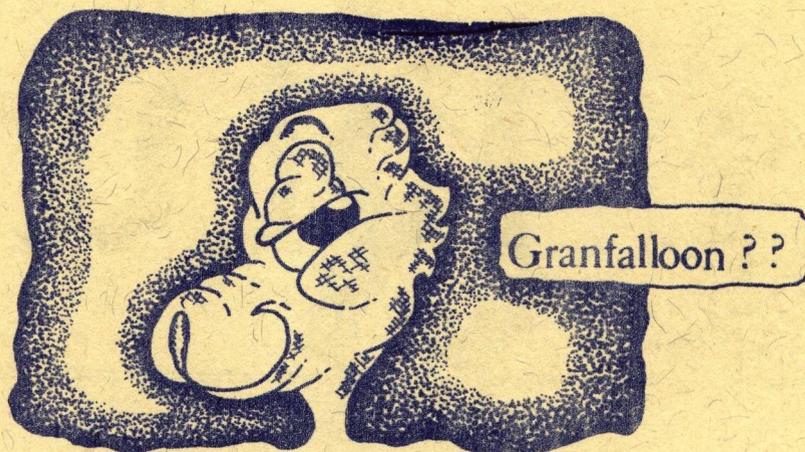




Edited and published by Linda E. Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, Pa. 19076. Available for \$1, trades, contributions, or as part of Karass subscription (counts as 2 issues). Please make checks payable to Linda E. Bushyager. NO LONG TERM SUBS WILL BE ACCEPTED. Mimeo assistance--Ron Bushyager; electrostencils--Brian McCarthy.



CONTENTS

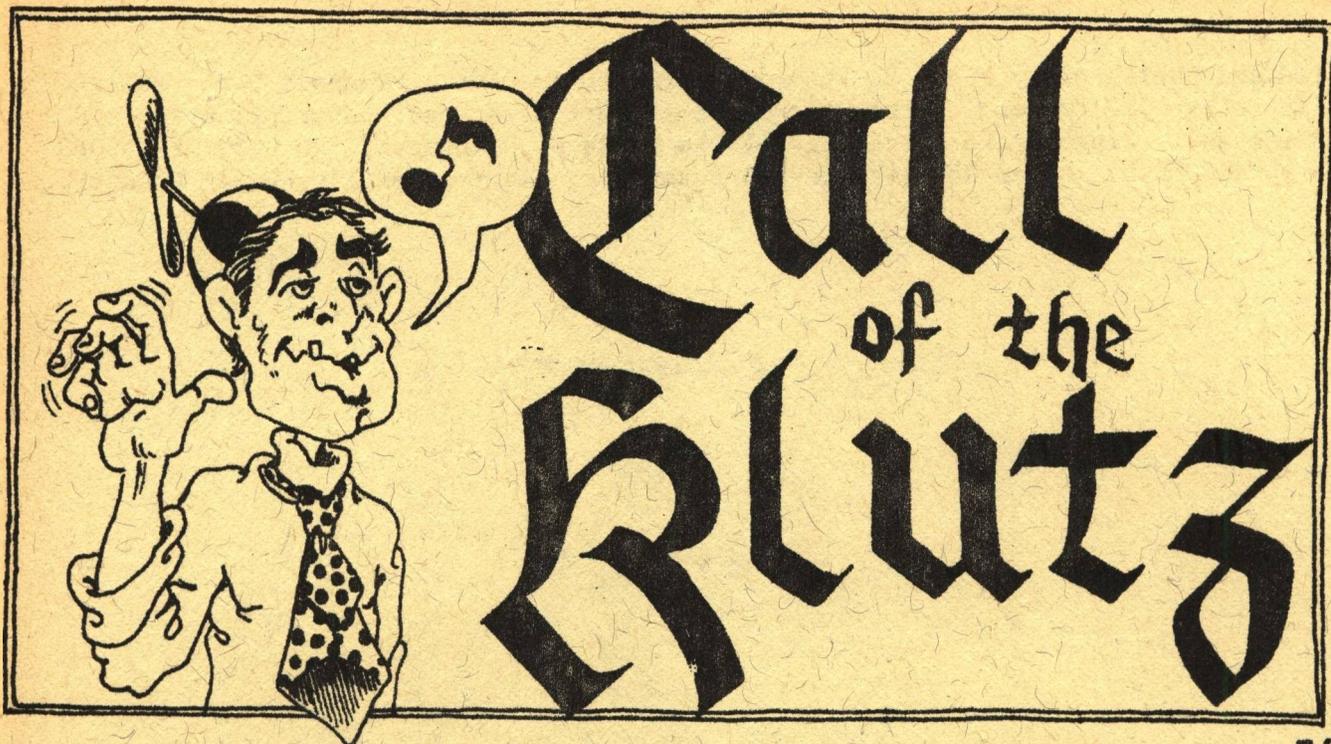
- 2....Call Of The Klutz
editorial by Linda E. Bushyager
- 6....The Clean Capitalist Revisionist
Bob Tucker reviews Worldcon history
- 9....Granny's cookbook
Fungus fun by Peter Roberts
- 12...APathy Or APAnage
Harry Warner looks at apas
- 16...The Club That Never Was
Alan Stewart describes English SF club
- 20...Byobcon Introductions
Bob Tucker blasts Bloch & Bushyagers
- 24...Book Reviews
by a number of people
- 32...Yesterday's Maddness Revisited
fan poll history by Mike Gorra
- 34...The Great Rejection Slip Mystery
faan fiction by Bob Ruben
- 37...Wakefield John Bloody Detective
a shortie by Gerard E. Giannattasio
- 38...Brother Are You Saved?
Mae Strelkov reminisces
- 43...Not To Let It Go
a poem by Pauline Palmer
- 44...Omphalopsychite
*the lettercol; where the readers
contemplate the editor's navel*

ARTWORK

- Front Cover - Richard Delap
- Back Cover - Tim Zell

- Art Portfolio - Randy Bathurst & Freff collaboration

- Randy Bathurst - 2,7,20,21
- Harry Bell - 19
- Harry Bell & Rob Jackson - 18
- Sheryl Birkhead - 1
- Grant Canfield - 46,47
- Connie Faddis - 23,43
- Ken Fletcher - 33
- William Gibson - 11
- Howard Green - 40
- Jay Kinney - 44
- Wayne MacDonald & Robert Wilson - 50
- Jim McLeod - 12,13
- Joe Pearson - 34,35
- Marc Schirmeister - 3,32
- Jim Schull - 9,24,25
- Dan Steffan - 8



RB

You may wonder what it is like to be a Fan Guest of Honor. Well, Ron and I had the opportunity to find out this past July, when we were the Fan Guests of Honor at Byobcon, held in Kansas City. Well fellow fans, it was great!

It all began when KC fan Bill "The Galactic" Fesselmeyer mentioned, almost in passing, during a 2-hour phone conversation, that Ron and I had been chosen to be GoHs, if we "wanted to be the GoHs...that is..." For about 10 seconds, poor Bill heard silence, followed by 10 minutes of hysterical goshowowoboyboying, interspersed with gasps, groans, yeses, and the words Guh and GoH.

Soon afterward we began receiving official and semi-official letters from Byobcon chairman Jim Loehr, Bill, Ken Keller, and other KC people. We also began receiving advice from friends as to how to act and what to say at the obligatory banquet speeches. But when the friends heard that our speeches would be juxtaposed to those of Pro Guest of Honor Robert Bloch and Toastmaster Bob Tucker, their advice suddenly stopped, or was on the order of: "Give a rescunding smoothhhh to the audience, and shut up quick."

Ron and I busied ourselves trying to determine just what a Fan GoH does -- a letter from Jim Loehr soon informed us -- a Fan GoH gives a panel...and the kindly KC people, including programming chairman Bill F. were allowing us to do anything we wanted on our panel. In fact, they refused to give us any hints as to what it should consist of. We wanted to do something a little different from the usual fan panel, and since Ron would play some part, we settled on a fanzine panel coupled with a one-shot.

Jim Loehr also informed us that Fan GoHs must provide recent pictures of themselves, for inclusion in the program book. Well, those of you who were at Byobcon may remember that no pictures of us appeared. After Jim saw the pictures I sent, he decided to drop the whole idea.

I really didn't have too much work to do on my GoH speech, fortunately -- it has been ready since my second week in fandom.... But Ron struggled for minutes to come up with something really good. "What's your speech about?" I asked, after his furious scriblings ebbed. "Computer programming and its relationship to SF fandom." "Ron, why not talk about how you got into fandom instead," I suggested, realizing immediately the perils of having a computer nut discussing his most obsessive, most dull subject. "It is about how I got into fandom...through the computer center at CMU and the people I knew there."

"But Ron, I don't think that will be very interesting -- how about discussing the friends you've found in fandom instead."

"I will discuss the friends I've found in fandom, and compare them to my friends in computing."

"How about discussing fandom as a goddamn hobby?"

"I will...when I talk about programming as a way of life."

"Well, instead, why not describe some of the crazy things that have happened on the way to conventions, like the Death Car, or riding with your body inside a tire, or breaking down at Breezeway?"

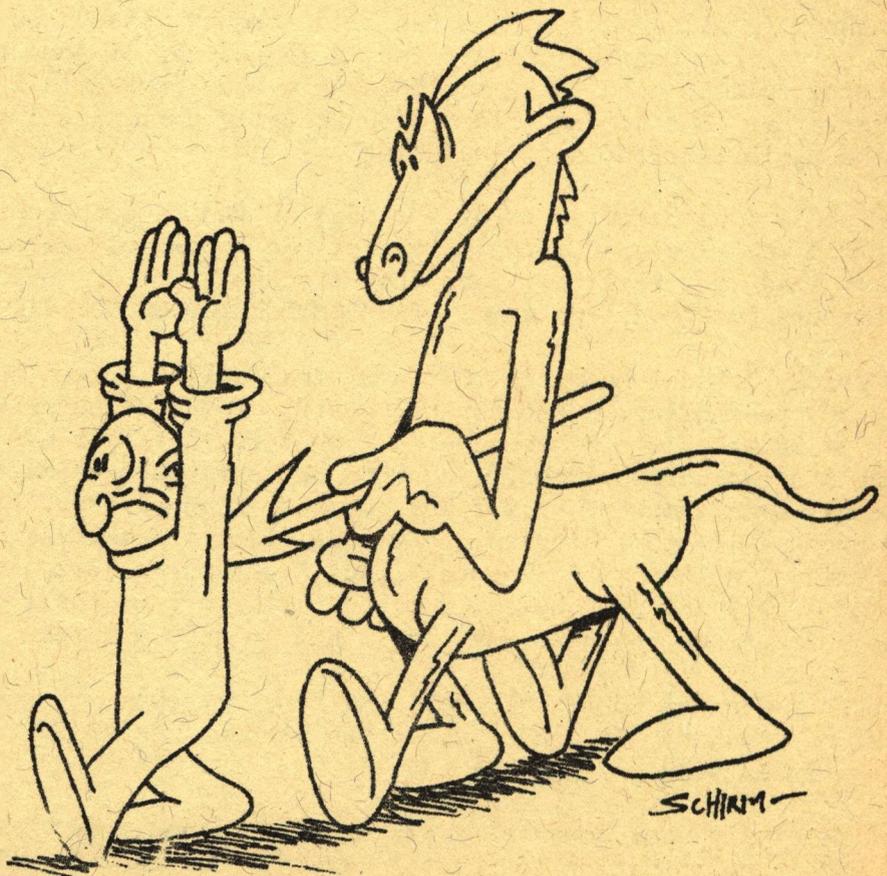
"We never broke down at Breezeway..."

"Oh, I forgot, every other East Coast fan we know has, so I thought we had too."

"Besides," said Ron softly, "Computer programming stories are much more interesting than con travels. I remember the time the G-21 broke down for 24 hours and we were forced to stop programming," his voice broke at the thought, "It was the most terrible day of my life..."

"But Ron, I just don't think fans want to hear about computers."

Ron looked thunderstruck: "What? -- why everyone wants to hear about computers, they are the most intelligent beings around...why they are really science fiction come true..."



So Ron talked about SF fandom and computing fandom.

Meanwhile, I tried to think of Bloch and Tucker jokes, but when I tried them out on Bill and Ken at Midwestcon, I only got dirty looks. My best joke was: "When I got to the convention today I ran into Bob Tucker. He warned me to "Beware, the author of Psycho is in this hotel -- shower with a friend." But when Bob Tucker handed me his calling card, I realized he wanted to be that friend." You should hear the rest of the jokes...

Ken Keller warned me not to include any jokes about Robert Bloch being the author of Psycho, since everyone was sick to death of them....

At last the big weekend arrived -- July 18 -- I'll never forget that day -- it's my cat's birthday.

GoHs do get special treatment, as we learned when Bill actually met us at the airport. Little did we know he desperately needed help unloading his car. At the hotel we were warmly greeted by Jim, who graciously waved at us while he ran by. We even got a complimentary hotel room. No wonder it was complimentary...they usually don't charge for staying in closets. The walls were dingy, and the furniture (what there was of it) reminded me of those seedy hotel rooms in old Humphrey Bogart movies.

On Friday we met Robert Bloch. "This is Ron and Linda Bushyager," said Mike Glicksohn, as he introduced us to the famous author. "Oh really, replied Bloch, nodding at us and smiling. "Glad to meet you." As he turned away I heard him muttering to himself, "Who are they, and who is that hairy person in the strange hat?"

At Byobcon I drank Jim Beam. You may wonder why I emphasize that, since if you've been to any convention with Bob Tucker around, you've probably had that pleasure. But somehow, in all my years as a fan, I'd somehow missed the experience. True, I'd seen Bob at various conventions sitting in the corner of some party or other, surrounded by adoring, glassy-eyed fans, imbibing Jim Beam or Beam's Choice and chorusing "Smmmmoooth" afterwards. But somehow I'd missed actually participating in the ritual. Byobcon was to be my initiation, and my undoing.

On Friday I happened to be at the edge of the circle around Bob when the bottle reached me. I sipped...the nectar of the ghods...I raised my arm (it was either that or my head, you realize)...and from the depths of my soul and through my clenched teeth and puckered lips came: SSSMMMMMMMMMOOOOOOOTTTHHHH because, you see, it was.

On Friday I had a meer sip or two of that devine juice, but on Saturday, after a hard day of one-shoting, I had several quaffs of the delectable stuff (you may have heard of Jim Beam by it's other name -- rocket fuel). This was after having had a rum and coke and two screwdrivers. And when Bob offered me some Beam's Choice, I just couldn't refuse, even though I knew I was somewhat high already. (You can tell when I'm high on booze -- I start singing or humming, talk incessantly, and walk in "out" doors -- normally I walk out "in" doors.) But I was ok -- just a bit high. I stayed up until about 3 or 4 and then headed for bed. I knew I couldn't stay up too late, after all, the banquet was the next day, and I had to give a speech.

The next day was SOMETHING ELSE. My body, my eyes, my head, my stomach! My stomach, yes, my stomach. It was 11 a.m., the banquet was at 12, and I was feeling queésy -- heck, I was sick!

Ron helpfully went downstairs for some coke, and some more coke, and read me my speech (I was in no condition to read it myself). Somehow or other I got dressed, put a smile on my face, an air sickness bag in my purse, and headed for the banquet.

Friends stopped to greet us: "How are you? Got your speech ready? It's a great con, isn't it?" To which I replied "uuuuuuuhhhh", "uhhhh", and "ahhhh."

We found ourselves at the end of a long line waiting for the buffet. Ron kept telling me not to eat anything, but I felt I needed something for my very empty stomach. At last we arrived at the buffet table, only to discover that the chicken was gone and all that remained was barbecued spare ribs. Morning Glory Zell was complaining rather heatedly and the hotel people were saying that they had put out enough food for everybody, and if the people before us ate "more than their share" (in other words our food), well, too bad. I was feeling sick, and I knew I couldn't eat ribs, so I joined in the complaints and also complained to Jim Loehr. Jim didn't know what to do, so Morning Glory and I and several other people continued to complain to the hotel staff. Eventually the hotel people brought up some sliced turkey for us, having totally run out of chicken. Why does this always happen at buffets?

I ate a few bitefuls and began to feel better -- and I began to worry about something worse than my stomach -- giving my speech. But Tucker began announcing things and introducing Bloch, and Bloch gave his good speech, and I found myself talking. Fortunately, I had memorized my speech, because I was still in no condition to read it. Somehow my speech went over fine. I knew it must have been good, because Harlan Ellison was laughing and pounding his fist into the table, and afterwards Bloch smiled broadly at me, patted my hand, and said, "That was a really good speech." Ron's speech didn't go quite as well, unfortunately, since he was so nervous and since, let's face it, computer programming is rather dull except to computers and programmers, but it did have many good points, and the audience appreciated its sincerity. But I do wish Ron hadn't been shaking so much...in my condition I didn't need to feel the head table vibrating...

Strangely, though I had felt well during the dinner and speeches, I felt violently ill immediately afterwards, so had to rush off to my room, missing congratulations and such. I did manage to speak to Fred Haskell for a moment. He is the Fan GoH at Byobcon in 1976. Warning him to beware jaberwocks and jim beams, I slipped off to my room.

Clutched in my hand was the "Cranky Award" which the Byobcon committee had kindly presented to Ron and myself. It is a lovely award -- a mimeograph handle mounted on a walnut base with an inscribed metal plate. The committee also gave awards to Tucker ("The Horny" -- a pair of cattle horns), Bloch ("The Block" -- a granite block with a cigarette holder and smoking cigarette), and special Fan Guest Tim Kirk (a HUGE, stuffed dragon -- believe me, it was bigger than Tim).

Really, we had a delightful time at KC, due in no small part to the efforts of all the Byobcon committee members, KC people, and our many friends. Ron and I would like to thank everyone for honoring us.

* * * * *

More about Byobcon can be found in Bob Tucker's Byobcon introductions, which he has allowed me to print. I'd also like to thank my other contributors for their fine work and for their patience in waiting out the years (in some cases several years) for their material to be published. For the present, GRANFALLOON will go into suspension until I have the time to do it justice. KARASS will continue to appear on an approximately monthly basis, but some issues will be expanded so that more general material can be published along with the news. I'd also like to thank all my readers for their patience in waiting all these months for Granny. I've appreciated your comments, letters, etc. Thanks to all of you. (Continued on page 50)

THE CLEAN CAPITALIST REVISIONIST

"Nothing changes more constantly than the past; for the past that influences our lives does not consist of what actually happened, but of what men believe happened."

- Gerald White Johnson

Fred Patten is rewriting the past. He is revising the error-prone accounts of past world conventions, and you have begun to see the fruits of his labors in the first progress report distributed by the Kansas City worldcon committee.

A whole new history of Worldcons is being compiled, one that is sorely needed to erase the errors of commission and omission. (Did you know that two fan guests-of-honor have been lost to history?) One of the many innovations planned by the 1976 committee for their coming bash is a history of past worldcons that will be more accurate, more truthful, and less subject to provincial exaggeration than any other compilation now available. The fanzine forests are filled with con reports written by men who believed a thing happened, or who exaggerated an event to make others believe it happened. (Did you know that one official deliberately kited the attendance figure to fulfill his own prophecy of "the biggest convention ever"?) Inevitably, this accumulation of honest error and shabby deception crept into the annual Program Books, and were then repeated each succeeding year by new committees who copied the records of the last.

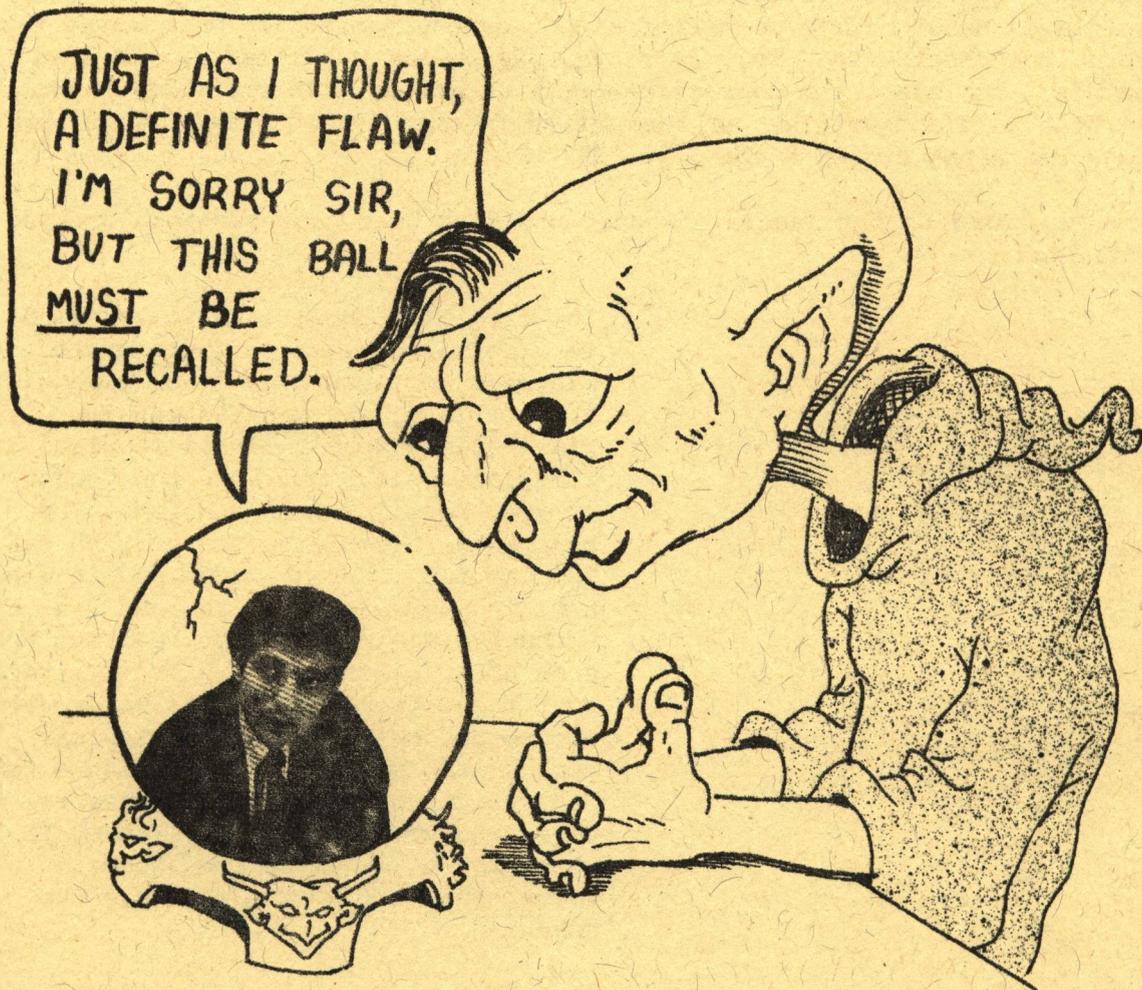
Ken Keller wanted a fresh history, an accurate history if such was possible, and Fred Patten began the task of rewriting the past. Their history is being published serially in the progress reports and, if present plans jell and finances permit, will be reprinted in full in the 1976 hardcover Program Book. This first installment of the serial appeared in the report issued in February (PR-2) and covers the first three worldcons: 1939, 1940, 1941. I hope and trust Patten will continue to beard the lions.

Attendance figures have always been open to question because they are the most difficult to ascertain with pinpoint accuracy; and too, different committees counted heads in different ways which added to the confusion. Some included gate crashers, some did not; some included indecipherable signatures on a registration record, some did not. I am convinced that some committees merely guessed at their total attendance and that total is now taken as gospel. I am equally convinced that some committees rounded off the figures to the next highest 10 or 20 for convenience, or for the sake of pride in their work. It is also possible that accurate counts were lost, and the figures now assigned to a particular convention are those later found in some fanzine.

Check the capsuled history tables published on page 87 of the Torcon program book, and on page 46 of the Discon book. One repeats the other, and both repeat the errors of earlier tables.

New York, 1939: The official figure is 200 hardy souls, but other sources cite differing numbers. A fan who was there counted heads four times and claims he found only 125 on each count -- but his claim was made in his fanzine a year later and so

BOB TUCKER



it is open to question, the more so because of a running quarrel he was having with the committee members at the time. A newszine published three years after the worldcon stated that 152 persons signed the register, but that other signatures were not counted because they couldn't be read. That seems quaint in retrospect.

Chicago, 1940: The official count is 115. Another source cites a figure of 125, and a fanzine published a year later printed the names of the 128 people who signed the register. Some of those names were suspected to be fraudulent, but not proven.

Denver, 1941: The smallest worldcon ever, and there is no disagreement on that point. The puzzling question is, how small. The official figure as given in those tables is 100, but fans who were there claimed figures of 70, 68, and about 65 in their con reports. Fred Patten, I wish you the best of luck.

Chicago, 1952: Now we come to the prize winner of confusion. Chicon II was widely advertised in advance as the best and the biggest worldcon ever, the con that would set fandom on its collective ear. One of the male officials behind chairwoman Judy May (and I prefer not to name him) boasted to me in advance of the event that "his con" would reach or exceed one thousand paid admissions. And what do you know? For a little

while it appeared that his boast had come true: it was announced from the stage that 1,050 people were in attendance, and that announcement brought both gasps and applause from the astonished multitude. The history tables in current program books still show an official attendance of 1000, despite the fact that the kited figure was later shown to be false. Several weeks after the worldcon closed, cooler (and perhaps suspicious) heads on the committee made a careful count and discovered that only 867 people had checked in. This corrected figure was published in the news-zines of that day, but alas, the correction never caught up with the error. Despite all that has been said and written, no convention cracked the 1000-mark until Ted White and Dave Van Arnam staged Nycon 3 in 1967.

And there are two bonafide fan guests-of-honor who have been unaccountably dropped from the spotlight.

The first fan guest ever to be named to a worldcon stood up there on the platform in Toronto in 1948, alongside Robert Bloch, and bandied insults with him--but you aren't likely to discover that fact unless you read the Torcon program book. The second fan to be honored at a worldcon was British fan Ted Carnell, who, who appeared in Cincinnati in 1949 alongside the pro GoH, Lloyd Eshbach. Again, you must read the program book to learn that. It is likely that these two early guests were overlooked and omitted from the tables because the practice of inviting a fan GoH was discontinued after those two cons, and not revived until about 15 years later. (Unless I am also in error, and if I am you may heap the ashes.)

Fred Patten's task is a formidable one. He has all the worldcon program books at hand, plus the fanzine collections of Bruce Pelz and Corry Ackerman, but fanzines are not always reliable and so he is double-checking with those convention committees who can be found and who will respond, & with those ancient bearded ones who attended some or all of the early cons: Ackerman, Wollheim, Millard, Moskowitz, Moffatt, myself, and others. His history should be sufficient until another revision is desired in a decade or so. Men may want to believe something else happened.

Ken Keller: you damned well better not announce six thousand at Kansas City if the figure only reaches 5,867.

* * * *
* * * *



GRANNY'S COOKBOOK

A CORFLU
COCKTAIL
!



HAVE FUN WITH FUNGUS...

recipes to surprise (and even
poison) your guests

by - Peter Roberts

Some people don't like mushrooms:

"There be two manners of them, one
manner is deedly and sleeth them
that eateth of them and be called
tode stoles, and the other doeth
not. They that be not deedly

have a grosse gleymy moysture that is dysobedyent to nature and dygestyon and be per-
yllous and dredfull to eate, therefore it is good to eschew them." So says THE GRETE
HERBALL of 1526 ("Translated out of ye Frennshe").

SHUN
2-4-75

In fact, every few fungi are poisonous, in the sense that eating them will actually
kill you; but many, if not all of them, will cause post-prandial suffering if eaten in
excess. Francis Bacon states the dangers pretty graphically: "It must needs be
therefore, that they be made of much moisture; and that moisture fat, gross, and yet
somewhat concocted. And (indeed) we finde, that *Mushromes* cause the accident, which we
call *Incubus*, or the *Mare* in the stomach. And therefore, the surfeit of them may
suffocate and empoyson. And this sheweth, that they are windy; and that windiness is
gross and swelling, not sharp or griping."

For a long time people believed mushrooms to be 'excrescences' of the soil, rising
spontaneously from the ground - a sort of earthy illness. Their genuine connection
with decay made them suspicious things to eat at the best of times, and they were
considered deadly poisonous if they were picked in certain places ("where olde rustie
iron lieth, or rotten clouts, or neere to serpents dens, or rootes of trees that bring
foorth venemous fruits.")

If these quotations from old herbalists make you feel rather smug and superior, just
think whether you'd be prepared to go out into the country to pick a variety of fungi
for the table. Most people are scared stiff. A recent competition for a party-stop-
ping one-liner was won by the classic: "These mushrooms taste funny."

Unfortunately, of course, there are a half-dozen or so species which are quite capable
of killing anyone foolhardy enough to eat them. They're not too difficult to recognize
and, indeed, most deaths are the result of total ignorance or over-confidence (a recent
case in the newspapers concerned an amateur mycologist who happily believed he could

tell the difference between a highly poisonous toadstool and an almost identical, edible relative - the latter, not surprisingly, is rarely eaten: he was just showing-off...).

To be on the safe side, I won't recommend picking your own fungi. A number are occasionally found in the shops and markets, though that rather depends on where you live. You may be able to find some in delicatessen stores; some dozen varieties are exported by Polcoop (the Polish Central Agricultural Union of Peasants' Self-Aid Co-operatives!), for example, and they're available fresh, tinned, dried, pickled, or marinated.

OK. Here's a recipe: "Take 10 funges, and pare hem clen and dyce hem; take leke, and shred hym small and do hym to seeth in gode broth; color it with safron and do thereinne powdor fort."

I can't answer for that one, I'm afraid, but you might give it a try. It's from the *Forme of cury compiled of the chef maistes cokes of kyng Richard the Secunde kyng of Englund after the conquest* and it's dated 1390. I assume you'd use the ordinary common mushroom in the recipe and leeks are simple enough. "Fort" is, I believe, pepper.

Sadly, the English don't seem too interested in mushrooms. As a child they were only served to me cooked in butter and a little milk; reasonable enough, I suppose, but I didn't like them then, though I rather think that was a result of watching my mother cutting out the maggoty bits of large field mushrooms past their prime - a revolting task (I don't think cultivated mushrooms were easily available in the early fifties in Britain: the government probably classified them as a non-essential luxury).

However, I think the following recipe is English, and it's one I'm fond of:

Cauliflower & Mushroom Pudding:

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1 large cauliflower | 3 oz. butter |
| 2 oz. mushrooms | 2 eggs |
| 4 oz. oat flakes | 1 oz. grated cheese |
| 1 medium onion | salt (if you insist) |

Divide the cauliflower into flowerlets, boil till half-cooked (using as little water as possible), and drain. Melt 2/3 of the butter in a non-stick pan and add the chopped mushrooms and onions, plus the cats. Stew for around 10 minutes without water, then let it cool. Add the eggs and the rest of the butter, mix it all thoroughly, and then put it into a greased oven dish. Sprinkle the cheese on top and bake in a moderate oven for half an hour or a little more.

Well, I like it, though it's not all that attractive to look at and guests may pick at it warily, wondering what the hell is in it all. Good to eat, however, and I even like it cold. The above is supposed to serve four, though I can happily finish it off in one sitting. My eating habits are pig-like...

The Russians have a way with mushrooms and a glance through a relevant recipe book will lead you to a host of ideas, like stewing mushrooms with a few diced potatoes, plenty of onion, and a bay leaf or two in sour cream. Bloody nice, that. I'm also partial to the following dish which goes under the name of:

Solyanka:

| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 1 lb mushrooms | 1 tsp sugar |
| 3/4 lb white cabbage | butter |
| 1/4 lb tomatoes | basil |
| 1 medium onion | breadcrumbs |

Shred the cabbage, slice the mushrooms, and chop the onions. Saute them separately in butter. Butter a casserole dish and put a layer of cabbage in the bottom; sprinkle with sugar and add the onion, also in a layer. Put the mushrooms on top of that and then the tomatoes. Sprinkle the basil on top, together with some black pepper (and

salt, if you like it). Finish off with the rest of the cabbage and thinly cover with the breadcrumbs. Dot with plenty of butter and bake until it looks good (about 20 minutes or more - the ingredients are all cooked beforehand). This one does look good when it comes out of the oven. When I first cooked it, I found everyone in the flat waiting patiently with a fork in hand to try some. After that I cooked it when nobody else was around. Still, it should serve about 4 people, I suppose.

Now for a brief scenario for a forthcoming SF spectacular, *Night of the Giant Puff-Balls*: "Professor Biggles, crazed by public rejection of his plan to feed the world on green mould, plans a devilish revenge. With his Mongolian assistant, Neville, he works on improved varieties of the Giant Puff-Ball, finally producing a mutant species with guaranteed germination of 100%. after a hysterical public announcement, Professor Biggles releases the spores of the New Giant Puff-Ball. The earth is doomed. Only one hope remains: can Flash catch all the spores before they reach the ground?..."

This is by way of introducing the Giant Puff-Ball, an easily recognized fungus which is also good to eat. All puff-balls are safe, according to the books, so it's a reasonable thing to collect in the wild; for eating purposes, they should be solidly white all the way through. The average Giant Puff-Ball contains seven billion spores (and that's a British Imperial Billion, not your cheap American kind): hence the science fiction plot - if every spore produced a mature fungus and all these in turn produced spores that were successful, the grandchildren of the original Giant Puff-Ball would form a mass 800 times the weight of the earth...

That's why we should all develop a taste for the puff-ball.

Puff-Ball Omelette: Pare and cut into blocks sufficient puff-balls to make a pint. Put a tablespoonful of butter into a saucepan; add the puff-balls, cover and cook for 10 minutes. Beat six eggs without separating until thoroughly mixed; add the cooked puff-balls, salt, and pepper. Pour into a hot, buttered frying-pan, and cook and serve as for an ordinary omelette.

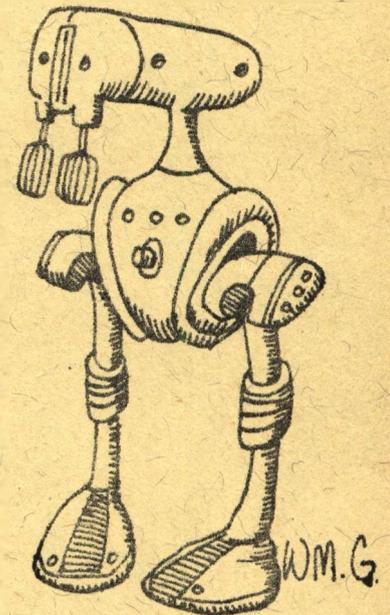
I must admit I haven't tried it yet, since I've been living in the city in recent years. Real Soon Now, though.

Meanwhile, don't eat anything I wouldn't. Have fun.

The quotations above come from MUSHROOMS AND TOADSTOOLS by J. Ramsbottom.

THE LITTLE GEM GUIDE TO SF FANZINES is Peter Robert's helpful guide to all types of fanzines. It also contains hints for producing fanzines and a large list of fanzines with prices and addresses. This new, revised edition is available for 50¢ from Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave., Prospect Park, Pa. 19076.

KITCHENS OF
THE FUTURE:
THE ROBOT
EGG BEATER!



APATHY

The first rule for finding fannish trends is: forget it. It's almost impossible to be sure about trends while they're happening. Ten years later, it's easier to look back and decide if there really was a trend a decade ago or an isolated episode or two created a false impression of a trend.

Still, I think it's safe to make a couple of generalizations about apas in the mid-1970's. There are a lot of changes involving apas and the traditional kind of apa which started the whole thing, like FAPA, SAPS, and OMPA, no longer possess the prestige and importance in fandom that they once enjoyed.

Starting from those fairly secure assumptions, it isn't hard to dream up hypotheses on why such things are happening. Come back in a dozen years or so and you might be able to be more confident about causes and effects than I am about these shaky theories in media res.

"There's one apa so secret that all I know is that Fred Lerner is in charge; he won't tell me whether or not I'm a member. A bit less secret is the one of which I was a member for several months before I found out about it." That's a quotation from a fan diary-type fanzine in a recent FAPA mailing. It's symptomatic of the wild and wonderful way new apas on old models and new apas on new models have been bobbing up during the 1970's, while the most famous old apas have been losing their former appeal to most neos. I think there may be two primary causes for the amazing proliferation of new apas, most of which are characterized by either a specialized nature or by quite small membership limits or by both.

Think back to how things were in the late 1930's when FAPA was born, and to the slightly later

HARRY

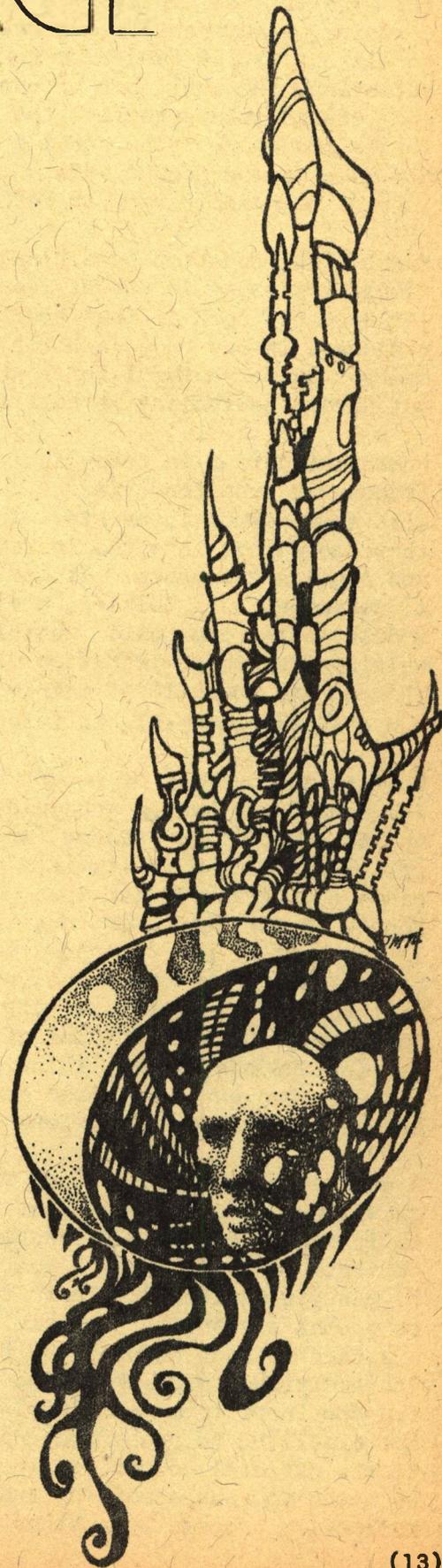


OR APANAGE

era when SAPS, VAPA, OMPA, and some less remembered old apas came into existence. Fandom was small enough that six months or so in fanac gave a neo a knowledge of almost all the major fans. After a year or two, the newcomer to fandom knew something about almost everyone in fandom, aside from perhaps a few primitive convention fans. SF in the professional sense was still confined principally to the prozines, a few juvenile radio series, and an occasional movie. The rare hardcover SF books were too expensive for most of us, and the paperback explosion of SF hadn't made big waves yet. So not only did we know one another, we all read much the same SF, and it was too soon for comic books to have nostalgia appeal. If you joined an apa in those long-ago days, you knew its members and their ideas pretty well before you received your first mailing. You were probably close to their ages, for that matter, because all but a few mavericks in fandom were in their teens or twenties. There was a common ground for almost all fans. No matter which batch of fans got mixed up into one apa, they meshed pretty well for that reason.

There's no reason to rehash here how things have changed in fandom. I think that its splintering into subfandoms, special interest groups, sercon and faanish fans, ancient and half-grown fans, word-oriented and picture-oriented fans, and so forth is the first important reason for the apa trend. When an apa's membership is drawn indiscriminately from fans of all sorts, there's bound to be trouble. One member who likes comic books will find his 44-page fanzine on EC rarities ignored and will drop out, and another member who is fond of fiction in fanzines will realize he's out of place just as rapidly. The big, quarterly apas that were first to organize have rarely established any selectivity in recruiting, except for minor influences on rosters like an OMPA rule which prevented North Americans from hog-

WARNER



ging all the memberships and a FAPA provision for instant membership, which has never been activated.

At the start of November, the first 10 fans on the FAPA roster, alphabetically, were the wife of a celebrated pro whose fanac in recent years has been confined to congoing, a superactive Australian fan, a pro who retains a few fannish instincts, an all-out fan of fandom, a formerly famous fan who is on the verge of complete gafiation, the publisher of one of the world's best fanzines, a gafiated fan who once caused inadvertently, the biggest feud of the 1960's, a completely gafiated fan, a pro who retains considerable fannish instinct, and a scholaraly fan. How much common ground exists there? Only two of the ten had been active in their current membership year in FAPA, at that time.

Maybe I've forgotten something, but I believe that the most prosperous of the traditional-type apas in recent years have been SFPA and APA45, both of them comparative late-comers, both of them founded with something in common among members: Dixieland residence in one case, a birth date later than 1945 in the other, which made all the members quite youthful for a while. Of the older apas, SAPS seems to be liveliest, but hardly equivalent in bulk or color to its great era around 15 years ago.

Where the action is today is in the apas which emit mailings or distributions more frequently than four times a year, and in one way or another tend to get members with some common interests. The latter attribute can be nothing more complicated than geography, like the incredible APA L, issued weekly and mostly involving Los Angeles area fans. It may be a specified theme for the apa which most publications emphasize: Tolkien, movies, or tomfoolery. Then there are the "secret" apas modeled after the Cult: monthly mailings, rarely more than 20 or so members and waiting listers, a tradition of frank discussion, use of first class mail to speed up things, and recruitment mainly through invitation to increase the chances of gaining new members compatible in interests with those already on the roster.

Most of the myriads of recent apas which specialize in some way have in common a more frequent distribution schedule than the original quarterly tradition. That brings up the second major reason for these trends. Fans aren't as patient as they used to be. This isn't a fault, it's an automatic mirroring of how the world has changed since the first fannish apas were founded. Television brings us news events as they happen or moments later, not the next day as newspapers did before the TV age. If you want to pay someone a visit, you see him in hours via air if he's on the other side of the continent, not days later. Most of us can afford to make a long distance call to settle a matter which once required weeks of correspondence to negotiate. Once the movies offered serials with weekly installments and cliff-hanging endings; today, television rarely risks the impatience that a week's wait to see what happens next would create, and normally leaves viewers in suspense only in the daytime serials, whose next episode will arrive the next day.

A quarterly apa like SAPS or OMPA seems increasingly tedious to the fans who have grown up during the past 2 or 3 decades. If a fan duplicates his apazine in Jan. so it can go out with the Feb. mailing, he won't receive until late May the mailing comments on what he did 5 months earlier, and another 3 months will elapse before he can get published retorts to those comments to the membership. If he attends 2 or 3 cons a year, he probably will have seen many or most of the other members of that apa face to face before that first exchange of ideas has been distributed. There is the additional problem of the increasing coagulation of the mails. If you live across the continent from the distribution point for a quarterly apa, it may take 3 or 4 weeks for a mailing to reach you and you must allow equal time for your publication to travel to the official editor for inclusion in the next mailing; you have, then, only 5 or so weeks to read a mailing and prepare another issue, or you'll stretch out the communication process by another 3 months.

This problem doesn't seem to damage as much as some of the highly specialized quarterly apas. I suspect that the apparent immunity comes from the sheer impact of getting a big batch of publications devoted to a favorite subfannish theme, an experience which excuses other flaws inherent in the system. The general apas don't offer much material that differs sharply from a batch of general fanzines chosen at random, now that so many fans are producing small personalzines outside apas for their own mailing lists. Things are much better in the Cult-type apas in the time element. First class mail permits a letter written in the last week of Jan. to be included in the Feb. publication which arrives early in the month, and you get reaction to it before the middle of March. More fast acting are a few local apas which distribute as frequently as the every-week schedule of the Los Angeles Apa-L. Moreover, you may get oral comments on what you've published minutes after distribution, if it occurs at a club meeting.

The worst thing about the effects of all these changes, I think, is the decline of the big publications and long articles that once were among the finest things in apa mailings. There just isn't time enough to produce long essays regularly for apas run on a monthly or more frequent basis. The Cult-type apas can grow ruinously expensive if too many members contribute regularly more than 2 or 4 pages, because of 1st class mail rates. It's conceivable that the big, general, quarterly apas may be on their way to extinction. OMPA has been ailing a long while, FAPA has had two major crises within 6 months, and N'APA died recently, although a glorious resurrection is being attempted.

I wonder if it might be possible to salvage their virtues, borrow ideas from their more successful competitors, and create a kind of apa new to fandom. Basing my ideas on problems that the oldest apas have experienced, I'd like to test the success of a new apa for patient fans which would retain the traditional quarterly mailings but would borrow some ideas from newer apas and innovate some that aren't currently in use.

This hypothetical group would require two types of activity credit for renewal of membership: both mailing comments and independent material, perhaps 8 or 12 pages per year of each. (This would guarantee both the continuity of mailing comments and the new topics which non-comment material provides.) In place of the customary chronological basis for admitting waiting listers, it would fill vacancies by membership vote on all waiting listers. (This would provide a means for finding new members who would be compatible with old ones.). What's more, the members with the least activity who are still eligible to renew membership would also face a vote by the full membership each year, on whether they should be retained or dropped. (Every big apa has at least a few members who are more interested in getting lots of fanzines than in doing their share, and hang on year after year with just the necessary amount of activity, frequently consisting of hurried, dull pages. They would face peril under this system.) Everyone's membership year would begin and end on the same date. (Less work for the officer who keeps records and the only way to avoid quarterly membership votes on waiting listers and the hangers on.) Previously distributed fanzines and fanzines that are distributed in quantity outside the apa within 3 months after their apa exposure wouldn't count toward activity credit. Officers are elected for indefinite terms, each serving until he wants to give up the office or a petition requesting an election for his office is submitted by perhaps 20% of the total membership. Each person upon joining is assessed a one-time sum, perhaps \$5 or \$10, which goes into an emergency fund. It's returned to him when he drops out, unless needed, and meanwhile becomes part of a special fund held ready for any dire organizational emergency such as to dislodge an undistributed mailing from a sluggish official. Maybe old-fashioned apas just need to be adjusted on the basis of experience. Maybe even the rapid-fire modern apas aren't fast enough for the youngest of today's fans. One youthful fan recently dropped out of Apa L because he didn't have the time for weekly apa activity, which ruined the apa for him. If other fans start feeling that way, a modernized big quarterly apa might become a valid alternative, after all.

THE CLUB THAT NEVER WAS

I'm always envious when I read of Americans who entered fandom at the age of 12 or 13. When I was that age I was quite happy to just read science fiction, while the idea of -- But wait, when I look back now, it seems that maybe there was something after all. Of course! How could I forget? The school SF club.

Yes, it's like looking at another world when I think back to my school-days. They weren't exactly the happiest days of my life (those days are now) but it wasn't such a bad time either. For the last 3 years I've been living in Frankfurt am Main, West Germany, and the 7 1/2 before that were spent in London (the London, in England). But the first 19 years of my life (have you worked out how old I am now?) were spent in my hometown, Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland, as we laughingly say.

First, a word about Edinburgh. If you are entertaining visions of a 'wee town' down in the glen, populated by kilted, bagpipe-playing Scots, who eat porridge (or is it porage?) and drink whisky all the time and are so mean -- well, it just isn't true, and then you have much the same ideas as the English and the Germans!

Put all those thoughts out of your mind and imagine a grey city, the centre of which is dominated by a romantic old castle perched high on a volcanic rock. A grey and beautiful city with fresh green gardens and parks, with a 'small mountain' right in the middle of the city, romantically named Arthur's Seat and also of volcanic origin. A city of old winding lanes or 'closes' in the old town and of beautifully laid out squares and wide spacious streets in the 200-year-old 'new' town. A city of half a million people, steeped in history, etc.

O.K., enough of the travelogue. It is like that, but it's also cold, windy, and above all, grey. Grey sky, grey buildings, grey people with grey lives. The trouble with a beautiful place like Edinburgh is there's little to do there. Unlike most cities, its population doesn't grow because so many people (like me) leave for pastures new. This then is the place I grew up in, my home town 'Auld Reekie,' which means 'Old Smokie' although it's a smokeless zone nowadays.

This was also the place, if I remember rightly, where I was a founding member of the school science fiction club. The school, the Royal High School (so called because it



was once attended by a royal prince!) was a pretty conservative one which traced its origins back to the 12th century. It was a boys only school, and we had to wear school uniforms -- black blazers, grey trousers, white shirts, black and white ties, etc. At the Royal High, science fiction was considered juvenile rubbish, as trivial as rock'n'roll, and not to be confused with good literature.

So when John Anderson, Richard Hogg, Deryck Guyatt, Leigh Moffatt, John Mackenzie, and myself decided to form an SF club, you can imagine that we kept pretty quiet about it in front of the teachers, particularly our English master, 'Sandy' Forsyth, a very sarcastic and cynical person, and therefore highly regarded by his pupils! I remember he did once see me carrying an SF book, 'The Kraken Wakes' I think, and said to me accusingly, "You don't read that stuff, do you, Stewart?" I knew he knew that I did, so I just mumbled something or other in my defense to the effect that SF wasn't all that bad, which he didn't believe. Sandy just wandered off laughing to himself, while I was left to contemplate my John Wyndham in shame and humiliation.

I must have been about 15 or 16 when we founded our club. The six of us were sitting around one Sunday evening in a Roman Catholic coffee house called 'The Grail' (we were all atheiststs, by the way) complaining about how rotten life was and how there was nothing to do anywhere. Somebody mentioned books and it turned out most of us read science fiction instead of the quality literature the school put on our 'reading list.' Only John Mackenzie scoffed at our taste.

Repeating almost word-perfect the immortal words of Sandy Forsyth, "Christ, you don't read that stuff, do you?" John poured scorn on our favorite literature. He then demanded to be lent an SF book to read (he'd never actually read any SF, of course, but he knew it was rubbish) so that he could demonstrate to the rest of us just what a load of old crap this science fiction really was. After John had read the book, however, he refused to admit he had ever been anything other than an ardent SF fan all along! We converted quite a few other sceptics in the same way in the months to come.

Anyway the other five of us were complaining on that Sunday night about how much books cost, how few SF books there were available (in 1960) and how difficult it was to find science fiction in the public libraries as there was no distinction made between one kind of fiction and another. It was all just fiction to them. Then John Anderson, I think, made the brilliant suggestion that we should pool the SF books that we had, and that was the start of the Royal High School Science Fiction Society.

John Anderson was a sort of 'instigator' -- he was the one who interested the rest of us in new subjects, be they Esperanto, yoga, ghosts, religions, hypnotism or mah jong. Later he sang in a rock group, made up of Royal High pupils. He was going to be a doctor and read lots of books on anatomy while he was at the school. Then he shocked everyone by leaving and becoming a chartered accountant. He lost all his prestige when he did that. Poor John, people even forgot he'd been belted for playing truant (yes, they're quite barbaric in Scotland -- they still have corporal punishment in schools). Actually another of the boys who was belted, Graham Simpson, turned up last year as the bass guitarist on the first album by 'Roxy Music,' so maybe there's hope for old John yet!

ALAN STEWART



We followed John's suggestion and founded a little library of SF, which attracted the interest of other pupils too. But before anybody else joined our club, we elected a committee to run it, a committee of six. Well, you don't want anyone else telling you what to do in your own club, do you? You've got to be one jump ahead. We were all so young and enthusiastic -- and inexperienced. We wanted to do more than just run a tiny library, so we decided to organize a short story competition with prizes of £1, 10/-, and 5/-, which is hardly anything in these inflationary times, but in these days was a lot of money. (A pound is now worth about \$2.05.-Ed. Note)

Strangely enough, we had no difficulty in raising the prize money (in Scotland!). Each committee member paid 3/- and the other 13 members paid 2/- each. We actually had 21 members altogether, but one was sick and one wouldn't pay. I suppose, looking back now, that 21 members was very good really, but we felt very small and despised at the time. Know the feeling?

No, the problem wasn't money, it was finding someone impartial (or rather several people) to judge the stories, as all 19 of us wanted to have a go at winning the money. Leigh Moffatt thought we should get some of our English masters be judges, but the rest of us were dead against having people as judges who had such low regard for SF and who would probably say that the stories were all terrible and that none of them deserved a prize.

Spencer Kennedy, who will always be remembered as the person who said, "Everything's been done before -- there's no chance to be original any more," considered that we should all act as judges. Not a bad idea, but not everybody was in favor, so we had to scrap it. Somehow we had thought it would be dead easy to get some people to judge the stories, and now here we were with absolutely no idea of who was going to do it. We were in a real quandary until the solution came to me one evening in the Citirail.

Edinburgh being built on all this volcanic rock, it's virtually impossible (let's say very uneconomical) to build an underground railway -- a subway as you Americans say. Mind you, they were able to build a Regional Government H-Bomb shelter under Corstorphine Hill in Edinburgh! But we're not supposed to know about that. We have no subway, but we do have a surface suburban railway. Originally this had no special name, then some bright spark at British Rail in Edinburgh spent a holiday over here in Germany, in Hamburg, saw the 'S-Bahn' (the 'Stadtbahn' or town railway) and decided that was what Edinburgh needed. Thus, the Citirail with its smart black and yellow carriages and station signs was born.

I said the answer came to me, but in actual fact it came to my girlfriend of the time, whose name I can't quite seem to recall. Valerie, Veronica, something beginning with a 'V' - I think. Anyway this Valerie (let's just call her Valerie) came up with the answer, when I told her we had all those stories and no one to judge them.

"Well," she said as the train pulled into Leith Central, "why don't you ask the ESFA if they have anyone who would judge them?"

"Eh, who?"

"The ESFA, E-S-F-A, the Edinburgh Science Fiction Association, of course. Don't tell me you SF fans have never heard of the ESFA!"

"Well, naturally, we know them," I lied, "but we don't really want to bother a big organization like that with a little thing like this." "Come off it, Al," retorted Valerie. She always called me 'Al.' "You've never heard of them, have you?"

"I'm a member, actually, since you ask," I replied as casually as possible.

"Bloody liar, that's what you are. I am a member. Look here's my membership card."

Women! Still, Valerie made up for it a little later, in an extremely enjoyable way. And she also introduced me to the chariman of the ESFA - as the secretary of the RHSSFS. Of course, he asked what the initials stood for. Well, I just told him as if it has been the most exclusive club in the world.

They judged our stories for us, all right, which may not have been such a good idea after all. The winner was me with something called 'The Alien Invaders.' Richard Hogg came second, and John Anderson third. Secretary, vice-chairman, and chairman. Of course, as soon as the results were announced, they were all screaming 'fiddle.' That was the beginning of the end for us.

The school was brought into the matter when someone complained to our form-master, who got the English Department to look at the stories. Hector McIver, the head English teacher, and Sandy Forsyth assessed our efforts and of course came to a completely different result from the ESFA. The whole fiasco ended in everyone getting his money back.

Then to our dismay, the Rector announced that our little club was now an official school society which would be supervised by one of the teachers to make sure that things were run properly. Well, the club just splintered. Some stayed in the new society, others formed a new 'underground' club, while yet another group (including myself) joined the ESFA and forgot about the school club(s).

Looking back from 1973, I wonder if all that was really real. Did all that really happen? Well, maybe it did and then maybe it didn't. Here. But it must have happened somewhere, or I wouldn't remember it all so clearly, would I? Yes, we must have had an SF club back then in my school days, or is it all just wishful thinking?





BOB TUCKER

BYOBCON
INTRODUCTIONS

My name is Bob Tucker. I'm the toastmaster -- and/or master of ceremonies for this on-going insanity. I'm going to make a long, dry speech -- one deliberately calculated to put you to sleep.

That is a sacred tradition in fandom. The toastmaster is expected, nay encouraged, to make a speech that is much longer, and infinitely more boring, than any of the claptrap that will be offered by the guests of honor who follow him. (And believe me, friends -- some of the people who will appear on this platform this weekend can really deliver deadly dull dillies!)

My subject matter today is the abolishment of office.

These conventions are cluttered with useless offices, with useless honors and awards, with useless dignitaries. I call for their elimination!

1. Hucksters and their tables should be abolished! Hucksters are here only to rob innocent fans.
2. Fan guests of honor should be abolished! They take up valuable time we could be spending in room parties.
3. Pro guests of honor should be abolished! They are here only to line their pockets at your expense.
4. Toastmasters and masters of ceremonies should be abolished! They are a damned nuisance.

and finally, 5. Convention committees should be abolished! They only manage to screw up everything.

BLOCH

It now becomes my sad duty to introduce the filthy pro who is our guest of honor: Robert H. Bloch. The "H" is for Humbug.

I could astonish you, by telling you that he sold his first story to *Weird Tales* at the age of 17 -- but I won't.

I could amaze you, by telling you that he has been selling things -- stories and novels and screenplays and TV scripts and commercials for belly-button deodorants -- for the past 41 years -- but I won't.

I could astound you, by telling you that he wrote a little book called *PSYCHO*, and made famous an obscure film director named Hitchcock -- but I won't.

I prefer, instead, to croggle you by telling you about Bob Bloch -- the fan.

Bloch and I are nearing our 30th anniversary, so to speak. We first met at the Los Angeles world convention in 1946, the first *Pacificon*, and no more than a couple of weeks ago, Forry Ackerman reminded me of Bloch's first exposure to fandom -- Bloch's first sorry joke at that convention.

He stood up and said: "I can't tell you how lucky I am to be here. The flight from Milwaukee was an expensive one, but fortunately I made 3 sales just before I left -- my coat, my car, and my typewriter."

I predicted then, there was no future for that man in science fiction!

A long time ago -- during the golden age of fandom -- it was our habit to go wandering about the world together. We went to conventions together, we cranked out zines together (and those fanzines are worth 10¢ a copy today) and once we sat together on a railing outside a railway station, eating peanuts and watching the trains go by. A railroad detective finally chased us away because Bloch's behavior aroused the agent's suspicions. The "Super Chief" went by -- chockful of beautiful people, of movie stars -- and Bloch pointed a finger at every window and every face, crying aloud "Zap -- you're sterile! Zap -- you're sterile!"

We also served sea duty together -- ship-mates -- braving the terrors of the deep. This was in the early Fifties, during the Korean war years, and together we crossed Lake Michigan on a car ferry.

A long time ago -- during the golden age of fandom -- one of the great fan news stories of the day, was that day when he and I organized an exploratory trip into darkest Kentucky to see Mammoth Cave. We intended to see the remainder of the state, but the Cave was our primary objective.



Fans along the route made preparations to greet us as we approached each town -- they equipped themselves with flags and firecrackers and beer -- to cheer us as we sped through. (And a few small towns having no fan population quickly organized vigilante committees to make sure we didn't stop there.)

I was driving -- which was our first mistake. Somewhere along the way to Mammoth Cave we took a wrong turn, and found ourselves in Canada. But Bloch -- who has a mind as keen as a rusty claymore -- saved the day. It was but the work of a moment for him to point out that we were in Ontario -- and that Niagara Falls was also in Ontario -- and he had always yearned to see that place, ever since Marilyn Monroe made it famous.

And so we did. We arrived after dark, and viewed the Falls by romantic moonlight and not-so-romantic colored floodlights. We also wanted to see them by daylight, of course, and so we checked into a nearby motel to await the dawn.

We didn't realize until too late that we were in a honeymoon motel.

I cannot possibly describe to you, the expressions on the faces of the real honeymooners, when Bloch and I walked out of that motel room the next morning.

Gentlemen, ladies, and students from the University of Iowa, I present to you one of the warmest friends I have in all this world, Robert Bloch.

* * * *

RON AND LINDA

It's difficult to say something witty -- but devilish -- when introducing a guest as quiet, as innocent, and as non-controversial as Ron Bushyager. Linda, now, that's different! Linda makes many new life-long friends every time she publishes another issue of Granny, or Caress, and all I need do is take notes from her disgruntled readers. (She pronounces that title differently, but I like Caress.)

But Ron is a more difficult subject. He's a computer programmer, and there is no truth to the rumor that he is also a CIA man who has infiltrated fandom on orders from the White House. He's been knocking around fandom for about 6 years, but he doesn't talk very much unless you happen to push his secret button. Linda may tell you -- quietly and in a hushed voice -- what that secret button is.

Ron is a splendid man to have on the other end of your mimeograph. When the fanzines are rolling off the press, he is an expert proofreader, a fast and efficient deslipsheetter, and a collator without peer. Actually, the Bushyager fanzines are produced by an electric machine, and Ron working like mad. Linda only pushes the start button, and sits down to read the latest copy of Perry Rhodan.

But I finally found something on him, something sneaky, but yet admirable in its way. I have never denied being a male chauvinist pig, and I have to admire another MCP when that man develops a new and previously untried -- yet triumphant trickery -- to win more than the heart of his objective.

Ron and Linda met at a meeting of the Western Pennsylvania Science Fiction Association. He got what he wanted -- sly man -- when he gave her 10 quire of stencils as an engagement present.

Now then, Linda -- A more difficult subject. I must be careful in what I say, because she edits the newspaper.

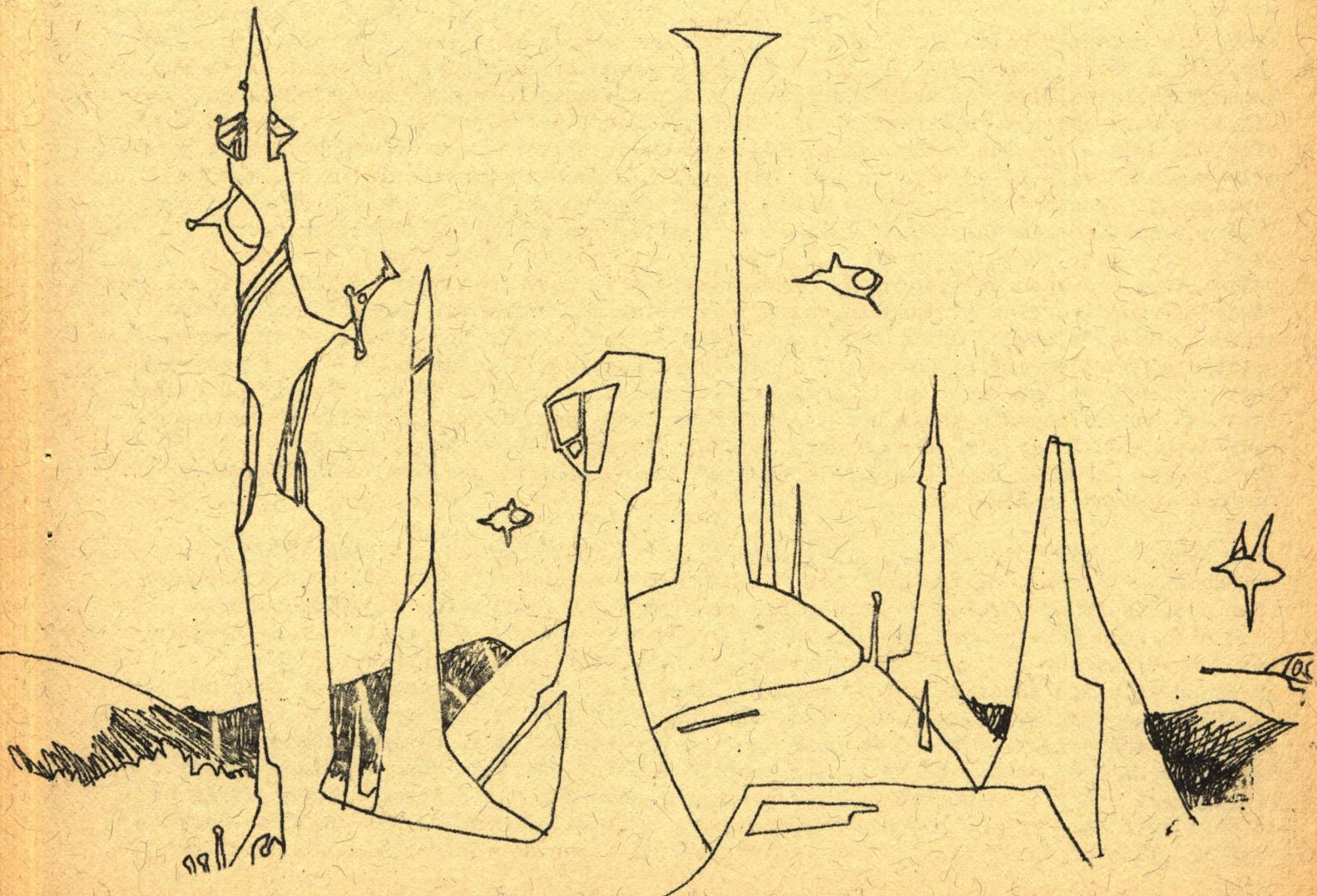
Where Ron is quiet, Linda is outspoken. -- Where Ron is shy and retiring, Linda will punch your nose if you talk back. She has been in fandom 8 years, and has attended about 40 conventions during that time -- she is running a race with Rusty Hevelin, to see which one wins some future award as the most exhausted fan.

On that magic mimeograph, she has published 19 issues of Granfalloon, and 15 issues of the fan news zine, Caress. She has successfully staged a regional convention, and -- by some process that escapes all understanding -- has gotten herself entangled in 2 major feuds. Why, just last fall, we -- several of her friends -- headed off yet another feud, a third feud, by spiriting her opponent out of fandom. We gave the man a bus ticket to Canada, and two boxes of lime jellow to console him. We assured him the Canada was virgin territory.

Linda told me that she began reading science fiction in the third grade, which I find astonishing. That marks her a true fan in my book. This is the vaunted 20th century, a century of marvels, a century in which many college graduates have not yet learned to read or write or spell.

Good people -- our fan guests of honor, Ron and Linda Bushyager.

(The above introductions are from Bob Tucker's notes, rather than as he spoke, and thus may be slightly different from the actual introductions he made at Byobcon in Kansas City in July 1975.-LeB)





BORN WITH THE DEAD: Three Novellas
by Robert Silverberg; Random House
1974, \$5.95, 267 pp.

The publisher tells us that these three stories are "about the spirit of man," which I find an odd way of categorizing them since Silverberg's approach to all three is coldly stylish, functional, bitterly rational. There is something

about his recent fiction that both fascinates and repels me. It's like watching a cat toy with a mouse, torment at a distance, not personally involving, yet grating to our human moral sensibilities which insist that death should be quick, as painless as possible, not strung out in a deadly game that chills us if we try to see it through the victim's eyes. The inhumanly calculated dryness of Silverberg's approach is what probably makes me vaguely hostile to him, although I am not unsympathetic to the themes he chooses. Much of his recent work is soaked through with an amorality of an offhand, indirect sort; one might almost call it a studied kind of anti-didacticism.

Quite a lot has been written about Silverberg's move away from swift melodramatic plots toward a new direction of intense characterization and character analysis. Unfortunately he doesn't really write about what goes on inside a person's head -- or, more precisely, the characters he writes about these days are obsessed with a self-awareness that pretends to be more than it actually is, which is thimble-deep. They brood rather than explore. They dig their graves and crawl into them, from which Silverberg would have us believe they find the essence of their internal fires among the gray ashes. The closest he comes to fires are a few smoldering embers, and even then one has to scrounge around to find them.

In "Going," a 1971 story which originally appeared in the anthology **FOUR FUTURES**, we are shown a future society which has increased man's longevity to well over a 100 year span and has found suicide an acceptable compromise in easing the population crush. Such a sociological projection should give credence to the links that must be forged between philosophy and technology, but Silverberg does no more than set each up independently and trust that the existing links need no explanation. With this unexplained and unconvincing background, the reader is left to react to the emotional aspect of the plight of the main character, Henry Staunt, a successful composer. At 136 years of age, Staunt feels he has reached a point where he must consider ending his life at one of the Houses of Leavetaking, a government-sponsored program designed to make suicide a reasonably pleasurable exit. His wife is dead, his children busy with families of their own, and something very like boredom drives him, hesitant but



resolute in purpose, toward seeking a personal end. But the pros and cons he weighs in his mind are tepid and tiresome. Even his own discovery of his life as "too sane, too empty" misses any drama of recognition. Staunt's final decision in regard to 'Going' holds no suspense or surprise, and his contemplations do not penetrate significantly into the meaning of superficiality. Perhaps Silverberg finds something ironic or touching or meaningful in all this, but it comes across as merely a boring story about boredom.

"Thomas the Proclaimer," from the 1972 anthology *THE DAY THE SUN STOOD STILL*, portrays the results of an unexplained halt in the rotation of the Earth in which physical laws are shattered but the psychological laws governing mankind are reinforced. Religion is the story's focal point, as Thomas ("a self-designated Apostle of Peach") tells his followers that the event is a sign from God, and the Earth will once again revolve after 24 hours, and "we live now in God's love!" Despite his proclamation, Thomas's goals are not easily reached ones, for the world starts to fall apart immediately. The Apocalypists rage that the end is near at hand and the people eagerly fall into ways of madness and death, much of it readily traceable to the inexactitude, reticence and foolishness pervading the religious systems. There is one particularly effective sequence in which an elderly man watches his home trampled by the crowds following Thomas to the sea for a mass baptism, surrounded by the bodies of those crushed in the hysteria, and responds: "I wish the Lord and all his prophets would disappear and leave us alone. We've had enough religion for one season." The story is pessimistic and cynical, smoothly written and quite readable; but its texture is polished glass marbles, individually pretty, but having a tendency to roll away from each other and lose any collective image.

"Born with the Dead," the title story and the lead-off piece featured earlier this year in *FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION'S* special 'Robert Silverberg Issue,' is likely the best work Silverberg has done during his recent tirade of clinical-dissection-of-the-human-psyche. The characters are no more depthfully written or interestingly portrayed than the tiresome David Selig of *DYING INSIDE* or the talking marionettes in *THE BOOK OF SKULLS* (two recent novels which are among his most commercially successful but least satisfying as literature), but Silverberg has an excuse for them this time.

Jorge Klein is obsessed with his wife, Sybille, because he cannot understand or cope

with the fact that she still lives and breathes even though she died some months before. She had signed up for revivification, a new process which allows the dead to be cryonically frozen and restored to life, or 'rekindled' as the deads term it. The deads do not, however, return to the normal world they left, isolating themselves in a specially built Cold Town. They travel through the world -- Sybille returns over and over to Zanzibar, where she is completing studies for a doctoral thesis she began when still 'living' -- but in general they keep to themselves, shunning the 'warms' who, to the deads, are no longer important or of any interest.

Following his ex-wife from place to place, using every possible ruse to get close to her, even going so far as to take drugs to give himself the appearance of a dead and to sneak into the Cold Town where Sybille stays between journeys, Jorge cannot rid himself of the compulsion to see if what is said about the deads is true. Do they really reject all association with their previous lives, are they willingly insulated and emotionless? He imagines how it will be when he finally contacts Sybille once again, and while he eventually discards the hope that the meeting will revive the love that once existed, his obsession does not wane -- instead it intensifies.

That makes this story work is not the desires of Jorge, but rather the distance and inhumanness of the deads, a mood that permeates the story with an icicle indifference. The dialogue, while sometimes gratingly bookish, reinforces this mood, as do Silverberg's descriptions of everything which comes into contact with the deads: an African safari with its frightened native guides, rekindled extinct animals, the sterility of the Cold Towns, the Zanzibar hotel rooms -- everything is glazed with an omnipresent barrier, invisible as glass and cold as steel. At the climax Jorge's battering at this barrier finally does cause a reaction from the deads, but it is a reaction that is as indifferent and casual as the swatting of a fly and appropriate in its controlled calm. It is not quite as horrifying as it should be, since Jorge's singular purpose makes him too much a symbol to gain reader sympathy, but it is startling in its swiftness and is meaningfully repulsive.

BORN WITH THE DEAD represents that I feel to be the peak of Silverberg's powers in this area of writing. It is a lower peak than that of his previous phase, in which we were given such compassionate novels as THORNS, THE MASKS OF TIME, and NIGHTWINGS. Silverberg's 'new' writing style has been quite interesting, but seldom very pleasurable, since boredom, listlessness, and one-dimensional obsessions can only offer a limited range of drama. I think he has culminated them as well as he can, and now I am hopeful he will move on to something else. Silverberg is much too good a writer to waste time sifting through the ashes of dying fires.

BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS

by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

Reviewed by Sunday Yorkdale

Those of you who are Vonnegut fans will probably not be too disappointed in this book, for it reads fairly easily -- and you can laugh over it and then forget it. On the other hand, it does not provide as much "meat" as his earlier books, and those who admired his sense of the ridiculous in PLAYER PIANO, GOD BESSS YOU MR. ROSEWATER, etc., may find a slightly sour taste in their mouths after this novel.

Mr. Vonnegut demonstrates that a successful and intelligent author can become lazy and allow his enormous ego to overshadow a reader's enjoyment -- and still sell books. Since he didn't feel like developing realistic characters, KV gives us just enough about each one to follow the plot line. And since he didn't feel like following through with the plot line, he simply resorts to the following attitude (not in so many words): "I'm the author, and I can write whatever I want to. So there!" Poor old Kilgore Trout, the unsuspecting villain, is finally told, and I quote, "I am a novelist, and I created you for use in my books...I am your Creator." Exactly what

every good Scorpio wishes to be! But the paranoid reader may begin to wonder, in those moments of complete absurdity in life, just when Vonnegut will appear out of the darkness, whispering that we are, after all, only characters in his next book.

For readers who enjoy catharsis via submersion in plot, empathy with characters, and vicarious adventure, this book is not for you! Vonnegut continually reminds us not to get involved in the book, because he is bound and determined to be unpredictable and do something strange on the next page. In true Scorpio style, he even indulges in a statistical study of the size of penises, both real and fictional, and quotes ladies' measurements at us as well. I would have preferred a bit of real sex ... it would have been an improvement.

In case you can't tell whether I enjoyed the book or not, neither can I. But I would no longer call myself, unqualifiedly, a Vonnegut fan. It is, however, the first time in a long time I really thought about a writer's style and purpose. And I'm not sure really whether KV was copping out and being lazy, or whether he wrote BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS the way he did on purpose.

STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY RANGERS

By Harry Harrison

INTO THE AETHER

by Richard Lupoff

A TUNNEL THROUGH THE DEPTHS

by Harry Harrison

Reviewed by Brian Earl Brown

In recent years we've seen a number of SF parodies, and while SF can always stand taking a poke at itself -- and is one of the few genres that would deliberately do so -- it's sad that none of these novel-length parodies have been that good. Parody can hardly be an easy form to write because it requires that the author catch both the flavor of what he intends

to parody -- which in these cases is the atrocious writing of 40 to 70 years ago -- and to write a story that is good in itself. The problem is that the writer might get one or the other, but not both, or he might get a little of both the flavor and a good story, but forget to add the vital touch of satire.

Harry Harrison's A TUNNEL THROUGH THE DEPTHS is an example of the latter. It's plot is taken from the nameless hordes of "scientific romances" that came out in the early years of the century. The heroes of these novels were young men out to gain honor for (or defend the honor of) their name and win the hand in marriage of their heroine, who was as often as not, that symbol of success, the boss's daughter.

Such is the case here.

Harrison is a man of considerable verbal skills, and he is a man of baroque imagination -- a steam-powered robot being his all-time classic -- but despite his baroque imagination and modern language, his novel is still a mass of victorian cliches and is mortally wounded by this. Harrison has not pushed any of the aspect of the old stories he was parodying to its absurd limits. His characters remain the stereotyped blobs of his creaky models. His plot, too, is conventional and stereotyped. His characters talk in a stilted style and fall into expositon just as did the characters in the old "scientific romances." The result is that far from satirizing these old stories, Harrison has written one identical to them. The result is not parody, just a bad novel. More than enough of these are being written without doing one on purpose.

Dick Lupoff avoided creating an exact duplicate of the edifying boy's novel of the last century in his INTO THE AETHER. While catching the pompous, stilted writing style with deadly accuracy, he leavens the novel with incongruous characters and bizarre and surreal events.

The point of view characters are two old, old, stereotypes: the wise old professor and the naive young boy. But Lupoff has exaggerated them to the point of ridicule -- which is the point, of course. Set in contrast to them is a string of out of place, modern characters. Their faithful, chicken-hearted, "darkie" servant is in reality a black militant spy out to betray their invention to the forces of evil. The contrast between the way the professor and the boy perceive their servant and the way he is heightens the absurdity of the former. Likewise, the bizzare events involving the professor and his paddlewheeled steamboat/spacehip exaggerate the absurdity of the "marvelous journeys" of the old scientific romances of that period.

The book dies, though, because of one little thing. It's the fact that Lupoff did capture the language with such deadly accuracy. His writing here is stiff, pompous, stilted, repetitive, and in general so horrid that it, in that delightful German phrase, "does not permit itself to be read." Dick Lupoff has always had a good ear for style. His series of satires by "Ova Hamlet" have all succeeded to the extent that they "sound" just like the writer they're parodying. Except, that is, for his story, "The Horror South of Red Hook," his Lovecraft parody. Some writing styles, like Lovecraft's, are so bad to begin with, that the dictate of good parody that the story be good in itself requires that the satirist not imitate the style too thoroughly. That is the case here.

Harrison's second entry into parody in recent years, STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY RANGERS, oddly succeeds where Lupoff fails and fails where Lupoff succeeds. In this novel, Harrison gives all those old Jack Armstrong, Tom Swift, and Kimball Kinneson stories their just deserts. Harrison wrote this novel in his normal verbal style, saving his caricature of the "gosh wow" style of the books he is satirizing for occasional use as "color." This is easily the best book of the three because it remembers to be a readable story while parodying. And it comes closest to being a good story in its own right. But Harrison fails to provide his characters with any suitable contrasts. Chuck and Jerry, the two "chums" of the story are stock stereotypes, inventing fools but otherwise pretty naive. Their mutual girlfriend, Sally Goodfellow looked, on the first page, as if she was going to be a real human being in contrast to the two boys. But she quickly becomes the typical heroine: screaming, needing to be rescued, getting the boys in trouble, etc. Only once in the rest of the book does she react in a way that would be expected from a real woman. The old black caretaker turns out to be a communist spy, but where Lupoff was able to use this as a contrast to his protagonists, Harrison converts him to Mom, Home, and Apple Pie, in the space of two pages, and he then becomes indistinguishable from the two other (white) boys.

The aliens that this quartet of Americans run into are generally given a modern, or non-idealistic nature: they are out to protect their privileged positions. While this contrasts with the out-dated romanticism of the Americans, the aliens are not utilized very effectively for contrast. The novel, thus, remains about four basically unbelievable -- or at least uninteresting -- characters. The events, while absurd, aren't so much more absurd than some that Kimball Kinneson went through. Overall, while the novel is a parody and an adequately written book, I can't say that it is really good parody.

Good satire can be done of those old victorian "scientific romances" and edifying boy's stories. Alexei Panshin did it several years ago in his Anthony Villiers novels. He caught the flavor of the old, overblown victorian style, the deadly slow pace, the non-existent plotting, and even the social millennu with deadly accuracy, yet with a certain light touch and originality that kept the books from becoming insufferable.

BRITAIN IS FINE IN '79. Britain is fine in '79. BRITAIN IS FINE IN '79. Yeah!

DEATHBIRD STORIES

by Harlan Ellison

Harper & Row

1975, \$8.95, 334p.

Reviewed by Wayne Hooks

Harlan Ellison is one of the most mercurial science fiction authors of the day. His stories alternate in quality from brilliant to low-grade porn. Unfortunately, more often than not, he writes low-grade porn. Therefore, it is always a good idea to examine a book by him carefully before purchasing it. Either his brilliance is punctuated

by long periods of mediocrity, or his mediocrity is frequently broken by flashes of brilliance. DEATHBIRD STORIES approaches the brilliant. However, even when brilliant, he must assume a defiant mock heroic posture. Surprisingly, these posturings accentuate his brilliance, rather than diminish it. It is suggested, modestly enough, that the reader not attempt DEATHBIRD STORIES in a single sitting due to the disturbing nature of the stories. This is partially true. Some of the stories are disturbing, but others are mundane. Even at his most brilliant, some mediocrity underlies Ellison's work.

"The Whimper of Whipped Dogs" is the extrapolation on the Kitty Genovese incident. Its God is an Old Testament figure, the god of the large city, maybe called Yahweh, maybe called New York, maybe Ba'al. New York is a jealous god, you may have no other gods before him. The god of the large city is primeval; when man crawled from the slime, he built cities, larger and larger. It is this god which city dwellers must worship.

"Along the Scenic Route" is a theme which has been done time and time again, sometimes with better results, sometimes worse. Highways are today's battlefields, where the slow and meek are daily slaughtered. Frustrated by civilization, Man turns to the highways for murder, dueling, and suicide. How long can this continue before society steps in and regulates it, as it did the duel with swords and pistols? The highways of today are the battlefields of tomorrow.

"On the Downhill Side" is a delicate allegory of ghosts, love, and unicorns. As with all delicate things, it should not be examined too rigorously. Its delicacy lies in the diversity of its personal symbolism. Neither should "Shattered like a Glass Goblin" be examined. Suffice it to say they are both allegories.

If man does not believe in a god, then the god fades away as his worshippers fall away from the old faith. What happens to a man when no god believes in him? "O Ye of Little Faith" examines this. It is an intriguing notion, but here it is not explored as deeply as it should have been. This is the problem with "Neon." The idea is wasted on the story. At times, attempting irreverence, Ellison confuses it with irrelevancy and the result is sadly surpassed by his other attempts.

War is the hobby of the gods. As long as there is man, a product of the gods, there will be war. Even when there is no war, Mars or Ares will step in and rectify matters. "Basilik" reveals the effect of the god of war upon people.

"Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes" is the story of a damned soul entrapped in a slot machine. This is one of Ellison's better known stories. Unfortunately, again Ellison utilizes a plot which has been used before and executed better. "Corpse" has an original plot, however exactly what the plot is supposed to be is debatable. Sometimes nonexistence may be construed as originality.

"Delusion for a Dragon Slayer" is the story of an existentialistic Hell. What is man except a bundle of delusions and dreams? But if it were possible to live these dreams, what would the result be? Would nobility and idealism be realized or would lust and brutality become reality? "Delusions of a Dragon Slayer" is an allegory of damnation, pessimism and truth.

"The Face of Helene Bournow" and "Bleeding Stones" must have been included merely to spotlight the other stories, like mud upon a white sheet. Purity cannot exist without corruption, and excellence depends upon mediocrity for survival.

"At the Mouse Circus" is an allegory, a paen to the automobile. It is brutal, degenerate, highlighting the illegitimacy of man's love affair with the automobile. In contrast is the delicacy of the Pain god. If there is a god of the universe, then he is a god of Pain. All that is created stems from agony. Pain renders life bearable; without pain, there is not even nothing, since in order for even nothing to exist, pain must create it.

"The Place with No Name" is an interpretation of the Promethean myth, only this time, it is man's insatiable curiosity which causes him to burn his fingers with fire.

"Ernest and the Machine God" is also an extrapolation on mythological themes. Even Zeus didn't appreciate anybody messing around with the Vestal Virgins. What would happen to somebody who seduced a Vestal Virgin of the God of the Moslem Age, the Machine God?

"Rock God" finds its origins in Celtic myths, and what is done with the theme is as original as Dracula. In contrast are the final two stories, both allegories. What if a man could explore himself. What would he discover? The answer lies in "Adrift Just Off the Isles of Langerhans." Finally, what is the true story of Eve and the Snake? Did the Devil just have a bad press? Ellison explores this in "Deathbird."

In DEATHBIRD STORIES Harlan Ellison surpasses himself. The general content is of high quality. DEATHBIRD STORIES may be recommended freely to the most discerning connoisseur of literature.

SOUTH CATCHER
by Frank Herbert
Bantam, Q7616
\$1.25; 216 pp
Reviewed by Ken Mayo

In SOUL CATCHER, Frank Herbert turns his considerable talents towards a more mundane setting than we are used to. In the process he has produced an excellent novel which seems to me to be a work of spiritual fiction rather than science fiction. SOUL CATCHER is not directly involved with the friction between the culture of the Northwestern Indians and the white world.

Rather, it is about the revolt of one young man, Charles Hobuhet, against the excesses and blasphemies which make up the white world as he sees it.

Hobuhet's transformation into Soul Catcher is, of course, central to the novel. It is a spiritual transformation which is rooted in Indian lore and is not just a work of imagination. The result is a character all too common in lesser works of SF and fantasy. Soul Catcher is a superman. He seems to be omnipotent. He is an extension of the forces of nature and of the Indian gods so deeply linked with nature as to be inextricable. And he has a purpose.

The soul Soul Catcher is out to get is that of David Marshall. He is Hoquat -- white man, and by extension Everyman. He is to be a sacrifice. His death will be a partial atonement for the atrocities committed by the White Men against the Indians and against nature.

Most of the action of the novel concerns the travels of Soul Catcher and Hoquat as they go deeper and deeper into the forest. The journey is an education for Hoquat and for the reader. It is never didactic, only thoroughly engrossing. In the novel both Hoquat and the reader, as well as Soul Catcher himself, grow in awareness of nature, of themselves, and of the forces greater than any of them which are at work all around us.

All in all, an excellent novel, well worth reading.

SUNRISE ON MERCURY &
OTHER SF STORIES
by Robert Silverberg
Thomas Nelson, Inc.
hb, \$6.95, 175pp
Reviewed by Wayne Hooks

Robert Silverberg is very prolific as both an author and an editor. As with most things produced in large quantities, Silverberg's anthologies are sometimes atrocious, less frequently, excellent, but in the case of the vast majority, either mediocre or average. Therefore, SUNRISE ON MERCURY comes as a pleasant surprise. A collection of his own stories, it is one of his better anthologies.

SUNRISE ON MERCURY is both the title of the book and the first story. Copyrighted in 1957, it is very familiar inasmuch as it has appeared in many previous anthologies. A story of the future, it deals with Man's encounter with intelligent alien life on Mercury. What forms and levels of intelligence coexist in the universe is still a matter of speculation, but recent discoveries relegate SUNRISE ON MERCURY to the realm of science fantasy rather than science fact.

There are eight stories in the anthology, but the best stories included here are "Alaree" and "After the Myths Went Home." "Alaree," like "Sunrise on Mercury" deals with Man's encounter with alien life forms on other planets. Its main thrust is individuality and corporate racial consciousness. In order for survival, there must be individuality -- or must there? Can any individual survive segregation from the totality of its fellows, or must the individual merge or die? Is there survival for the individual isolated from the corporate consciousness? It is this which "Alaree" deals with. The answer is not very pleasant.

"After the Myths Went Home" has only the vaguest trappings of SF. It is a delicate fantasy, a parable to modern man. Voltaire said, "If there was not a god, man would invent one," but is this true? Does the modern man have a mythology? According to Joseph Campbell modern man has invented a mythology of technology. However, man is swiftly divesting himself of all vestiges of both gods and heroes. What will happen when no gods inhabit Olympus and there are no heroes to battle Grendel?

The techniques of writing are scrupulously observed in all the stories. The plots range from excellent, such as "Alaree" and "When the Myths Went Home," to humorous, such as "Hi Diddle Diddle" to mediocre as in the case of "There Was an Old Woman." All in all though, the totality of the anthology is entertaining enough to warrant reading. SUNRISE ON MERCURY makes excellent light reading.

THE SCIENCE FICTION ROLL OF HONOR
edited by Frederik Pohl
Random House, 1975, hb \$8.95
Reviewed by Wayne Hooks

Every contributor to this interesting anthology has been a guest of honor at a Worldcon. This anthology is one of the most awesome arrays of writing talent to be published in the last few years. A combination of fiction and nonfiction, every article and piece of fiction is familiar. To attempt to criticize each individual in this book would seem to indicate their excellence and praiseworthiness.

The fictional contents include "Kings who Die" by Poul Anderson, "The Last Question" by Asimov, "How Beautiful with Banners," by Blish, "Daybroke" by Bloch and "Who Goes There?" by Campbell. Other authors included are Clarke, del Rey, Heinlein, Leiber, Doc Smith, Sturgeon, and Van Vogt. Gernsback, Paul, and Ley authored the included articles.

A formidable exhibition of writing talent, THE SCIENCE FICTION ROLL OF HONOR is an excellent reference book of some of the best science fiction written. However, it is a waste of time to read this book if the reader desires fresh, new material.

SUPPORT TAFF! SUPPORT DUFF!

YESTERDAY'S MADNESS REVISITED



In an article I published in BANSHEE early last year, Bob Tucker wrote at length on the fanpolls he took with LE ZOMBIE in the 40's. Three or four years ago, Terry Carr did a similar piece for FOCAL POINT, about those polls of the forties as well as the ones that Terry conducted via FANAC in the late fifties.

I love fanpolls. I love to read their results, the commentary that accompanies those results, and I love to compare the results from year to year as well as with the mental list I keep of who, or what, the "greats" are. I get turned on by knowing that HYPHEN never won the FANAC poll, even though it's been voted best fanzine of all time.

So it was a pleasant surprise to find, nestled away in QUANDRY 19, the results of a fanpoll taken for the year 1951. I'd never heard of this poll before -- Terry hadn't covered it in his article, and I'd never seen it mentioned in any other fanzine. The poll was conducted through QUANDRY, which was edited by Lee Hoffman, but it was run by J. T. Oliver. I don't know much about Oliver -- I know he had a good bit of material in QUANDRY, but nothing especially memorable. There's no indication of how many ballots were returned -- it says that 24.7% of the ballots mailed out came back, but I don't know how many were mailed out -- nor is there a list of voting fans.

For those of you who thought the poll I ran in RANDOM had too many categories, feel glad that you didn't have to fill out this ballot. There were 19 separate categories, many of them redundant and hair-splitting. Still, the poll provides some interesting results.

QUANDRY was voted the best fanzine, with Willis' SLANT second. I don't really think that QUANDRY had reached its peak in 1951, but it was certainly a fine fanzine then. Walt Willis had his "The Harp in England" published in Q that year, along with his regular column "The Harp that Once or Twice" and Bob Tucker had many good articles there. In addition, LeeH published the QUANNISH, a jiant 100 page fanzine which, while it contained a lot of material which seemed to be printed only to pad the page count, was still an excellent fanzine issue, and two special NOLACON issues given over almost entirely to accounts of the convention and the famous party in 770, illustrated with many of LeeH's "littul peepul" cartoons. QUANDRY is, unfortunately, the only fanzine of the period I've seen, except for a few issues of the fourth place fanzine, Tucker's SF Newsletter. Other's mentioned were FANVARIETY, famous for its licentiousness, in third, NEKROMANTICON, supposedly an impeccably produced fanzine, in fifth, and the combined COSMAG/SFD in sixth. There were several categories for art. SLANT was voted "Mag with Best Artwork" and LeeH was best artist, with Bill Rotsler second.

There were three categories for specialized fanzines: QUANDRY was best nonfiction magazine, SLANT best fiction mag, and SFNL best newsletter. The QUANNISH was voted best single issue, followed by SLANT#6, and there was a category for "best first issue" won by a fanzine called MAD.

Dave Locke should be interested to know that there was a poll taken for best article: four of them in fact. Best serious and best humorous article and similar categories for stories. Bob Tucker was the obvious winner: three of the top four humor articles were written by him, the upper ranks being broken only by Bob Shaw's "The Fanmanship Lectures." Tucker also had an article in each of the other three categories. I'm surprised that "The Harp in England" didn't win one of these categories, but since it was a convention report, and serialized to boot, a lot of people probably didn't know where to place it.

Oddly enough, there is no category for best fanwriter. There are, instead, ones for "Best Fiction Writer" "Best Fan Humorist" "Best Columnist" and "Best Poet", a category which has died out even on the FAPA egoboo polls now. Rory Faulkner won that one in a tight race with Orma McCormic. The best fiction writer was Clive Jackson, followed by Manly Banister, who edited NEKROMANTIKON, J.T. Oliver, Bob Tucker, and Peter Ridley. Willis won Best Humorist overwhelmingly -- he had 91 points compared to second place finishers Tucker and Hoffman with 43 each. Burbee had 17, and Bob Shaw took fifth with 10. For some reason, all of these humorists had remarkable staying power. Willis was in fandom for the shortest period -- 20 years. Willis also won Best Columnist by a wide margin, garnering over three times the vote that Redd Boggs and Harry Warner got. Rich Elsberry, Bob Tucker, and Lee Hoffman rounded out the group.

Best Regular Department was taken by QUANDRY's lettercol "Sez You." SLANT's "Prying Fan" was second, and "The Harp..." took third. The list of Best fans went as follows: (1) Lee Hoffman; (2) Walt Willis; (3) Tucker; (4) Max Keasler; (5) Ackerman; (6) Ken Slater; (7) Ian Macauley (editor, I believe of COSMAG, he is not the same Ian Macauley who later became coeditor of HYPHEN; (7) Rick Sneary; (8) Henry Burwell; (9) Vernon McCain; (10) Redd Boggs.

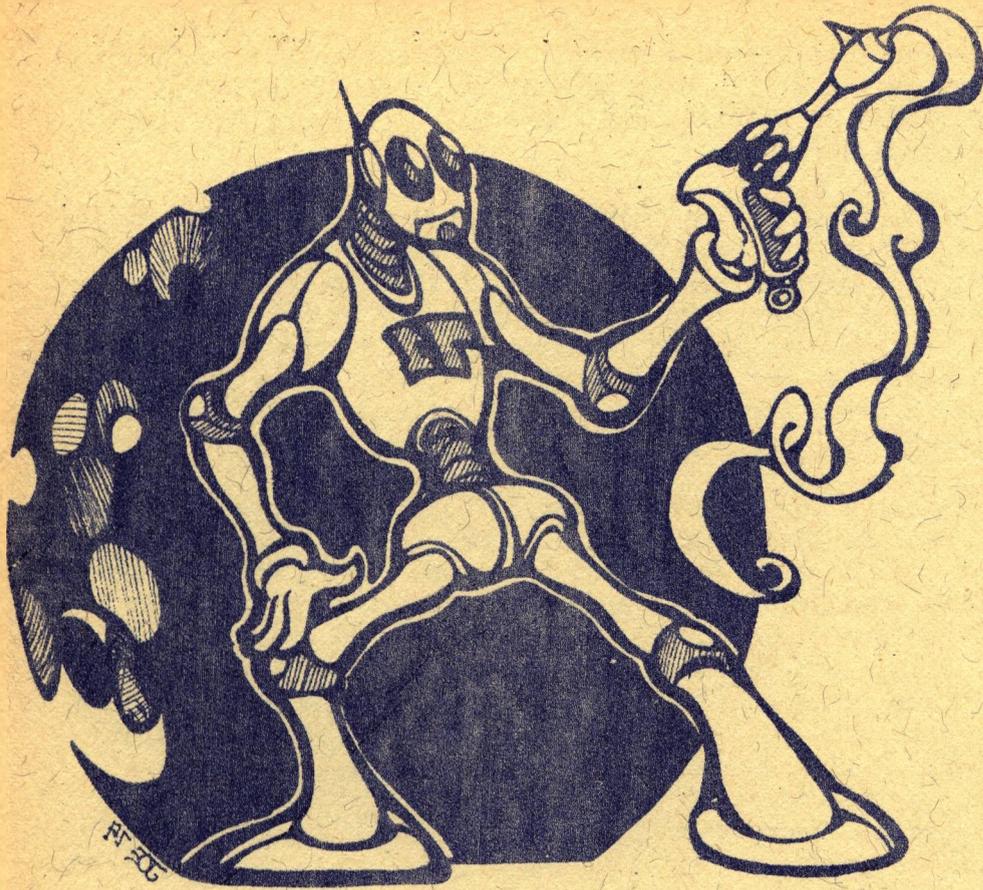
This was, I believe, the first comprehensive fan poll taken in the 50s, and was the only one until the FANAC polls for 1958-60. (Pete Vorzimer did, however, take a poll of the best fanzines in 1954 -- PSYCHOTIC won.)

Bob Tucker claims that fan polls are pernicious and dangerous. I couldn't agree more. Fanpolls cause one to think about the good things of the year before, and spread a lot of unnecessary egoboo. Furthermore, they make fans who chance upon the results years later speculate and muse upon the past. And finally, fan polls lead to more fan polls which lead to more...

Pernicious indeed. And I love them.

MIKE
GORRA





THE GREAT REJECTION SLIP MYSTERY

I have been the recipient of a number of rejection slips in my short and undistinguished attempt at professional writing. After wreaking destruction upon my surroundings, in the moments of calm after the storm, my mind turned to the long unanswered question: where do rejection slips come from?

Yes, I know they come from the editors. I mean, where do the editors get them? From the publishers, right? So where do the publishers get them? Do they make their own? Do they use job printing companies? Anyone who has collected rejection slips from the different magazines will notice a similarity among them in the kind of paper used, the size, and printing. This suggests that all rejection slips might possibly come from the same source. It was a baffling puzzle, but I was determined to solve it.

First I went to see Linda Bushyager and asked her if Granfalloon would sponsor an expose. After she had mumbled something, which I assumed to mean yes, I set out to find the answer. Finding out that one of the employees of a major SF magazine could be reached through bribes, (I cannot divulge the name of this magazine without exposing myself to the threat of a lawsuit. My investigation cut pretty deep, and I struck a few nerves.) I spread a few tens around, and got my first lead, an address on the New York City docks.

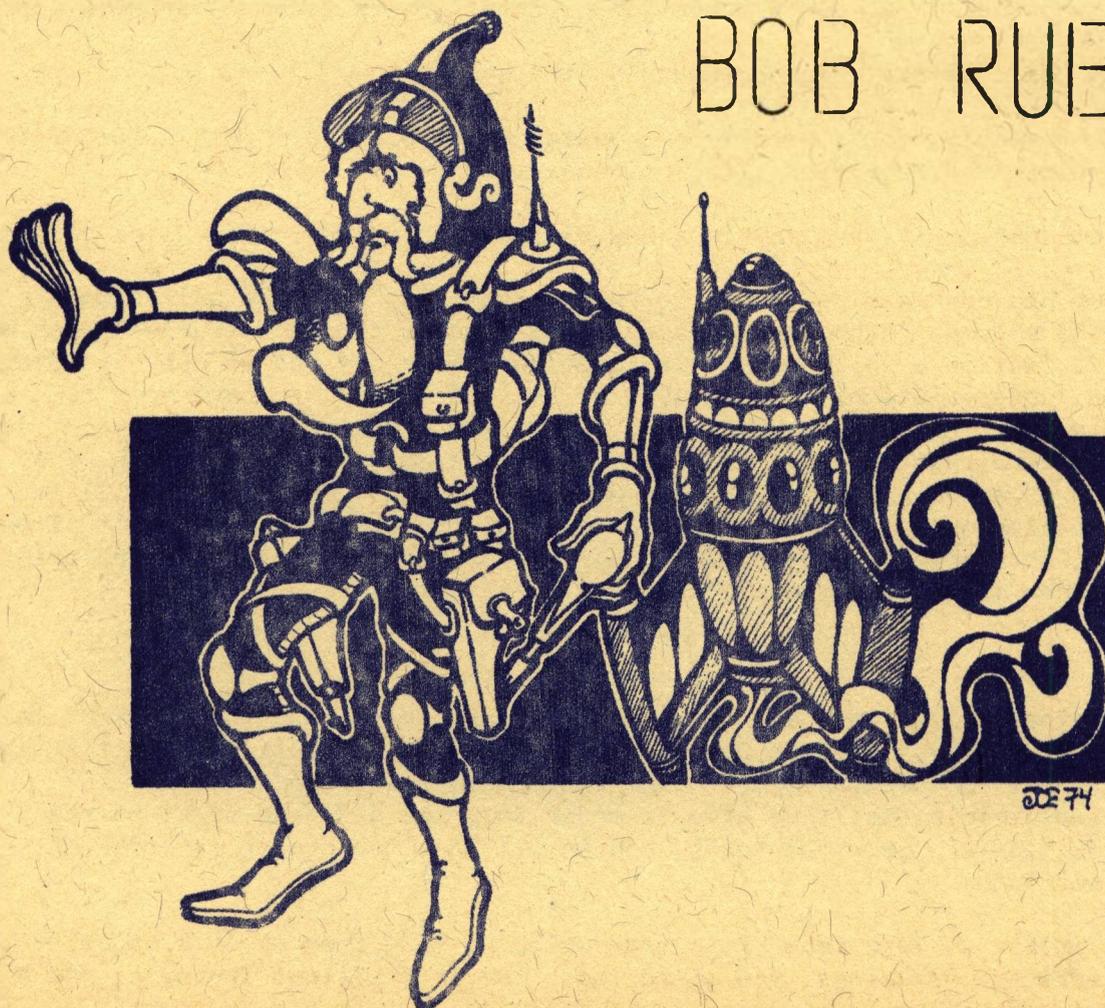
I arrived there early that same evening. Fog had drifted in, and I felt a clammy chill on my back. Somewhere, a foghorn sounded. I half expected a stiletto to come whizzing by, missing me by inches, to become imbedded in a nearby dock post; fortunately for me, nothing as melodramatic as this happened. Then I reached what appeared to be a decaying warehouse. A quick search revealed the entrance, a rusted iron door.

Seeing no other means of letting whoever was inside know of my presence, I knocked, and as I brushed the ferric oxide off my knuckles, the door opened. What I saw inside startled me, for it was an immaculately clean office building which seemed much larger inside than it did on the outside. It was a modern structure of finished wood, aluminum, and cheerful pastel colors. Well dressed people hurried back and forth to unknown destinations. The place conspicuously lacked windows. The air conditioning hummed softly.

On a wall overhanging a reception desk, in raised brushed steel letters were the words, "Rejectionships Inc." The man who had opened the door smiled at me, and invited me in.

I walked to the reception desk and explained how my curiosity had led me there. I asked if someone might explain the purpose of "Rejectionships Inc." The receptionist was very polite and congenial, but every now and then she cast a furtive glance at the man who had let me in. She picked up a phone and spoke briefly in an inaudible voice. I was told to go to Room 101, where all my questions would be gladly answered.

Room 101 was the office of John W. Abercrombie, Director of Public Relations. Since it was a big office, bigger than one might expect for a public relations man, I figured Abercrombie must be very important to his organization. Bookshelves lined the left wall, and black leather chairs dotted the room. An oversized desk scattered with papers sat towards the back of the room.



BOB RUBEN

Abercrombie stood at the door to greet me. He was a tall stocky man in an impeccable gray business suit. He was bald, with neatly trimmed gray black hair on the sides and back. His face was too red, and the features were too small for his head. His breath stank of cigars. I knew this was a man to be wary of.

I was offered a seat, as Abercrombie swung around to his desk. "Now sir, what can I do for you," he said in a cheerful, yet businesslike tone.

"You can start by explaining the phony front to your business," I replied being equally blunt.

He smiled. "There is a perfectly straightforward reason for our 'phony front' as you call it. There is no cloak and dagger involved. The fact is that we, as the only rejection slip business in the country, are not very popular with either the government or the public. The government sees us as a monopoly. We have a screening corporation, so we're protected legally, but there's no use flaunting it in Uncle Sam's face. The public would see us as something sinister. So you see, we have to be discreet."

"Let me see if I understand you correctly. You are the only printers of SF magazine rejection slips?"

"Oh no, my dear fellow. We are the only printers of rejection slips in all professional publications!"

I gave a low whistle. "But don't other job printers object to your cornered market?"

"We have our, shall we say, 'arrangements' with them."

I nodded knowledgeably, for I wasn't born yesterday. "But isn't this a lot of trouble just to monopolize the rejection slip business?"

"It pays! You just don't have any idea how big a business rejection slips can be."

He got up from his desk and went over to the bookshelves, where he pulled down a thick cardboard bound volume. "These are the research figures of our actuaries. You mentioned science fiction a while back. SF rejection slips are one of our big movers. Let's see now, under fiction, science; 90% of all the people who have ever read SF regularly have written at least one story. They figure they can write a story just as good, or better, than the ones they read. What an easy way to get rich, they think. By conservative estimates, that's over two million people. Now I'll let you in on a little secret. Do you know how many of those people who aren't already professionals, or professionals writing under pseudonyms, get their stories printed? Five! That's how many! Five people! Do you believe it?"

"No," I said.

"Well, you better believe it, pal. It's right here in black and white. That means 1,999,995 rejection slips have to be printed up. And that's not even counting the people who write more than one story. There are a lot of those. One guy in New Jersey, for example, well, we have an order to print his name right on the rejection slip. It's a personal touch, you know? That's a one gross order of one hundred slip pads.

"You add the profit we make from SF to that which we make from mystery magazines, the general interest magazines, the porno mags, the professional journals, and a lot of others, and you're talking about big business, and that's for sure."

Abercrombie was sweating profusely, and so was I. He had made his point. We both took time to calm down.

"Why do you think editors give out so many slips to new writers?" I asked quietly.

"Because they enjoy it. Gives them a feeling of power. Most editors wouldn't be in the business unless they could give out rejection slips. They can't afford to offend proven professional writers too often. They are their bread and butter. But give them an unknown to work on, and pow! 'Thank you for letting us see your manuscript, but-'" He was getting excited again, so I figured this would be a good time to leave, but he interrupted me and said, "One moment. You seem like an agreeable man, but I have to make sure. You're not going to make trouble for Rejection-slips Inc., are you? You're on our side, aren't you?"

I thought fast. From what Abercrombie had just told me, I knew that he and his company were playing for keeps. "No sir, yes sir," I answered to both of his questions. "Your rejection slip business provides a great service to the country and is a credit to the free enterprise system."

He nodded and smiled. "That's good," he said, "Nicely put."

I walked out of Room 101. By the door were two of the biggest, heaviest, toughest looking thugs I had ever seen in my life. They looked at me impassively.

As I left the building, I noticed the receptionist breathe a sigh of relief. So did I, as I wondered what would have happened to me if I had answered those questions the wrong way.

WAKEFIELD JOHN BLOODY: DETECTIVE
a short short by *Gerard E. Giannattasio*

Wakefield John Bloody, extraterrestrial and contratemporal creature-about-town, finished sorting through the day's mail and looked up at his partner Trompolene, the headless time-traveler. Trompolene was actually down the hall in the WC (at the time of which I write the two had set up a detective bureau in Victorian London -- hence the WC). Wakefield was able to converse with Trompolene because the other had thoughtfully left his head in Wakefield's out basket for the purpose.

"Anything?" the severed head asked.

"A note from Linda Bushyager at GRANFALLOON. She's been getting some weird LoCs and would like us to investigate."

"Yes, I remember her comment in the 'Omphallopsychite' section of GRANNY 16. I thought then that they might be developing a thing-gummy."

"A what's-it?"

"A watcha-ma-call-it, a who's-iss-what-iss, a dig-a-ma-jig, a dohickey," Trompolene's disembodied head bobbed up and down in the out basket in agitation. "Don't be dense, Wakefield, a thingamabob is the name of whatever you can't remember the name of. In this case I can't remember the name of the thingus I was afraid they were developing, which I guess they are, after all."

Wakefield thumped his tail against the carpeted floor, slowly and in thought. "This what-its-face you can't recall, can you give me a hint?"

The head smiled. "Certainly, a granfalloon is a false wallah-ma-jig and a thing-a-ma-ling is a true granfalloon. It comes from the religion Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. put into his book --his book--" the head wrinkled Trompolene's brow in thought, "his book hulla-cazaam." A victorious grin beamed at Wakefield from his out basket.

The body of Trompolene returned from its errand down the hall and sat behind Trompolene's desk. "What have you two been arguing about?" it asked in a deep, lisping voice. (Continued on page 42)

Brother are you saved?

When I was a young girl the question addressed to me was either "Little girl - have you given your heart to the Lord?" Or as I grew nubile, "Sister, are you saved? Your parents tell me you're very worldly, and the world is dancing on the edge of a volcano. Nineteen-thirty-six is the very last Year of Grace. After that the Great Tribulation's starting. Your parents won't be here -- they'll be 'caught-up' -- but what about you?"

As a tiny child I squirmed and figeted. As I grew older, and had reasoned it "all" out (or so I believed), I'd look at my questioner sorrowfully and answer, "I couldn't go to Heaven when friends I love are going to Hell."

My poor mother (who was terribly dear to me, though never near) would let out a sorrowful wail and declare, "That comes from being a friend of an Infidel and a Catholic."

This might puzzle our august visitor. "Infidel -- Catholic?" he might stammer, stealing a furtive glance up and down my figure (which was turning out surprisingly curvacious and 'sinfully seductive' already).

"Two best girl friends she has from schooldays. One's a Catholic, the other is a Communistic AGNOSTIC! -- an INFIDEL!"

"Communistic?"

"No, Mother," I'd wail. "Betty isn't! She just is sorry for the poor and feels they shouldn't be exploited."

"What they need is salvation -- not material comforts!" my would-be-saviour would growl, still eying me in a way I found infuriating.

"Besides," my dad would enter the fray. "What did Betty ever do for the millions of poor starving Chinese on every side of her? We've done much, much more, your mother and I."

That was undeniable, and I was proud of my parents' utter dedication to the 'poor and lost' of Shanghai. In fact, on occasion so sympathetic had I felt, I'd even joined them in 'giving out tracts, printed in lovely Chinese characters. It was fun because even an unlettered coolie got a great thrill out of being presented with a pretty little pamphlet printed in Chinese, and he'd treasure it.

By then we'd have forgotten what we'd been arguing about and my father would start listing all the 'Missions' he'd started throughout Shanghai, how many converts were made per year on the average, and he'd get so delighted with the story, I'd manage to sneak out-of-sight without my parents noticing it. The guy might, but what could he do?

There was one really infuriating fellow and again I'll name him, his genuine surname. Brother Peponis! Brother Pep, his fellow missionaries, those who could stand him, called him affectionately. The 'Worldly, Modernist Missionaires' who also couldn't stand my parents (though with pained looks they tried to look friendly when they met

MAE STRELKOV

by chance), well, that type considered Brother Pep a nut. Alas, my parents didn't and gave him a room in our big new semi-Chinese home near Jessfield Park, Shanghai. (We'd long since left the other side of town, the haunted house near Hongkew Park, and since we left, it was by then a region of ruins, due to wars fought right between all the houses of China-town there.)

Anyway, Brother Pep was henceforth present at every meal, praising the Lord between every mouthful -- Hallelujah! -- and eying me, no doubt in a fatherly manner, grunting approval as he egged my parents on in their scoldings. "What? Are you going to visit Betty again?" said my ma.

"She just phoned, Mother! She wants to do a sculpture using my head as a model -- at the art club."

"Art clubs! Art clubs! Full of sin and nude models!" rejoiced Brother Peponis, beaming.

"There are NO nude models and there'll be nobody at the club in the afternoon, just Betty working there. Can I go, mother?"

"Well...if you'd just help Betty see the light, instead of the other way around --" began my Ma.

"Well, mother, we do talk about -- things -- Heaven and Hell and all that! She is sincere in wanting to understand it, and so am I!"

"You're too intellecutal! roared Benjamin, my father, adding with an effort to sound regretful -- "She takes after me! I was too intellectual also -- much good it ever did me. Gave me a breakdown, finally, that's all, using my brain too much."

"Praise the Lord!" boomed Brother Peponis. "We don't need our brains to love Jesus -- all we need is our hearts, hallelujah!"

(My Lord! I thought. He's impossible) Changing the subject, I said to my ma, "Mother, Kathy Perrin sent over some records she knows you'll just love. May I play one right now, while we're eating?"

"Why -- that's very nice of her!" said mother. "Please do!"

"You twist your mother around your little finger!" growled my dad. But he couldn't growl much. The Perrins had given a 100 Mex to my dad just a week or so back, to help with his Missions. Very politic of them since they were marvelous friends of mine, to whom I'd been introduced through a childhood friend of my mother's so they just had to be okay. This friend of mother's was the wife of a first-rate missionary surgeon who'd healed Kathy from some sort of ulcer or the like (with a successful operation). Kathy was crazy over horses, but her health didn't let her ride them still, so she'd gotten me to ride her horses for her -- at 5 a.m., way out near the Lung-hua pagoda daily. Mother got up at 4:30 to give me breakfast and to make sure I didn't walk out of the house just in jhodpurs, but had a skirt over them. Which skirt I removed once out-of-sight of home, naturally! It look so crazy on. One just was forced at times to be a little two-timing, though it upset me heaps. But you

never got to first base arguing with mother, especially with my pa and Brother Pep booming their defenses of her against me. Anyway, I decided to have a little revenge against Brother Pep. I selected a tune that was catchy (like a jolly revival hymn in its rhythms), and the gramophone with its tinny loud noise was right beside Brother Pep's chair near the table, so I turned the volume on 'High.' The singer bawled about his 'old home' and how he missed it, and mother nodded approvingly, just beaming. The song concluded, "I'll take my lover on my knee in Paradise!"

Alas, how shameful I was -- I realize it now! For fear mother had heard the word 'lover!' I said, "He says he'll take his mother on his knee in Paradise! Isn't that nice?" She looked utterly astonished and somehow flattered too. (She had never read of Oedipus complexes! Nor had I at that time.)

"I thought I heard 'lover,'" Brother Peponis fixed me with his gimlet blue eye.

"Oh no! -- I doubt it! I said, hastily putting on another record instead. Just as loud, just as "boomp-a-doop!"

The pained expression grew on the long whiskered face of our guest. "Praise the Lord!" he ventured. The noisy drums and trumpets drowned the remark. "Hallelujah!" he shouted, but it sounded like he was requesting an encore, not at all defiant.

At last, he said, as the record ended, again (and it wasn't a long-play, for there weren't any!)

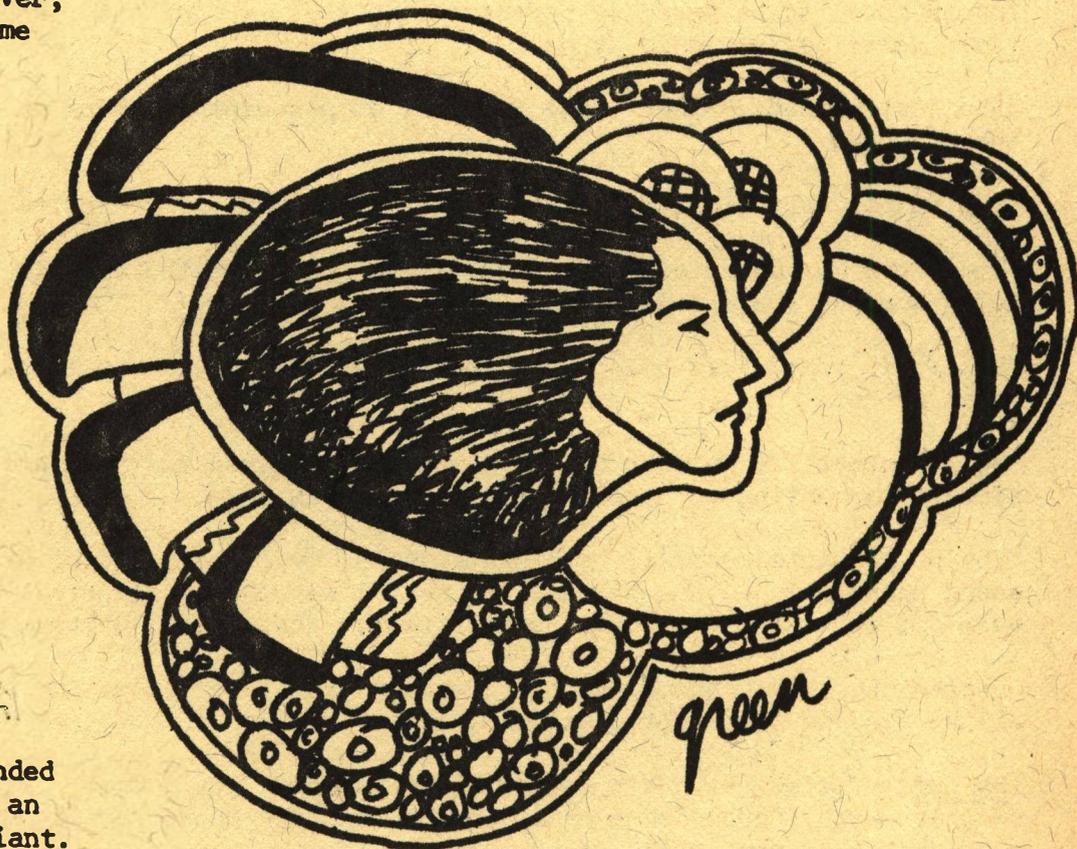
"I don't feel 'in the Spirit' with worldly music like that going on."

"Play no more!" shouted my dad, and I knew better than to disobey.

"Oh, it was cheerful, nice music!" mother tried to sound brave.

"That's the trouble!" replied my poor father, and Brother Pep answered with an AMEN!

"You may go to Betty's," my father said suddenly, having exchanged a word or two with mother while the music played, "provided she promises to come to the China Inland Mission meeting on Saturday night, in turn. Can you make her do that?"



"I'll ask her."

"Now you go and do that, and don't let her wiggle out." Mother turned to Brother Pep apologetically and explained, "We really prefer her friendly with Betty than with Valentine. Valentine's the other girl, she's a Catholic. It's impossible -- usually -- to convert Catholics, they're so benighted. It's all the idolatry!"

Before the permission might (just by chance) be rescinded, I shot out of the house, with a hop, skip, and jump through the midst of all the Chinese always swarming along Connaught Road where we lived and down to Bubbling-Well. I went past that bus and tram terminal into the French Concession with the nice houses and their gardens just like home -- back in Europe. I never walked, I skipped with occasional leaps across whole squares of sidewalk-paving, for really I was so bottled up with "being good" at home, I had to let the steam out somehow.

Nobody stared. The occasional Chinese passerby would grin, and I'd grin back with a hello in Chinese. Most white folk never walked -- they either called a taxi or a rickshaw if they didn't have their own cars.

Ahead in the distance I saw Betty with her bike -- at least I thought it was Betty, but being shortsighted (even with glasses) I waited before waving, so she waved first.

"I thought they might let you come!" she said, and we were already laughing just at life being "the funniest thing," and the fact I'd wangled permission seemed hilarious. "They almost didn't," I told her, adding, "It was that Brother Pep! Always making trouble, trying to get me into hot water with my folks."

"My mother," said Betty, "thinks it's shocking, the way your parents so trustingly take all sorts of queer guys into your home. Has he ever made a pass at you?"

"He'd not dare. He's actually scared stiff of me when my folks aren't around. But the other day he did get maudlin when he came into the living room when I was practicing for Sunday,' (I played the pipe-organ at the nearby Free Christian Church, full of China Indand Missionary folk). He came in and said, 'Ah, that puts me in the Spirit!' 'It's Handel!' I said, getting to my feet and preparing to beat a quick retreat. You could see he'd never heard of Handel. 'Hallelujah!' he went on. 'You know what's the dream of my life?' 'No!' said I, retreating to the door!"

"My dream,' he said 'is to see you humble your pride and travel third-class in the tram with me -- among the coolies!"

"My eyes just popped, but I didn't answer and beat it. I mean, I have nothing against traveling third if I have to -- my gosh, I like the Chinese. But with him? And giving out tracts? He wanted that too, as he added, while I fled."

"Well, you just watch out for him!" said Betty.

"You bet!" said I. "I'm good at dodging passes. That other guy..."

"Which?"

"You know -- the guy who said he was a Russian prince, and we're sure he takes drugs (you and I are sure) but he says Hallelujah on cue, anyway, he did try to make a pass once, and I ducked and just ran away and he was so scared I'd tell my parents he left our home -- but real fast and hasn't come back."

"You were lucky! They can pin a girl down..."

I tossed my head. "Not me!" I boasted. "I'm ever so quick!"

And I was...

Till I fell in love at eighteen, and married -- but the rest of the story you know, I'm married still, to the same guy!

* * *

Being a thorough sort of person, having decided "Me, I'm no Protestant," I tried Catholicism next, when we first reached Valparaiso, Chile, my husband and I, in 1936. A darling Lazarist priest assured me I didn't have to believe in Eternal Hell to be a Catholic, and he told me I was a better Catholic already than most, so refused even to give me a catechism to read (probably afraid it might put me off).

So I joined sight unseen and stayed more-or-less a Catholic till a priest wrote from North America warning me to put aside my pride and 'see the justice of Eternal Hell with people in it.' So I ceased to be a Catholic in due course, unable to see any justice even yet. And there is where I disagree with any 'orthodox' believer. I do NOT want to be an 'either/or' person, I do NOT want to join the nobles and elite and watch from aloft an Eternal auto-da-fe in Hell, just for my 'amusement' -- greatest pleasure of Heaven promised to Catholics till so very recently. (And autos-da-fe in real-life were also provided as a foretaste of the 'bliss-to-come.')

No sooner had I finally gotten down to researching the history of Christendom in the Old World and here in the New World, than I realized that I agreed with the Indian Hatuay of Cuba (during the Conquest), "If you're going to Heaven, then I'd better go to Hell," as he told his tormenters, the Conquistadores and their friars just before they set the torch to him. I don't want to go any place of Eternal Torture, but I'd feel honest there.

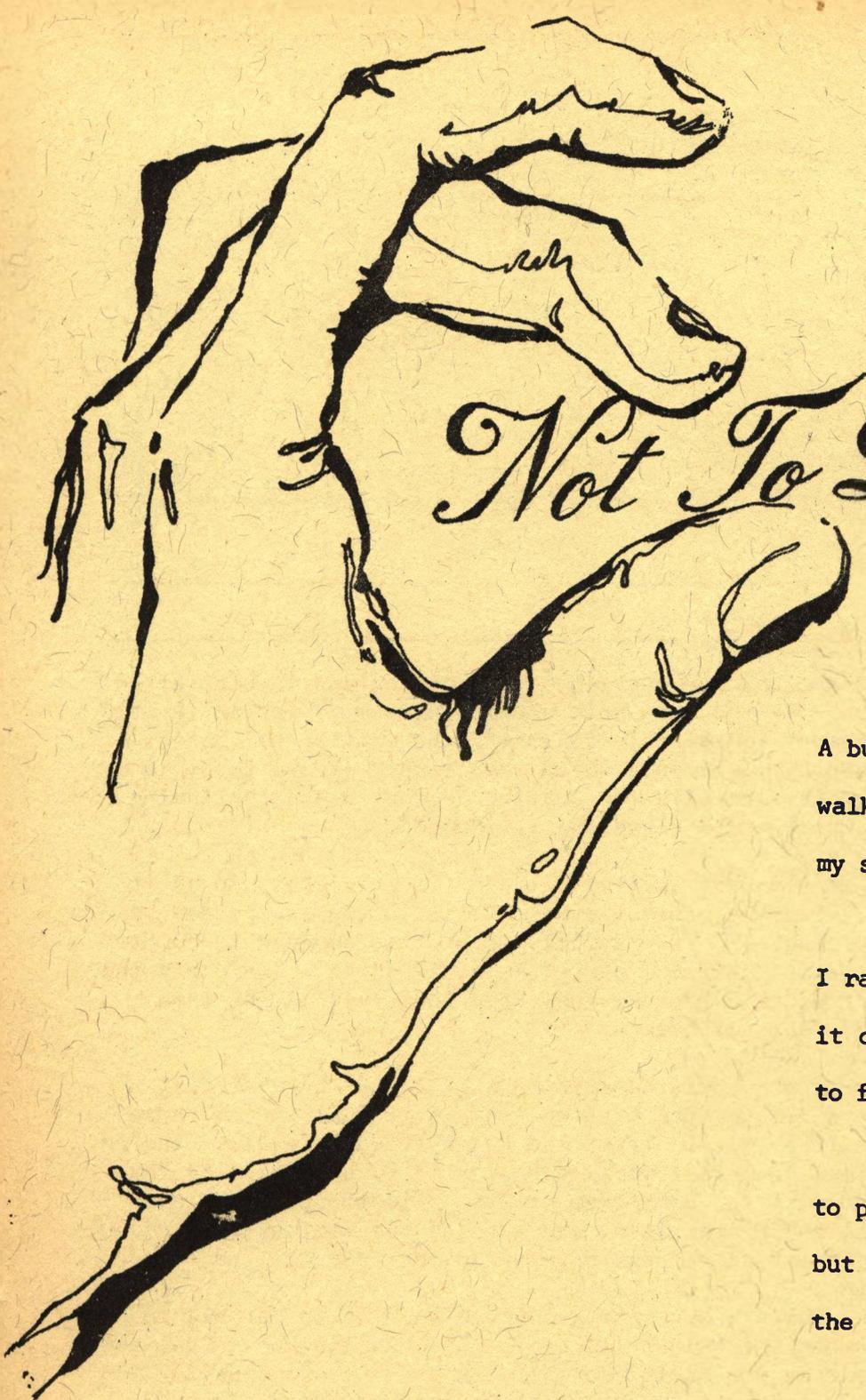
In Heaven, watching my 'enemies, the lost' in Torment, because I signed on the dotted line and accepted 'salvation,' I'd feel a wretched fraud! And isn't it sad that so many people prefer personal salvation, a 'hope-in-a-painless future' to the risk of love-for-all-mankind, at any cost?

WAKEFIELD JOHN BLOODY: DETECTIVE (Continued from page 37)

Wakefield John Bloody and the head explained. "I see," Trompolene's said. "The book, as I recall, was Cat's Cradle, but I can't remember what a wha-iss-ma-lah's called either."

"We'll have to decline the case," the head of Trompolene said after a while, "we can't very well get involved with strange religions."

"So much for the jig-itty-jig," Wakefield said lifting another letter in his thumbless hands. "Lord Dimple-Dorring writes that the tracks of a giant hamster have been found on the downs near West Worthington."



Not To Let It Go

A butterfly
walks on my arm to tease
my skin with powdered gold.

I raise my hand;
it climbs the limb with ease
to fingers and is bold

to perch their tips
but not to fly. It seems
the summer that I hold.

-- by *Pauline Palmer*

omphalopsychite



Len Moffatt, Box 4456 Downey, Calif. 90241

Michael T. Shoemaker owes me an apology for quoting me out of context in his letter in GRANFALLOON 19. He should have quoted the whole paragraph from my letter in Gf18 or, at the very least, the statement immediately following the portion he quoted. But then that would have weakened his argument, which wasn't very strong to begin with. I'll repeat what I said, starting with the portion he quoted and continuing with the rest of the paragraph which he so cleverly (?) ignored:

"Each Worldcon committee is an independent entity. It can, if it wishes, do as it damn well pleases with the con, with the monies, etc. And it is usually guided by what will be best for fandom in general. If a Worldcon committee decided to donate money to the Salvation Army, or some political party, it could do so. Obviously the average Worldcon Committee won't do this because they know that they'll get even more than the usual bitches from fans all over."

Please note that I said that Worldcon committees are USUALLY guided by what will be best for fandom in general. I had to--and have to-- state it that way as there have been committees who ignored the Rules. True, the Rules are not legally binding, but I'm sure that most committees have felt morally obligated to be guided by them. They are needed -- not only to remind the committee of its obligations -- but also as a guide or a procedure to follow in organizing and running the convention, conducting the business meeting, site selection voting, Hugo balloting, etc.

Changes are made in the Worldcon Rules every year. I would be nice to be able to look into the future and learn what the Rules will be in '78. As you know, June and I are chairing the bidding committee for Pacificon III - LA in '78. Considering the problems and work that a Worldcon committee must expect to face and to deal with, we gave the matter a good deal of thought and discussion before we decided to head up the bidding committee. We decided that yes, we would like the opportunity to run a convention that the majority of the attendees would enjoy. (We do not pretend that we can please everybody; there never has been--and never will be--a convention where there are no bitches and gripers. That would be humanly impossible and fans are the most human type people I know.) It seems to me that much of the griping is done by those who have no appreciation of the work that goes into organizing and putting on a convention. Coming up with ideas that create more work for the

committee is not exactly the ideal way to get more fans interested in forming bidding committees. Fortunately, committees consisting of experienced fans (such as ours) know how to deal with possibly well-meant but impractical suggestions, but why turn off those who would like to bid for a convention, but because of the "problems" and minor hassles they hear about are afraid to try? (Worldcons are becoming so large and complex that fandom is coming face to face with the real possibility that the only practical way to run such conventions may be by a professional con committee in a municipal auditorium or convention center. Such a solution is one most fans dread, but when running a Worldcon requires the committee to put as much effort into it as a full-time job, such a solution may be the only realistic answer. I sometimes wonder though if the alternative to professional con committees might not be to simply simplify the Worldcon to the point where it is manageable by an amateur, volunteer committee as tradition and fannishness demand. A move back to the simpler, last minute programming of the 50's and 60's might be drastic, but it might have pleasant results. Items which require extensive planning such as elaborate multiprogramming, all day/all night film programs, light shows, rock bands, presentations based on 2001, and even concerts (originally promised by MidAmeriCon, but now ruled out because of expense and replaced by an original drama) could be eliminated. But which is the direction the fans want the Worldcon to go in? The advantages and disadvantages of each will have to be thoroughly discussed by fans through fanzine and convention communication to determine the future evolution of the Worldcon in an organized manner. KARASS and GRANFALLOON will continue to present comments on the future of the Worldcon and on commercial conventions. I hope other fanzines will also discuss these matters. - LeB)

Grant Canfield, 28 Atalaya Terrace, San Francisco, Calif. 94117

From an artwork standpoint, honors for GRANFALLOON 19 have to go to all the fine robots therein. As something of a self-proclaimed robotic expert (design aspects), I can speak with a fair amount of authority here. And I say that the best illos in Gf19 were the robots, led by the uncredited beauty on page 31 by "L.L." Who is "L.L." please? That is really an excellent robot there, very ingenious in design and very striking in graphic impact. (I wish I knew who L.L. was. As sometimes happens I hold onto a piece of artwork for months or years and forget who drew it. L.L. had but a single piece in my files, that robot, from over 2 years ago, and I wasn't able to determine the artist from my files or friends. So if anyone out there has any idea who L.L. is (and it isn't Linda Lounsbury) PLEASE let me know-LeB)

Second-best robot in the issue was Jim McLeod's dandy cycloptic mono-tentacled runner on p. 32, one of the finest robots of recent years. In any other issue of any other fanzine, that would definitely be the Boss Robot. It is only the spectacular L.L. robot that prevents it. It is amazing, possibly even fantastic, to consider a marvelous robot like Terry Austin's, which leads off his portfolio, as only the third-best robot in the issue. Well, third and fourth, actually, since Terry has two pretty swell robots in that illustration. But that's just a mark of how fine an issue Gf19 was from a robotic-art standpoint. So, as an afficianado, purveyor, entrepreneur, devotee, and fan of robotic art, I thank you for a superlative contribution to the body of Great Fanzine Robots. Enclosed are two recent robots of my own in a cartoonistic vernacular. (They appear on the next two pages)

Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6P 2S3

Gf19 certainly is a nice looking fanzine, and it reads very well too. I guess fanned-ing is like ridiig that proverbial bicycle. No matter how infrequently you may do it, you never forget the basic techniques. Delap's cover is most impressive and easily the best piece of his artwork I've seen. Too bad he seems to have gafiated. (*Richard hasn't gafiated, really, but is now busy trying his hand at professional writing. For some unknown reason he never felt his artwork was that good, but I think it is, and I wish he would do more. Richard is still occasionally doing book reviews, and much of his work appears in WSFS JOURNAL and Son of WSFS JOURNAL. If you enjoy very good book reviews, you'll enjoy Richard Delap's new professional book review zine, DELAP'S FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. Richard hopes to sell subscriptions mainly to libraries to provide a place for them to determine if a book is worth buying. Library subs are \$12. Individuals can also subscribe to the monthly publication for \$9. Richard probably could use book reviews too. If you'd like to subscribe or want any information on the zine, write Richard Delap at 1014 South Broadway, Wichita, Kansas 67211. -LeB*)

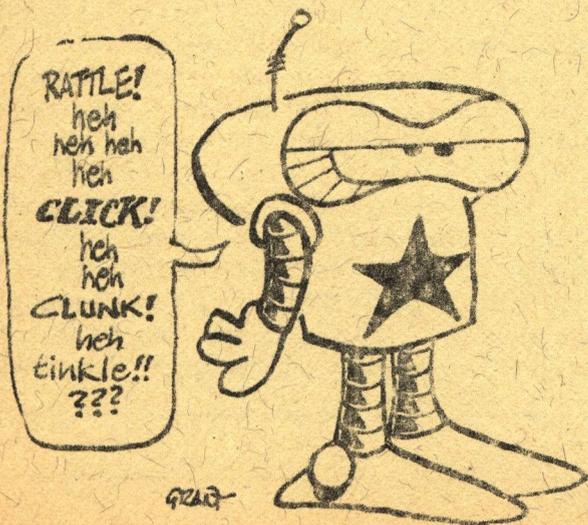
With GRANNY appearing so infrequently, I'm sorry you didn't write more of an editorial. All that dull factual stuff about publishing schedules and requirements belongs on an informational flyer like Bowers uses. Put more of yourself into Gf in the future. (A bit more about the achievement of and reformulation of your fannish goals would have been much more interesting and revealing, for example. You've piqued my curiosity by saying you've got new fannish dreams now, and I'm wondering what they might be? Run a Worldcon? Introduce a new set of awards? Raise a new generation of fans? Could be anything. My new fannish goal, for example, is to get another letter published in GRANNY...A man's reach should exceed his grasp...) (*Glad to make your dream come true. I really don't have any current fannish goals - LeB*)

Randy's illo of a Rotsler character donning a Canfield disguise should be voted into the Fannish Cartoon Hall of Fame and if there isn't such a thing someone should start one just for that cartoon! What a beautiful and brilliant idea!!

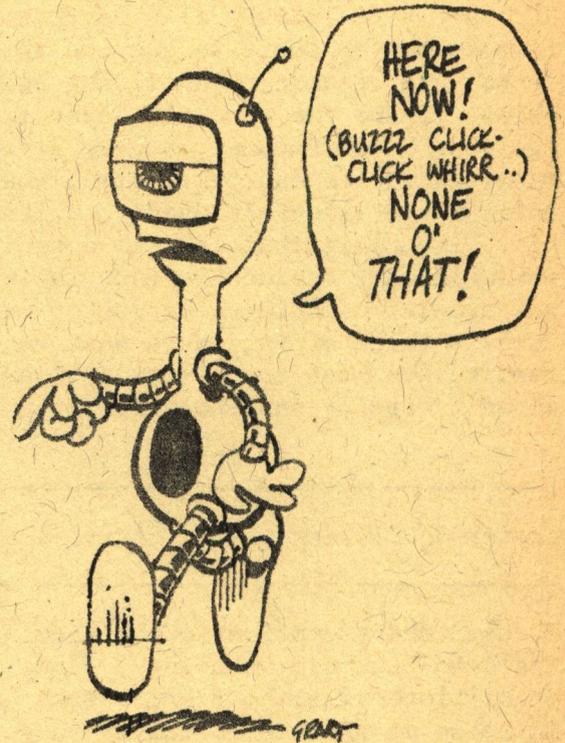
Mae writes one of the most completely fascinating articles of anyone in fandom. That word gets a lot of over-use, but it really applies to her writing. There is so much in everything she writes. Nostalgia, beauty, insight, humor, scholarship, truth, mysticism. She's truly a marvel. I seldom agree with all she says, perhaps due to an inherent pragmatism, but I always enjoy her writing, and I admire and envy the spirit that shines through her words and the truly beautiful way she views the world and the people in it. I count myself richer for having known Mae, and that

debt is increased each time I read a fanzine contribution from her. (*I love what Bill Bowers said: "If there was not a Mae Strelkov, it would be necessary to invent her." -LeB*)

John Curlovich has a really excellent critical piece here, both in terms of his content and style. I think he is a little off-base in thinking that fandom is completely uncritical in its acceptance of the "name" SF writers (as his own article proves, there are those with clear critical vision), but whether or not one agrees with that small point, one can't help but admire the deft way with which he peels away a little of the



veneer of past accomplishment that clings to some of our main practitioners. The more perceptive fans (of which I am not one) have long been aware of the limitations of the field and of those who toil -- often literally -- in it, but it's well worth having those cold hard facts presented to us regularly. Helps keep things in perspective. John does an excellent job, pricks a few balloons, points to a few feet of clay, and makes us think a little more clearly about the truth behind some of our myths. This is a hell of an accomplishment for just three very well-written pages. In defense of the anthology (which I haven't read), I wonder if possibly the writers themselves were aware of the shortcomings of their stories but produced them anyway in tribute to a man who started the whole thing in the first place? John may be correct in questioning the skill with which they wrote, but to try and evaluate the scope of their creative vision based on a contribution to a very specialized memorial volume may be carrying things a bit far.



Your interview with Elwood suffers by appearing after several other such epics that have graced the fan press in recent weeks. In addition, your questions tended to elicit more information and less opinion and hence aren't perhaps as interesting as some of the more penetrating interviews that have appeared. As a matter of interest, why did you avoid such topics as editorial bias, dilution of standards (which was briefly mentioned), and desirability of one, strongly-biased editor controlling such a large percentage of the markets, etc? (Roger Elwood requested that I interview him a long, long time ago, before any of the other interviews appeared and really pretty much before people began talking much about Elwood's policies or his influence on the field. When I sent the questions I really didn't know much about Elwood's policies, so I really didn't even know the right questions to ask. His answers were so brief that I sent an additional set of questions. As the months went on, Elwood neglected to answer the second set, so I was left with only the first set of questions and didn't get a chance to send a third set of questions. Oh well. -LeB)

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Md. 21740

The Stereoscopic View might be the finest formal article yet by Mae Strelkov. She has found the secret entrusted to only a few fans like Willis and Boggs of utilizing episodes not only for their own interest, but also for the light they throw on larger matters. Moreover, she managed to push a few of my memory buttons, even though I didn't grow up among missionaries in China. But some old relatives and friends of the family created an environment on visits when I was small quite similar to the circumstances described by Mae. So I can empathize with her sufferings and reactivate a few half-forgotten impressions. Oddly enough, my home contained one of those old-fashioned stereoscopic viewers and some cards.

John Curlovich wrote the best review I've seen yet of THE JOHN W. CAMPBELL MEMORIAL ANTHOLOGY. But I think fandom and prodom both need some revision of their habits. Why should an individual's death touch off an epidemic of tributes to him? Wouldn't it make better sense to provide this homage while he's alive, able to enjoy the egoboo and capable of providing assistance with this and that problem which may arise? There are a couple dozen important figures in prodom who are at or near the age when death becomes an ever stronger possibility, and none except Heinlein has received what's due him. Simultaneously I don't like the way a few people wait until a pro is safely dead to write a violent debunking or derogatory article about him. Any claim that this is done in such a manner so it won't cause him pain becomes insignificant beside the fact the the subject is unable to refute inaccuracies which only he could recognize or reveal reasons why he did things in such a way. Come to think of it, there must be quite a few youngsters in fandom today who don't realize how much the attitude toward Campbell changed after his death, because they weren't reading fanzines when it was hard to find downright praise for him in them.

Lester Boutillier, 2726 Castiglione St., New Orleans, La. 70119

I must take exception to the conclusions reached by John Curlovich in his review of the John Campbell anthology. True, most SF writers aren't good as literary practitioners, altho there's some question whether SF writers should be required to be so or whether SF can be judged, criticized, etc., on its own terms and not by the standards of literaryness applied to mainstream fiction. Once an SF writer gets a reputation as a good writer, readers tend to follow him everywhere and don't criticize him. But that doesn't mean that some of these as well as others are not good writers. There are many good writers in SF, and most of those who began writing prior to 1950 got their start as Campbell writers. Okay, the praise of Campbell in the memorial anthology was full of hyperbole, rooted no doubt in sentimentalism, nostalgia, and a possibly perverse kind of reverence. But this doesn't change the fact of Campbell's very real contribution to modern SF.

Just because the Campbell era writers who wrote new stories for the anthology, with few exceptions, fell on their faces, it does not mean that they didn't produce top notch SF stories and novels in their earlier years. As Curlovich points out, the vast majority of these writers were trying to write addendums to past series, 'remember when', or 'remember this' stories. So they were enormously handicapped and almost couldn't produce good stories. But that isn't the full explanation. The main reason for the failure of these stories is that most of the writers have long ago lost their touch. They had a lot in them in their early days, but they didn't have an endless supply of creativity. After a while they used it all up, burned themselves out as writers.

The memorial anthology shouldn't be taken as indicative of the 1940's and 1950's ASTOUNDING. Take any random half dozen ASTOUNDINGS from that era and compare them to any random half dozen 70's issues of current magazines, and the ASTOUNDINGS will come off much better. Whether you prefer 'new wave' stuff or traditional SF, you should be able to see that there can be and are good and bad stories in each, good and bad writers inn each. The current ANALOG doesn't fail simply because it prefers traditional SF to new wave material. It fails because, for one reason or another, most of the good traditional writers who are writing stories today and writing them well do not appear that often in ANALOG. They're at least as likely to appear in AMAZING and FANTASTIC as ANALOG, and more likely to appear in F&SF. In all, I still prefer an old master like Clarke, Asimov, or Sturgeon to most of the new wave authors around.

Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, Fla. 32925

There's something that bothers me about GRANFALLOON 19. It's a beautiful zine, all right, with perfect repro, excellent and fannish artwork and layout, etc. But as I read it, I had a sense of unease, of incompleteness; it seemed humorless and fretful. Even the usually jolly Mae tells a tale of terror. I had to laugh, tho, because when I was a kid, I used to be dragged off to Woodberry-like houses by my aunts; I recognized the types instantly.

"The Author" was a delight, both for the story and for the highly fannish Steffanillos. I got the idea that I was missing something tho; is it one of a series of connected stories? (*Not that I know of - LeB*) The Terry Austin portfolio was also well done.

John Curlovich's article puzzled me. I've not read the anthology, so I can't take issue with him on what he says; but the way he says it bothers me. He could have told us why he didn't like the anthology in half the space he took, and without rancor. Did I detect malice in the 'anti' tone of the review? Is John a victim of his own reaction? The unfriendly tone of the piece seemed out of place in GRANNY, and the carelessness in the writing made me wonder about the validity of the conclusions John drew. For example, he says "most science fiction writers are not good in any objective sense; they are merely deft." That's a good phrase, and it has a certain amount of truth in it, perhaps a great deal. The phrase is worth an essay itself; it's just waiting to be enlarged upon. But John changes the subject from writers to readers, and leaves the phrase standing in mid-air, so to speak.

Phil Payne, 28 Woodfield Dr., Charlbury, Oxford, OX7 3SE, England

Mae Strelkov's piece was very confusing, and I'm not sure I understood what she meant by the last part. "The Author" had some nice bits, but was generally corny. I liked John Curlovich's review. It was well thought out & put together, and managed to be a review of a book many people have on their 'perhaps' list. John makes a few disastrous slips, in particular when he implies that Asimov is telling us something new in crediting Campbell with 'Nightfall' and 'The Three Laws of Robotics' -- Ike's been saying that for years. That aside, John does make a number of good points. Campbell did not produce a marked upswing in literary SF, but he did help it mature. It cannot be denied that he played a large part in the development of SF as we know it, or that he put a large amount of effort into dragging it out of the gutter. But it is totally wrong to believe that he raised it to its zenith and that further progress is impossible. Campbell was also narrow-minded and fanatical. He was an idea man, a seed-sower, but it was up to other people to put flesh on those ideas. And like all humans, he ran out of ideas in the end and became hidebound. I think it a shame that the Memorial Anthology should contain new stories he never saw, it would have been more fitting to ask each author which of his stories he thought Campbell had most of a hand in, and collect those.

Don D'Amassa writes a better piece this time than last. I'm also in favor of articles giving exposure to little known authors. I bought and read "Half Past Human" when it was nominated for an award and was very impressed. "The Godwhale" sits on my shelf unread as yet, but I imagine it will be before long. Don's article was the first I remember seeing that mentioned T. J. Bass at all, but I suppose he cannot be totally unknown if he got an award nomination.

CALL OF THE KLUTZ (continued from page 5):

I'm now typing the last stencil in June 1976, about a year and a half after I typed the first stencil. The last Granny appeared in Dec. 1974, so you can see why I want to suspend publication, it's just too long between issues. On the other hand, I hate the thought of actually folding it, so I won't, I just won't say when the next issue will be coming out. If nothing else, I'm planning an issue for Jan. 1978, the 10th year anniversary of Granny which would contain reprints of the best of Gf, guest editorial by Granny's former co-editor, Suzanne Tompkins, etc. I'd like to put out another issue before then, but who knows -- I may break my right arm next time. Meanwhile, all long-term subscribers to Granfalloon will be getting Karass instead. This issue of Granny and future issues will go to all Karass subscribers, contributors, etc., and will count as 2 issues of Karass. I hope this will be satisfactory to everyone, if not, write and I'll refund any money left on your subscription.

Meanwhile, in case you are wondering why you received this:

- You subscribe to Karass or Granfalloon
- You contributed artwork, articles, letters, etc. Thank you!
- You are mentioned
- Sample
- I like you
- Trade for your zine
- You remind me of Burt Lancaster, and I looovvvee him
- You remind me of Burt's sidekick, Nick Cravat
- We've got to stop meeting like this -- Ron's is beginning to look under the sheets - of paper
- The way to a fan's heart is through his brain
- Without my fan friends I'd go stale

WATCH OUT! An X in this block means you've gotten the axe -- your sub to Karass (or Granny) has run out, or your trade or contrib credit has run out. If you want Karass you'll have to do something.

