the Soviet effort of the 1950s-60s -- which led to the Strugatskys, a significant anti-regime voice. Given my experience with the Chinese in science conferences, we could open doors so their sf faction could begin a campaign of larger cons, leading to an eventual worldcon. They've already hosted conferences--well financed, I found, at a five-day one on the future in Hong Kong in 2003. They've hosted *Locus* staff, etc -- which made *Locus*'s absence a notable lapse (except for the Japanese rep, who had a table in the skimpy huckster room at Yokahama).

Time to expand our horizons! John Hertz has it right. We should make overtures so there's a major Chinese and maybe even Indian, at Melbourne in 2010.

Martin Morse Wooster doesn't under-



PRISONER OF EEO. KR



stand the Julie Phillips issue & her Tiptree bio. "It takes between 3-5 years for the CIA to declassify documents. You can't just call up and get someone in Langley to make you a copy of something." But that's just what I did, because I have long connections with the Agency. A friend read me the memo in which the Agency declared the deaths to be "murder-suicide" not a dual suicide. "Maybe Phillips filed a Freedom of Information Act and is still waiting for a response." She never did. If "I were her, I wouldn't change her book just because Greg Benford passed on unconfirmed rumors." She didn't try; that was my point. She also didn't ask for Tip's personnel file, or else would have discovered that Tip was fired, didn't just leave for grad school. "(And Phillips won a National Book Award, not a Pulitzer.)" Yes; I stand corrected.

Dennis Lien

Minor comment on the latest *File 770*. In his Japanese worldcon report, John Hertz explains "Minneapolis in '73" by saying that the Minneapolis bidders "lost to Toronto decades ago but has never been stopped by that."

He's wrong that we "lost to Toronto" -- in fact we withdrew the bid well before the vote, and then supported the Toronto bid. See (most of) the details in the Minneapolis section of this site:

<http://jophan.org/1960s/chapter3.htm>

John is, however, correct that whatever happened as regards the 1973 WorldCon in mere consensus reality never has stopped, or even much slowed down, our activities in that alternate brand of reality we traditionally prefer over here in the Sin Twitties.

Jerry Kaufman

File 770 arrived in the same week as *Locus* and I was flabbergasted to find that it was their 40th anniversary issue. A 30th and a 40th - both distinguished milestones. Not millstones, either.

In general, I'd say *F770* has the better cover art. If I had three hands like Brad Foster's smiling robot, I'd salute with all three.

This is the moment in which I try to remember just what I read in *F770* and what I want to respond to. The piece that stayed in memory most clearly is Taral's "Byline," a clever and funny piece. I'm fond of the old *Superman* tv series, too, though I watched it as a child and don't recall all its details.

We've been able to renew our acquaintance with Tim Kirk because of his involvement with the SF Museum here, and it's been a pleasure to be able to chat and joke with him several times in the past three or four years.

I enjoyed seeing those old photos Tim Marion included with his article. I'm sure that's Barry Smotroff in #11, even if Tim's not. I don't recognize the guy in the question-marked photo at all, but he could still turn out to be an old buddy - there's a photo in *Locus* of John D. Berry at poolside at Baycon (1968) that I was sure must be someone else. So that shows how well I can identify people in old photos.

And your back covers, like this one by Grant, are swell, too.

Joseph T. Major

Cover: Nice Brad W. Foster cover BUT... the robot should have been holding up the third and fourth fingers on his right hand and

the third finger on his left hand. 0011 0000 0010 = 770.

Stiles & Samaritan Medal: I do wonder how the Samaritans feel about having had their community appropriated by another religion.

Datclave: Not to worry, 2400 is a leap year, it being evenly divisible by 400. So, when the system clock rolls over to 3212-02-29 our consciousnesses can coalesce at the Datclave node. (Back in '80 we would still have flown there in our space-ships. The futures they are a changin'.)

Imperishable Flame Award: Congratulations to Diana. All the same, you do know that there are people who consider the Inklings's interaction to have been a negative thing.

The Worldcon John Hertz Saw: The most famous regent in Japanese history was Hideyoshi Toyotomi. He was Regent (*kampaku*) because he was born a peasant, and was not of enough standing to become Generalissimo (*shogun* or if you want to be technical *sei-i taishogun*). So Kampaku Dancing should involve being dressed as they were in the late sixteenth century. Hope you like the blackened teeth.

The Dubious Accuracy of Ridley Scott's Film: There was one positive effect of Ridley Scott's *Gladiator*; it got Wallace Breem's *Eagle In the Snow* reissued. *Eagle In the Snow* has a General Maximus, but it's

set in the fourth and fifth centuries AD/CE, and is a very downbeat story of the fall of civilization and the Alienated Man.

"I find that a lot of my interest in history comes from films I have seen." Mark would do well, then, to acquire a copy of *The Hollywood History of the World* by George MacDonald Fraser, which discusses in detail precisely his point. Fraser praises films when they stick to historical events and discusses the backstory.

As with *Red Dawn*. While being on the border between depressing worst-case-scenario and paranoid nightmare, the movie does have the advantage of careful military portrayals by John Milius, director of *Conan* and executive producer of HBO's *Rome*. (Now there's an idea, Conan facing Julius Caesar; but they'd probably team him up with Xena...) Thus the effort expended on making the equipment look right. (Or other things, such as the scene where the Soviet paratrooper takes a souvenir, pulling a gun out of a man's cold dead fingers, just like the bumper sticker above him says.)

The "crack Soviet unit" is special forces, or in Russian, Spetsnaz (an abbreviation of the Russian for "Special Purpose"). They wear the airborne striped undershirt because they train with the airborne forces, who in turn got it from the Soviet Naval Infantry with whom they worked in the Great Patriotic War. You did notice that they goose-

stepped, and no this is not Milius attempting to tag them as Nazi. The Germans got the stiff-legged goose-step from the Russians, back during the nineteenth century, before there were Nazis and Communists. Anyone going to see the East German army on parade would have seen that.

The Fanivore: Lloyd Penney: The Tuckeron committee seemed to have been at cross purposes. Once you got there, there were plenty of opportunities to find out who Tucker had been. I think it was another case of insularity; they all knew who Tucker had been, and didn't see that others didn't. Or why the computer manual is so opaque.

I wish I could find more lolcats with Catwoman. I have one that shows her "IM ON UR ROOF CASIN THE JOINT." More of those, especially in the Emma Peel all-leather outfit. (The skirted number she wore in the Sixties didn't hack it.)

Lloyd Penney

I'll start off with congratulations on 30 years of *File 770*. These days, getting anyone to carry on with a project for more than six months is cause for celebration. Thirty years is beyond an achievement, and thank you for sticking it out. It's issue 152, and here are some comments on the contents.

I think my first issue of *File 770* I received, after Yvonne purchased my first subscription when you were the FanGoH at Ad Astra III in Toronto in 1983, was issue 58, possibly issue 53. It's been a while. I would need to check the envelope 152 came in to see how many issues I have left in my sub. I can't even remember the last time I sent you cash for a sub.

[[A dedicated locwriter like you doesn't need to renew, now that I've gone to *The Usual*.]]

I heard a lot about Chris Garcia's TAFF trip, but heard absolutely nothing about the Francis's DUFF trip until cracking open this zine. I will have to purchase both reports once they see print, just to see what impact these folks have had on fandom around the world. As far as Chris goes, I want to see what he did at Orbital. (I can imagine the reports...)

Congrats to Diana, not only for the Imperishable Flame Award, but for the Hugo nomination. The closest I've come to



DISCOVERY of the LOST TEMPLE of the BIG HORNY GUY

a silvery rocket lately is the golden rocket at Rob Sawyer's home. Diane must feel fabulous with this new fannish achievement.

Didn't realize that Frank Wu has won three Hugos. Truly a selfless gesture to step aside so that others may enjoy the massive egoboo that comes with a rocket. I know where everyone would expect me to go next, but I shall refrain. Selflessly. We'll see if others pick up the obvious next sentence.

The obits carry on forever. When Arthur C. Clarke passed away, it was a few days before this year's Ad Astra. Yvonne quickly got a book of condolences ready, and Apogee Books publisher Rob Godwin produced some programming for the convention. Rob was a friend of Sir Arthur's, and is in close touch with brother Fred, who isn't doing well himself. Yvonne will be taking the book of condolences to Eeriecon 10 in Niagara Falls, NY in a few days, and then to Corflu Silver in Las Vegas. Once we return, the book will go to Rob Godwin, who will take it to the 2008 International Space Development Conference in Washington, DC.

Another great report from John Hertz, and as many have observed, with John being such a Nipponophile, who better than to be sent to Japan for a Worldcon? A true brain-wave from Murray Moore. I have not seen Shibano-san for some years now, and I have some hopes that I will be able to see him again. I had the offer to the Japanese committee to be their Canadian agent; I still wish they'd said yes.

I had heard the Montreal parties were great, and I did sample the ice cider...wonderful. I could get used to that. I must wonder what the maple stew was... I had wondered what fanzine content there was in Japan, but what John says here is a disappointment. The Denver and Montréal rooms will be much better, guaranteed. I was pleased by my finish with the Fan Writers Hugo race...hope to do better in coming years, fingers crossed. I wish that future fans may have the chance to enjoy a Worldcon in an exotic place.

Yvonne and I miss seeing Roger and Pat and Dick, and we hope they are comfortable and secure in their new abodes. Health to them all; it seems sometimes there is a dwindling supply.

A great essay/memoir from Taral. Indeed, George Reeves was the best Superman, but Kirk Alyn was good as well, and in a more recent age, Christopher Reeve did a great job.

I suppose I must archive my own zines at some point...having them alphabetized by title is about the best I can do right now. I know some use photocopy paper boxes, but I don't know what the rest of us would do if it wasn't for Banker's Boxes. I've got 20 to 25

of them full in an nearby locker.

As has Francis Hamit, I've crossed the 30-year mark in fandom, and Yvonne has, too. We've passed 200 cons, and could compare our early days with modern days, but I think the best thing to say is that they are just different. We see our world change as time marches on, and fandom is no different. We have decided that while we could grouse about the way things used to be, we'll just adapt for something different, and carry on. Francis, we have kept all our badges, too, on a large drape hanging on the wall of our bedroom. In a few years, the drape will be full.

Hello to Joe Major...Japan has their Seisuns, and Canada has Auroras. The Torcon Hugo ballot had no Canadians in the fan Hugo categories...I hope there will be at least a couple in Montréal. Speaking of which...Yvonne is working with Sir David Clement and Farah Mendelsohn with Anticipation's space and science programming, and I have been approved as the head of the fanzine lounge. I won't have Milt Stevens' budget from LAcon IV, but I will see what I can do to make the room comfortable.

More voiceover work these days, especially for the local universities and art colleges. Perhaps soon I can put together a demo disk from all these projects and make the professional attempt.

It's Sunday night, and I am toast. I worked the annual spring meeting of the Ontario Dental Association...yup, working trade shows again. Gotta make a few bucks along the way. There's a job interview tomorrow, and afterwards, general pre-pack for a daytrip to Eeriecon Ten in Niagara Falls, NY, and then a week in Vegas, celebrating 25 years, and then enjoying the weekend with the Katzes and many others at Corflu. I hope the beginning of your 31st year of publication will start soon. I'm greedy enough to want the next issue. Take care, congrats again to Diana and Chicken! to Sierra, and see you next mailing.

Mark Leeper

Another very good issue. I enjoyed James Bacon's account of the film *Red Dawn*, with its Communist invasion of the US. It is a fun film, but what I remember best about it is a rather large error that perhaps few but film fans will notice. It is in the scene in which the main characters sneak back into their home town to find it totally taken over by the Communist invaders. It is like something out of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. It is the same old place but oh so different. The movie theater was showing *Alexander Nevsky*. The idea is that the Communist invad-



vaders would be showing a Soviet propaganda film. On the surface this must have seemed like a good choice for the screenwriters. It is a film with a lot of action that might appeal to Americans. This is the film with the classic "Battle on the Ice."

Somebody in the production probably chose this to be the film for a lot of good reasons. But they probably never saw the actual film so did not realize that this is the very last film that the Communists would want to show the Americans. Alexander Nevsky was the prince who saved Russia by defeating the invading Teutons. The theme of this film is "we are happy to go into battle and sacrifice our lives for our country. At any cost the invader must never have one inch of our beloved homeland." This is possibly not the message that the invaders would choose to give the Americans.

Martin Morse Wooster

I agree with Kevin Standlee that fan writers can and should publish professionally. Here's an example of the sort of writer Purcell would disqualify: I have a friend who sold four stories professionally in the late 1960s and early 1970s and whose dissertation was published as a book. But in the late seventies he became a Fed and while he writes in his job, earns very little outside income from his writing. Under Purcell's rule, this fan would be permanently disqualified because he sold stories to Campbell.

I'm not in the business of writing Hugo rules, but the sort of "fan writer" nominee I'd

disqualify are people who use their unpaid writing as a way of promoting their professional work. John Scalzi's ultimate purpose in writing his blog is to get people to buy his books. Therefore his work shouldn't qualify him to be on the Best Fan Writer ballot. I'd also kick out John Flynn (whose "fan writing" I was never able to find) and that "fan writer" who became editor of *Amazing* for five minutes, I'd also include Dave Langford, although I agree that he ought to withdraw for a year or two.

"Best fan writers" should be amateurs who write for fanzines because they love to, not pros who publish unpaid work as advertisements for themselves.

Robert Lichtman

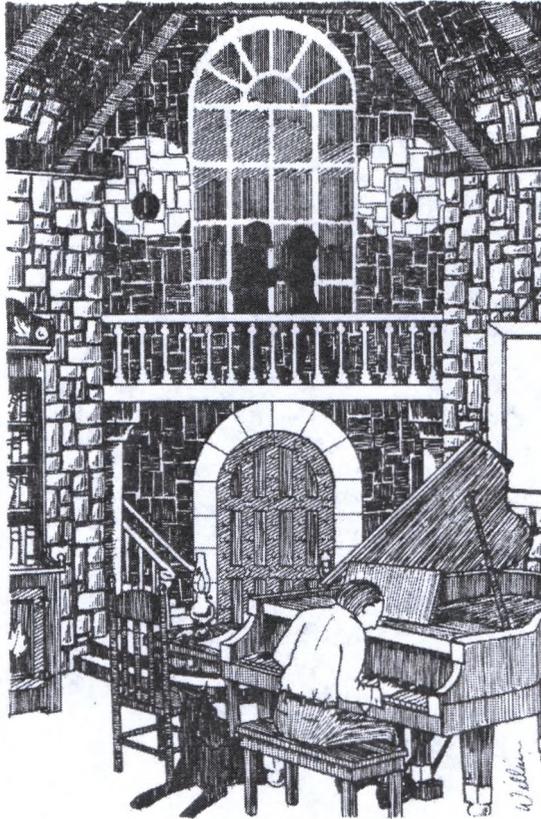
Congratulations on thirty years of *File 770*! My next *Trap Door* will be the 25th annish -- goshwow, eh, 26 issues in 25 years. It'll also mark the 50th anniversary of my first fanzine, *Psi-Phi* No. 1, dated January 1959 but actually published and sent out in December 1958 (with the advance dating aping the way the prozines do it).

Your reference in writing about the LASFS Christmas gift exchange to "one of the many copies of *Zot!* that cycled through the exchange" being on your bookshelf led me to wonder if these days the Awful Gift of choice might be a DVD of *Plan 9 From Outer Space*. Or would a VHS tape be more in keeping with the spirit of Christmas?

Thanks for the link to Brad Foster's works in print. Naturally I've bookmarked it and have checked out what he's had in *Trap Door*. I was less impressed with *Spock.com*, where I'm completely absent. This I don't mind!

In his obituary of Ken Slater, Andy Porter writes of Operation Fantast: "Membership offered people a way to distribute their fanzines as riders." This was not a new thing in British fandom, as during the WW2 years J. Michael Rosenblum provided the same service with mailings of his *Futurian War Digest*. Numerous fans took him up on it, including Forry Ackerman, Ken Bulmer, John Burke, Ted Carnell, Ron Holmes, R. G. Medhurst, Harry Turner, Doug Webster and C. S. Youd.

Enjoyed John Hertz's lengthy account of his Japanese worldcon experiences, was glad to see Bruce Gillespie's article on Robin Johnson getting a wider print circulation, liked Chris Garcia's mention of Dan Stefan's booping of Phil Foglio's undeserved Hugo award as reported in your seventh issue, and liked Taral's long piece. Not being interested in *Red Dawn*, I couldn't get into



James Bacon's piece, and was a little surprised to see Tim Marion's "Fannish Archiving Blues" here since I'd recently read it in Bruce Gillespie's **brg** (something I thought of before seeing the footnotes at the end). However, it also deserved wider circulation than Bruce could offer. Oh, and nice Terry Jeeves portfolio -- I think it's great he won the Rotsler Award, since he's one of our unsung good fan artists.

In the lettercol I confess to having some trepidation about the prospect of Jerry Weist doing a "fanzine history" in collaboration with James Halperin. Certainly both these gentlemen know fanzines well as collectibles, but I wonder if they have sufficient knowledge between them to do a thorough and sensitive job of such a history.

And I appreciated David Bratman's mention of his turning over to me the FAPA rubber stamp at last year's ArtCon/Ditto -- I'd completely forgotten about this semi-momentous fannish occasion and had to spend a little time poking around in drawers to find the thing. It's now on top of a modest pile of old fanzines I'm contributing to the Corflu auction, and it'll be interesting to see if "someone will be interested in this piece of fannish history."

Obeying William Breiding's command, "Robert Lichtman, reach for your archives

for wonderful examples!" I pulled out my copy of *Starfire* No. 7 and checked out the artwork of William Church, Steve Oliff and Steve Swenston. I can see why William says they "were more involved with the 'small press' side of horror and fantasy fiction, rather than fanzine fandom." Swenston's drawings are technically more accomplished, but I find myself more drawn to Church's more informal drawings. So that I'm not speaking entirely into a vacuum consisting of me, William and whoever else might be able to pull a copy of that issue out of their files, I'm attaching a scan of my favorite of Swenston's work *[[left]]*, a heading for Sutton Breiding's "HPL, Falling in Love, and the 'Dark Chamber.'"

The most shocking piece of the whole Alexis Gilliland/WFA flap is his admission in his letter that he's cutting his artwork out of the pages of hundreds of fanzines. "Lee thinks we could end up with maybe 10,000 cartoons." That represents an awful lot of fanzines stripped of their completeness and a hugely misplaced sense of fannish propriety in the service of his ego. I'm appalled.

Joy V. Smith

Congratulations on your 30th anniversary! I enjoyed the fanzine background, and it was great that you found a photo of the famous Room 770 party. (I don't think I ever knew that.) Lots of interesting fan news too.

Congratulations to Diana for winning the Imperishible Flame award for Tolkien/Inklings scholarship!! And I think it was nifty that Tim Kirk did Tolkien-themed paintings for his thesis for his Master's degree in Illustration.

I really enjoyed John Hertz' Worldcon report. I'd read elsewhere that it was upcoming in *File 770*, and I looked forward to reading it here. It was fun and full of interesting background tidbits and succinct because he had to cover so much territory. The Masquerade sounded so impressive! Does anyone ever tape these and pass them around?

[[Some Worldcons have produced tapes of the Masquerade. More recently, No-reason 4 did a DVD of its Masquerade, which can still be ordered online.]]

I enjoyed the article on Robin Johnson also and the other articles, especially Mark Leeper's piece on history in film. I am so annoyed when they lie about what happened.

And thanks for all the photos and illos, including Terry Jeeves' two page spread.

Keith Lynch

I'm glad that issue 152 is finally out, with messages from both Ted White and I denying that WSFA ever considered suing me, and that the topic is now finally closed. But I'm disappointed that you didn't do as you said you would above, so there's no official statement from WSFA or quote from WSFA's meeting minutes in the issue. I fear this leaves the question still in doubt among your readers.

[[The official letter has now come in, and appears next.]]

I noticed that in #146, the first issue in which the WSFA situation was discussed, over two years ago, you said, "It's apparently taken three fans to replace Keith Lynch. Ernest Lilley is the new editor of The WSFA Journal (he has already posted his first issue online). Paul Haggerty and Gayle Surette will run the club website." I thought you might be interested it's now four people: Adrienne Ertman is the secretary, Steve Smith the WSFA Journal editor, and Paul and Gayle are still webmaster and webmistress.

Cathy Green

Dear Mr. Glycer: I would like to clarify a statement made about the Washington Science Fiction Association (WSFA) in issue #151. WSFA is not planning to bring legal action against Keith Lynch. WSFA is not planning to bring legal action against anyone. Sincerely, Cathy Green, President, WSFA.

[[And I further understand that legal action was never contemplated.]]

Timothy Marion

Getting ready to come out with another issue of So It Goes, as I keep telling you. It's almost all completely typed; I just have to buy the paper, materials and covers. Next month it will be 35 years since I did that first issue of So It Goes, although I certainly haven't published continuously like you have (there was a gap of 27 years between issues 15 and 16, after all). At that time I called it Solt-Goze, running the title words together in a Frank Lunney influence. Frank, you may recall, did a zine called *BeABohema*. *[[I do - it was one of the best zines going.]]* The joke about *BeABohema* is that each issue go so

much progressively larger than the one before that it should have been called "Be A Behemoth."

I enjoyed the look backward at the origins of *Organlegger*, and recognized Elst Weinstein immediately from his picture, even though it was dated 2003 and I haven't seen him since 1974. How? Why, I was the uncredited photographer for that picture you put right next to his, of you and him and Craig Miller (taken, coincidentally, in 1974). It's a good picture, my only regret is that you seem to be somehow obfuscated by Craig Miller's bulk...

And thanks for reprinting "Fannish Archiving Blues" --- I think those Stu Shiffman and Steve Stiles covers were brilliant and really deserve repeated exposure. Thanks also for reprinting the article on Robin Johnson.

Thanks for thanking those who try to loc every issue of every fanzine they get. I try, but just like with the greats like Harry Warner, many slip thru the cracks. But I really do try to loc every fanzine nowadays, not just because I publish so infrequently (and thus can't trade very well), but also because I know how frustrating it can be to send out so many copies and get so few locs in return.

As for the obituaries -- I never knew Robert LeGault, and he lived only 2 blocks from me! Apparently he was the fellow Gary Farber was staying with when Gary came over and visited me sometime in the mid to late 90s.

We Also Heard From

Evelyn Leeper: On page 36 in the "30th Annish" of *File 770*, you quote Mark as having said, "Sugar is bad, so we don't cut back on sweeteners--we invent cyclamates, and saccharine, and Equal, and Splenda. We want sugar with[out] the bad effects. Fat is bad, so we don't cut back on fat--we develop Olestra. But why not? There is nothing inherently wrong with cigarettes or internal combustion engines. If one could make an internal combustion engine that ran on grass and did not pollute, why not? People used to get sick drinking water until they figured out how to purify it--should they have just given up on water?" It was actually I [Evelyn] who wrote that, in my weekly book column.

[[Sorry about the goof -- I'll watch the byline more carefully next time I clip from MT Void!]]

Steve Green: Many congratulations on *File:770's* thirtieth birthday, quite an achievement for a newzine(as you'll recall, Martin Tudor and I failed to coax Critical Wave into its second decade, let alone its

fourth).

Correction time. John Hertz's worldcon report in #152 confuses the Nova Awards (presented annually at Novacon, recognising excellence in UK and Irish fanzines) with the British Science Fiction Association Awards (presented at the annual Eastercon, recognising excellence in sf and fantasy published in the UK).

"Another Reader": You've probably already heard this but it's with great pleasure that I get to say it as well: there is now a website <http://www.alexisgilliland.com/>. As of when I'm writing this the content isn't up yet but each link says "coming soon." Soon won't be soon enough.

I can proudly say that I have all three of Alexis's published collections. Signed. But it's been quite some time since his work has been gathered together and, while he's sufficiently prolific and generous that it's too widespread to get everything, there are finally going to be more Gillilands where people can see them in one place.

And: Robert Kennedy, Sally Syrjala.



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