

R E P O R T
o f t h e
M I D V E N T I C N E T T E

(This report is compiled largely from the personal reactions of the various slen present, which were written down during the 'con. No one person is writing throughout, but the report is presented in the third person from the viewpoint of a hypothetical omni-present attendant.)

The convention more or less began with the arrival of Gus Willmorth, on Friday, September 1st., at 10-00 p.m. Talking, eating, and the sorting of auction stuff took most of the time until 2-30 a.m., when Gus and RRJ crept stealthily down stairs in search of beer RRJ had cached. Unfortunately, parents of said S-R knew what slen were, and had taken steps to remove the beer. Ginger wine was consumed, with sporadic outbursts of baffled rage. Merits of English and American beer were discussed. (Both slen being experts on the subject..)

Gus and RRJ arose next morning to find Arthur W. Gardner, pounding (figuratively) on the door-bell. Though presenting an appearance more suitable for a Volga, RRJ was not deterred, and music ensued - Liszt's 10th. Hungarian Rhapsody, I believe.

The three wandered into town armed with Gus's boo list and fifteen of the Johnson's forty-two Library tickets. (Two is the official quota, but it used to work at said Library.) Books were procured, and the three musketeers swam through an almost Mancunian downpour, to the inevitable second-hand book-shop. AWG and RRJ were staggered by the following transaction in high finance:—

GUS: How much for that edition of Fraser's "Golden Bough" ?

GUY: £7 - 10 - 0 .

GUS: Sold.

More swimming, to the restaurant where semi-slen Boris Parker was to be picked up. Naturally, he wasn't present - turned up some time later at "Homewood" (abode of Johnson), where the other three had congregated. Cast-iron arrangements by 'phone to meet semi-slen Tony Anticoni resulted in his being completely excluded from the day's activities, and the four slen made their way to the gymnasium of the YMCA.

There, an impromptu duel was staged (supposedly from a Burroughs epic) between a first-class YMCA fencer, one George Wearn, and RRJ, now a fencing instructor. Blood flowed freely, and when the duel was over the slen refused all challenges thrown out to them by the two swordsmen. George Wearn, who is of Targanish build and an amateur weight-lifter, demonstrated how to lift a couple of tons (or so it seemed) above his head. Surprise came when Gus quite easily duplicated his feats !

In the meantime, Ralph Crue had arrived, no doubt swearing volubly under his breath at RRJ, who in ~~last~~ letters had given directions the result of which was that Ralph had to travel over most of Leicester before he found the others.

After the strong men had finished, and thanks given to GW (who has no connection with slander), tea was taken. Apparently ((No, definitely - BVP & RRJ)), Johnson and Parker are well-known denizens of the restaurant, for during lunch and tea there was much lively repartee with the waitresses.

The first step after tea was the hotel where the out-of-town slen were to stay. Thence, to "Homewood" once more, music, supper, discussions, work on this report, and what have you, ensued.

It was resolved that on the morrow the slen should convene very early at "Homewood", for the auction - RRJ was most insistent about this, and set 9-30 a.m. as the latest time.

The auction was not over-s successful, on account of the dearth of bidders. Gus was the main auctioneer, and under the circumstances he did a very good job. Ralph Orne was the main buyer, contributing 8/10 towards the total of 25/60. Several items, including the exquisite Wallace Smith portfolio, were deemed too good for our small auction, and were put forward until the next, large convention.

Lunch followed, and on returning from the restaurant, Gus, Ralph, and RRJ consumed four and a half pines of beer: Gus had to be dragged forcibly from the bar - we have photographic evidence, which we hope to be able to include with this report. A few outstanding items were auctioned off by RRJ, and then the fun started.

The music session was scheduled for the afternoon, and it is regretted that Keith Gayton, brilliant Leicester pianist whose talents approach virtuosity, was unable to be present, owing to a rehearsal of the Leicester Symphony Orchestra, with which, at the age of sixteen, he plays frequently. His performance was to have been the high-spot of the programme, and we were very sorry he could not attend - though he visited RRJ during the following week and played superbly.

However, Boris Parker, a good dance-band pianist in his own right, was present, and the two other guests, Bill Gutteridge, an even better jive pianist than Boris, and a clarinettist to boot, and "Viv" Green, a trumpeter, soon arrived, followed by Tony Anticeni, who unfortunately could not bring his drum-kit through the rain.

The convention degenerated - or ascended? - into a jam-session. Clarinet, trumpet, piano; trumpet and four hands on piano; solo piano; we had them all, in a really solid jive session. The otherwise respectable neighbourhood certainly rocked that day! With the non-appearance of Keith Gayton, the classical section was almost non-existent - RRJ did manage to play on the "pianola" the 1st. movement of Schumann's A Minor piano concerto, but that was all. It was, primarily, J-I-V-E !!!

After said jive had been attended to, and the comparatively tame item of tea gotten over, more photographs were taken, and then the meeting broke up. Ralph's LNER train, Arthur's 'bus, and Gus's LMS train, all left in quick succession; the musicians had already departed; and Tony and RRJ were left to clear things up, which they did by playing darts at "Homeood", after first visiting the notorious "Dover Castle", favourite haunt of beer-drinking M.C.A members.

Tony departed at 10-00 p.m., and the 'con was officially over, just two days after it had begun.

From the point of view of size, it was not over-successful: six slam attendants, plus two musicians and the fencer. But, as usual, it was extremely enjoyable. Slon always manage to have a good time when they're together, and the one advantage of a small, informal meeting, is that everyone gets to know everyone else, and at no time does any attendant feel "out of it".

So we conclude with a report of success: and best wishes to the New Year convention - may our meetings never grow less!

.....

REMEMBER Dec 29th to Jan 1st 1946

THE SECOND NORCON !!!

Who else will be there besides Ron Linn, George Ellis, Roy Johnson, Gus Wilmoth, Art Williams, Ron Holmes, Ken Chadwick and Jim Rosenblum
Will you be one of them? Full details (as available)

from J.M. Rosenblum, 4 George Terrace, Leeds 7