

INTERMISSION #85

Small E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com for EAPA. In Twitter, follow my newstweets from Nordic sf/fantasy/horror/fandom on @SFJournalen, and my private account @ahrvid. BTW, Typos have their annual convention here and now! Early June 2019.

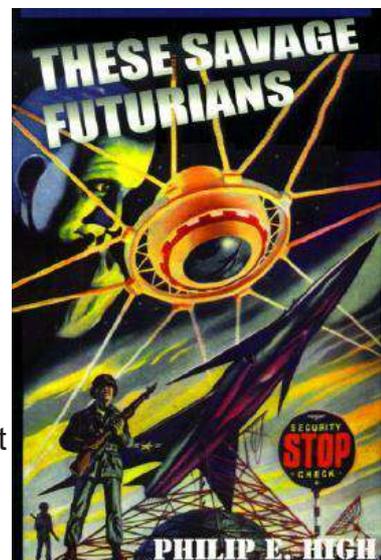
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Let's accelerate and take off with this! What's up? There's Viking club, a translation and adaptation of a piece in Swedish I did in 2016. Then a little on *paracosms*! I found an probably "unknown" sf story by a Nobel Prize winner. I'll say something about the first Swedish fanzine, and learn about how Doris Day sung about radioactivity and atomic bombs. It will all be rounded off with some comments from and to readers pictures from some May events.

First, did you notice something with the latest Nebulas? (<http://file770.com/2018-nebula-awards/> .) Out of five fiction awards (drama presentation and a general Grand Master stuff don't count) *not one* went to the "middle-age white men" who constitute a significant majority of sf writers. The big majority of sf writers instead just got a token award...for computer games! The Nebulas are going in the same Politically Correct and destructive direction as the Hugo nominations earlier. The PC people – who seem to be a bunch of absolute fanatics – brag about "being inclusive", by being *excluding* on a massive scale. Tilting science fiction over to political activism is a threat to its status and integrity. People simply won't be interested in a genre of exclusion, discrimination, producing political pamphlets and engaging in platitude demonstrations.

If we go back to the 1940's we did of course have the NYC group The Futurians (Wollheim, Pohl, Kornbluth & Co – even Asimov) who were quite left wing, some even members of the communist youth league (but Asimov was a Democrat). I think they had more style and they were definitely more fannish and talented. Most of them became the leading writers, editors and critics.

Read Damon Knight's *The Futurians* and on the other hand Sam Moskowitz' *The Immortal Storm* about those legendary days. Sam and they fought over the first Worldcon (Nycon '39) resulting in the shameful Exclusion Act, a deed which shall live in infamy!). BTW, I found this, a novel by Philip E High: *These Savage Futurians*:



https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1575007.These_Savage_Futurians

The book is described like this: *"Don't think new thoughts, don't improve anything, don't wander over the next hill, these were the commandments for the men and women of the experimental village - one of those careful nurtured settlements established after the collapse of world civilization. The rules were made by the benevolent Masters of the Island - and they had to be obeyed. To disobey was to be destroyed. But Robert Ventnor, villager with a dangerously high quotient of curiosity, was the exception. He fled - and evaded liquidation. But he fled right into the hands of THESE SAVAGE FUTURIANS and thereby supplied the key that could blast apart civilization's second chance and destroy the world once and for all."*

I asked around if anyone knew whether this novel had anything to do with the famous Futurians fan circle. The book itself doesn't mention anything in connection, but it was suggested that as it came from Ace Books where Donald Wollheim was editor at the time, it was Don – an old Futurian - who invented the title. With a wry smile.

There are so many strange books out there - one day I may tell you about the absurd crime novelist Harry Stephen Keeler - but only one *Intermission* worth a damn!

--Ahrvid Engholm

The Order of Valhalla

Are Vikings fantasy? Oh, they certainly existed and brought terror and trade to Europe for a quarter of a century. But in the way Vikings are depicted and used today, there are huge doses of fantasy. And to this comes that the Vikings themselves lived in a world of fantasy, through their Norse religion. There were gods crossing the sky causing thunder, dragons and giant snakes, giants who fought with the gods and much more.

A society dealing with Vikings - and doing it in a very imaginative way! - should at least be considered as some sort of fringe fandom, and it may be Sweden's first hint of some sort of fandom as The Vallhalla Order was founded a few months before the Atomic-Noah club from September 1945 (which I have written about earlier).

It's interesting how this Viking society in a lot of ways works like the Tolkien societies. In Sweden we had Europe's first Tolkien group, The Tolkien Society of Sweden, founded in Gothenburg in 1969 and shortly thereafter came Stockholm's Tolkien Society Forodrim. Both Tolkien and Viking societies let members take a Tolkien name, an "alias", you would have special Tolkien costumes, both have many parties which includes invented archaic ceremonies, you could climb in "grades", and you use special alphabets - and the Tolkien and Viking societies both call the world "Midgård" - usually translated to "Middle Earth".

Fandom as such deals with science fiction literature, in written form via fanzines (today almost entirely via electronic media), in social form (e.g. the cons), with its own soon century old history and traditions. But around this there is what we with fanpeak call fringe fandoms, peripheral fandoms, groups around nearby subjects. We have movie/TV fans (Star Trek, Star Wars etc), comics enthusiasts, role- & cosplayers, those bloody vampire suckers, the brain-dead zombie fans, fans of certain writers (Tolkien, Rowling, D Adams, Lovecraft, etc.), medieval people, space and rocket interested - and as a nearby subject we could also count in the Vikings. And The Order of Valhalla (OV from now) came already in 1945.

I just happened to stumble upon a heap, a couple of decimetres thick, of the OV clubzine, assorted issues from the 1950s and up to 2009 (and things from the 1940's are sometimes reprinted, so I have info from then too).

The first thing I wonder is whether OV is secret? There is no trace of them on the Web, and it is not listed here: <http://medeltiden.ifokus.se/articles/500c0d51d4e3a3937004295-wiki-and-meansharegroups-Sweden>. That's a list of the approximately 15 Viking societies that existed in Sweden in 2012. On Wikipedia there's another Order of Valhalla mentioned, a secret society way back in the 1700s (<https://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valhallaord>) with members among officers and nobility, founded in 1783 in Finland which at the time was a part of Sweden. It has obviously nothing to do with our society, which was founded on May 25 1945 by a group of nine men, at the home of Sture Andersson on Valhalla street in Stockholm. Starting 1954 women were welcome as members to, at least to the meetings, and were called "frillor" (loosely: concubines) or "sköldmör" (=shield maidens.)

The nine founders took the aliases of Norse gods (Odin, Thor, Tyr, etc.) and formed a council of the aesir ("asar" in Swedish), which became the board. The founders were: Emil Fristed (Oden), Nils Jonson (Brage), Folke Guve (Vidar), Sigfrid Bernemo (Balder), Sture Andersson (Tor), Emil Olbo (Vale), Lennart Håkansson (Forsete), Olov Alnerius (Had), Olof Nordahl (Tyr). (I use Swedish spellings of the Norse names, to avoid having to use wild guesses for English alternatives.) As the original founders left or died, others could be taken into the council. Outsiders were called "weaklings" and in order to become a real Viking (member of OV), you was subjected to a test in



connection with a "blot" (party), which consisted of a practical task and a quiz about the Viking Age. Originally, it was decided that OV would have a maximum of 50 members (or 45 as stated there elsewhere), something that later was extended. Some membership numbers I extracted:

- 1945: 17
- 1949: 45 (filled up! - but soon extended)
- 1961: 51
- 1965: 60
- 1999: 34 (incl "frillor" and descendants = children)
- 2002: 32

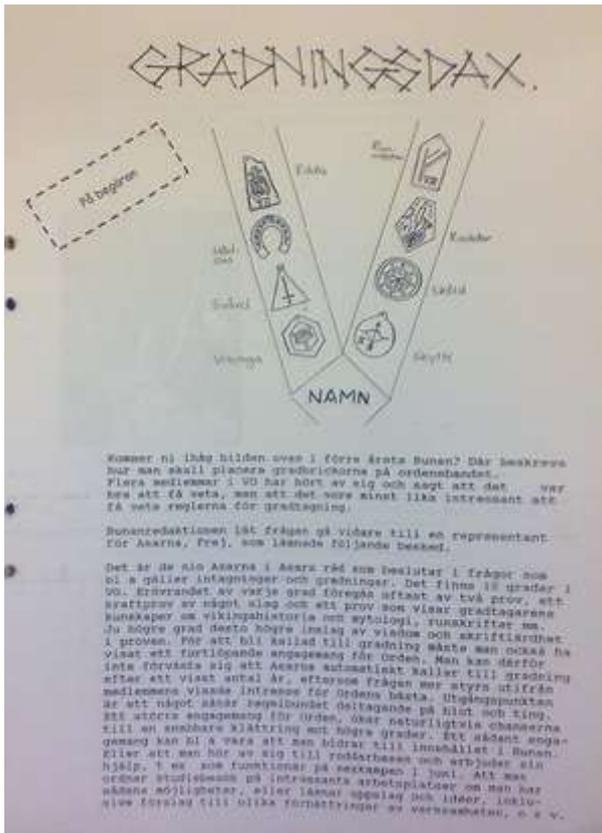


At the end of the 1940s, they began *From a "blot"*. A note says it was 19 May, 1954.

publishing the clubzine *Runan* (The Rune), with up to two issues/year - usually 1 issue/year but some years were without. Most seems to have come after each New Year, to call members to the annual big meeting each March in March. The issues had 8-10 pages initially but later after year 2000 up to 50 pages. Initially they were printed on mimeograph and/or dittograph. In the 1960s electrostencilling became more common (ordinary stencil were still used too), in the 1970s photocopying appeared, and from the 1990s laser printing, and later colour laser printing. Printing methods could be mixed in the same issue and the layout could change from page to page.

Contributors seem to have made their own originals, which were then only printed with the rest. The heap I have does not indicate the total issues published, but up to 2009, just over 50 numbers should have come out.

Normally, *Runan* worked as an annual report and started with a report of the year that went on in OV, and then there were summons to coming year's meetings. There was a list



A page from *Runan* describing the different grade markings on the Order band.

of members' even birthdays (30, 40, 50, etc.). There were longer reports from previous year's meetings, membership list with addresses and "aliases", short reports from the "rowing laws" (more soon) and last a little of everything they thought a Viking should read. It could be letters from members who lived far away (one lived in Africa, another in Gällivare, and they gladly wrote about what they did during the year), pages with funny stories, crosswords, poems and songs (a kind of Viking filk songs!), articles about Vikings, and even short stories. During the 90s a longer Viking-talen sequel began, for example.

The permanent meetings were:

- *Year Thing ("Årsting")*, March every year (place a tavern, cafe or rented room)
- *Spring blot*, May every year (tavern or rented room, in recent decades a tavern at Nybohov)
- *The Sextuple Challenge* (earlier a *Quintuple Challenge*: bow and arrow, throw in bucket, horseshoe throwing, croquet, ring throw and something called "the viking" - probably a quiz - and it could take place in Kaknäs or Bredäng in Stockholm)
- *Autumn excursion*, October every year (usually in the Stockholm archipelago, eg Oxnö, later Gålö; they would simply visit some member's summer cottage)
- *Autumn blots*, November each.

Other activities can be added to this, such as study visits (once they visited the Pripps brewery), a group trip to the mountains, a trip with an Åland ferry, etc. In 1995 and for a long time to come, monthly pub meetings began (theoretically perhaps they are still on...), First at Pelikan on Södermalm, then Bavaria also Södermalm, and then on Strömmen near Slussen.

In Runan the Year Thing and blots are mention as if it's basically compulsory to attend, unless you have a valid reason not to (sometimes it is said that a medical certificate is required!). And it seems that somewhere around 2/3 of the members actually usually appeared. One reason for high attendance is that not attending affects one's status in OV and one's chance of reaching higher "grades". As many orders, the Valhalla Order has membership grades. To my knowledge, they are:

In The Viking Grade (relatively simple entrance examination)

II Shooting grade (test in archery)

III Sword grade (the test is probably some kind of sword act)

IV Shield grade (probably about protecting yourself with a shield while others throw things at one)

V Horseshoe grade (probably horseshoe throwing)

VI Rowing grade (probably a test of rowing in a boat)

VII The Edda grade (probably to write and perform something)

VIII Rune Master grade (perhaps knowing and writing with runes)

IX Poet grade (probably writing and presenting a Viking poem)

X is not mentioned but is likely to having achieved Aesir status

Each grade included a knowledge test, likely to be more difficult the higher one goes. The Board monitors members' activities and gives a notice to a member to do the test for a new grade when they consider him ready. You cannot apply for a grade test yourself. The titles of the original Aesir Council were: chairman, secretary, club master, material managers, rituals masters, the spokesman



Runan celebrates the birthday of a member who has turned 90.



Another "blot" pic. I guess it's the Council of Aesirs, and that it's once again from 1954. and the alderman. Later clubzine editor would have been added.

The members are divided into rowing teams with 6-8 members each, in Swedish called "lag" which means "law" but etymologically, I believe, also "group". 4-6 rowing teams are mentioned in Runan 4-6, at different times in the history of the OV, each team has a boss who takes special responsibility for their rowers. Members of a rowing team are expected to have closer contact with each other and

form teams in competitions at OV meetings.

The council of the Aesir has, as mentioned, named of gods. Other members get aliases that "sound" Viking-like but also says something about the member's character. We have names like Armstrong, Bold, Cheerful, Long, Mouthwind, Coin Minter, Printer, Poet, Widetravel, etc. (I have here translated the names.)

Although one can speculate that OV is a secret society, it was actually mentioned in the newspapers in the beginning. After the foundation, Aftonbladet had a larger article with a picture on November 10, 1945, under the heading "Cosy meetings" (from the blot November 6 that year). May 25, 1950, they were in Aftonbladet again, in a shorter article about one column long.

In the pictures you can see that everyone has Viking helmets with horns and a special kind of distinctive, a long shirt adorned by a necklace and a band for the order. Symbols for the grades the wearer has passed are on the order band. It is mentioned that recently joined formed Vikings (= members) should wear a rope around the waist instead of a belt and for many years they talk about making a finger ring for the order. However, in the 1950s, the cost of a ring marking stamp was a hefty SEK 250 (ca €25) and that constituted a major obstacle - it was a lot of money then, half a month's salary. If there ever was a ring, I don't know, but they did have a club pin with a symbol for OV - a Viking helmet with the year 1945 inscribed. They also had their on stationary with the OV symbol on the letterhead.

For each grade a member rise to there's a fee (size roughly as an extra membership fee), which partly goes to pay for the metal tag for the degree on the order band. The basic membership fee is quite steep. In 1945 it was SEK 10/year, which corresponded to about 70 journeys with Stockholm's local transport, and it would today compare about SEK 800 for a period card. In the 1990s the membership fee was SEK 275/year and in 2009 it was SEK 400/year. In addition, they welcomed voluntary donations, even in the form of things to hand out as prizes for competitions.



This must be after the boring ceremonies. Some helmets are off, non-alco drinks are not welcome and they seem to have fun! Date 25 May, 1950.

The money is probably used for things such as postage, print costs and renting places for their meetings, but also (in any case during OV's early history) to subsidise members blot costs (food and drink). But as a socially respectful order OV also gives some money to charitable purposes. They donated SEK 500 or 1000 in recent decades to things like the Cancer Foundation, the Radio Help and the Doctors Without Borders. A member of Africa took a word which OV sometimes sent \$1000 to, that was a girl in Namibia who in 2004 turned 18 and the money supported her education.

A tragic story from 1952 is how OV gave SEK 50 (1/8 monthly salary then) to a member - or possibly a member of the family - who in an accident at Södra Station in Stockholm received "both legs cut off". Sounds awful! During the founding in 1945 an intentions were mentioned to give monetary support to those in need in Fredrikshof's Walking Sports section - some of the founders

probably had links there. Giving money to needy recipients seems to have stopped in recent years.

SEK 336 was in their cash box (almost one month's salary at that time) and in 1957 there were SEK 277. But in 1957 there was also a separate building fund with a total of SEK 1377. Apparently, the idea was to try to raise money for a clubhouse, something that was never realised. To increase the chances, OV (or OV's building fund?) Invested in premium bonds, which, in addition to interest, lend greater profits. The bond numbers were published in Runan, so members could keep track, and some smaller amounts of money came in.

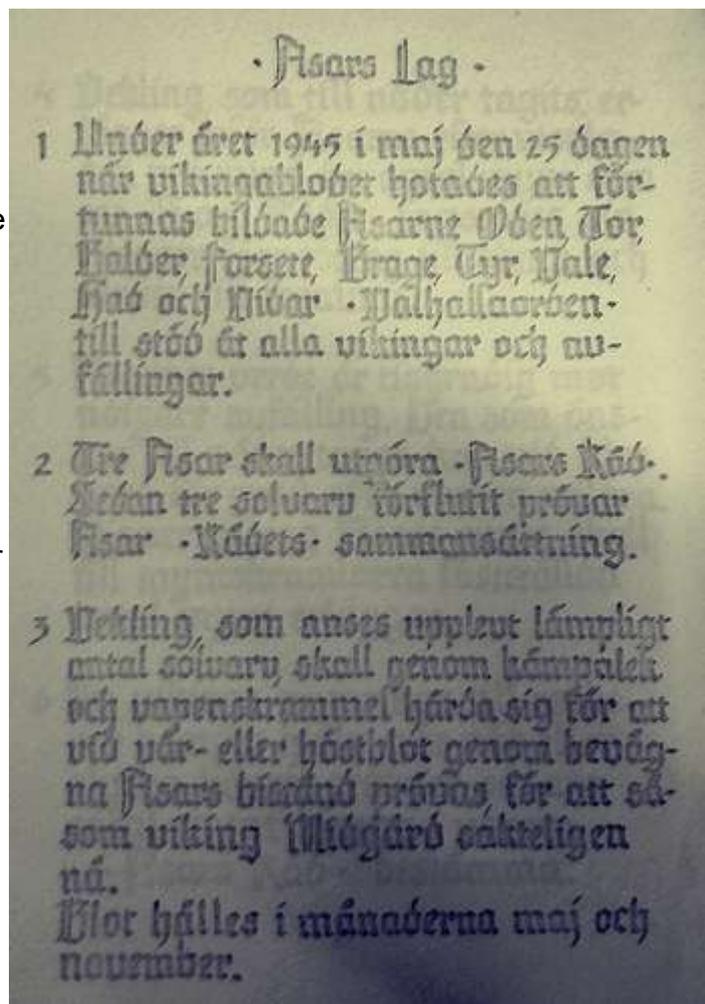
On the blots - but also on the other meetings - the spirits are high. They decline non-alcoholic drinks. The bosses of for each rowing team are encouraged in Runan to make sure that they have enough mead and that no one in the team is lacking. In 1950, when the booze rationing system still perverted the lives of citizens, OV requested the Dispensing Board an extra grant of 8 litres of spirits for its five-year anniversary. The request was rejected on the grounds that extra awards were only given to 25- and 50-year anniversaries... Anyway, they ate a multi-course dinner and had various entertainment. They have has membrship entrance and grades tests. They would play sketches and have quizzes. Some talented members with guitar sang Viking songs and there's a sing-along with the help of songbooks. A lottery is held. A poem is read, a speech is spoken, and prizes are awarded, such as "Viking of the Year" (to an extra active member), the prize of Balder's memory, the Heimdal prize (to a person who has been a member for more than 20 years), etc. Members will also get merit signs, table stands and cuff links.

A typical number from 1954 is that 35 (out of 45) members attended the spring blot. In 1957 the membership limit was raised above 50. In 1960, 44 of about 50 members were present at one blot. In the following decades membership numbers as well as mere visitors to blots appeared to drop somewhat.

I know a huge number of names from Swedish sf-fandom, an effect of trotting through hundreds of names on SFJ's subscriber lists (when it was still paper posted). But with one possible exception, no name i recognise appear in the various OV member lists I have. I know a lot of names from Forodrim too, but nothing I recognise from there appears in VO. (There's one possible exception, a guy with the initials TE, who had some contacts with fandom in the 1980's, worked with computers. In 2004 TE passed the admission test and took the Viking alias "Hackers".

When OV started in 1945 the members were 25-40 years of age. It was middle class and professionals. We had dentists, owners of small shops, a police officer, a welder, a banker, etc. The average age then increased, some old people died and few younger ones have joined. The impression I get from the Runan I have from 2009 is an average age of 65-70 years (and some that are even older!). In 2009, regular activity planning for 2010 was published and there were no signs that OV would end then. But with such an old average age and few young joiners, OV could very well have died in the nine years that have passed.

Except for the historic 18th Century group, And there's still nothing about the Order of Valhalla on Internet. Strange. If they really are secret, I have now exposed them...



The beginning og the Law of Aesirs, the Order's constitution. Written as blacktype to look old.

Appendix I:

The First Constitution from 1945: Law of the Aesirs

(I haven't any later ones in the Runan issues I have. It is written in a simulation of archaic language, which will be lost in my translation.)

1. During the year 1945 in May the 25th day when the Viking blood was threatened to be thinned, the Aesir Oden, Tor, Balder, Forset, Brage, Tyr, Vale, Had and Vidar formed the Order of Valhalla in support of Vikings and apostates.

2. Three Aesirs shall constitute the Council of Aesir. After three solar laps, the Aesirs shall test the Council's composition.

3. Weaklings who has lived through a suitable number of solar laps, shall through the fighting games and the weapon's jangling harden himself in order to be tested during the spring and autumn blots under Aesirs' assistance be tested to as Viking slowly reach Middle Earth. Blots are in the months May and November.

4. Weakling, who has been taken to grace, pays in front of the Aesirs, after the examination, the number of coins that the Great Council has decided, his former humiliation to shame and gaining in words.

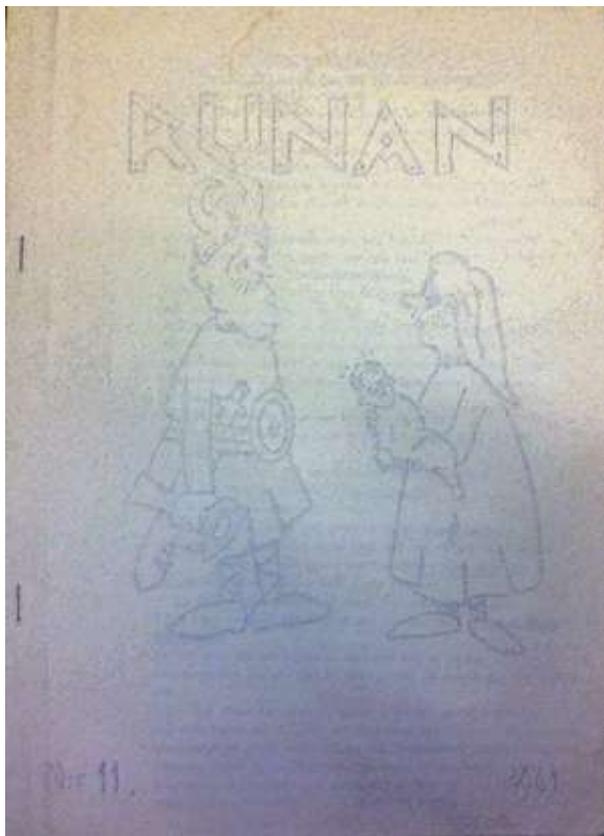
5. The anger of the Aesirs is tenfold against previous apostasy. Anyone who wishes to grace being taken, can may at blots grade by grade the try to soften the wrath. If the Viking Aesirs' favour wins, the decided number of coins shall to the coin jangler be presented.

6. From the Viking coins, the Righteous may seek help, when in distress or pressed by accident, such number of coins the Council of Aesirs decides.

7. Aesirs nine take under their protection four times ten and a one. After three solar laps are completed, it shall be tried if its protection shall be increased to bring in more weaklings to Middle Earth.

8. Viking who in Middle Earth threads, so in combat acts and so in speeches and runes expresses himself against another Viking, that laws of honour breaks, must be so treated that he from Aesir and Vikings is excluded. Never can the wretched one again find grace before the eyes of Aesirs.

9. Should a time of trouble and splitting prevail and Aesir be dissipated, Ragnarök is near. Then all the assets of the Order shall to fighters be handed over.



The dittographed #11 (1961) of Runan, a print method that often makes the print weak. They used other print methods too: mimeo, photocopying, later laserprinters.

Appendix II:

It is interesting that the Valhalla Order functioned in many details exactly as the Tolkien societies of Sweden! Consider:

Both use aliases and dressed up in costumes, for them in the Vallhalla Order as Vikings and using aliases from Norse mythology.

Both use an ancient sounding "constitution", for OV the Law of Aesir.

Both are have guilds for different interests, in OV "rowing teams".

Both call the outside world Midgård (=Middle Earth).

Both have membership tests, for them in the form of both quiz and physical tests.

En vacker dag gick sirligade för
 man på Valhallavägen i och för
 ständande av Valhallastoden. I går
 Arval var det dags för femårsblot
 och då blev åter de gamla asagur-
 derna Oden, Tor, Balder och silt-
 vad de heter in på artna.
 På klassisk mark — drottning
 Kristinas gamla lustslott i Malar-
 höjden — firades detta jubileums-
 blot. Allfadern och som sig bör äl-
 dermannen Oden tronade i högsetet
 med smågudar och vikingar i all-
 sköns blandning runt omkring.
 Oden — evigt känd som Fredriks-
 hovs idrottsförenings gångektionens
 ordförande "Mille" Fristedt — väl-
 sade gäster och bröder välkomna
 när alla bänkat sig kring gästa-
 nadsbordet. Tor — banktjänsteman
 Sture Andersson — såg fara runt
 bland varmrätter och mjödnhorn och
 från Hofors hade överkonstapel
 Sigfrid Bernemo i asaguden Balders
 sväpnad dragit ned till Valhall för
 att kuligt diskutera förestående sa-
 ker och ting med gamla kamraterna
 ordensgänget.



Edagsvåga gäster vid blotet. Fr. v. Gösta Granden ("Blå dären"), Oden
 och Sigfrid Bernemo (Balder), Hofors. Gösta Nilsson ("Gästgiveren"),
 Sahlholm, och Olof Nordahl (Tor), Gällivara.

Same pic as above, now to a small article in the Aftonbladet paper (that's how date is known). From L to R: Gösta Granden, Sigfrid Hernemo, Gösta Nilsson, Olof Nordahl. Others mention in the article are Mille Fristedt and Sture Andersson.

Both have different "degrees" you can reach through tests and work.

Both have regular banquets at fixed dates of special importance, with food, drinks, entertainment, talks, awards handed out and so on. Their banquet was called "blot" (a Viking term).

Both publish a clubzine.

Both are governed by a sort of high council, for OV called the Council of Aesir,

Beside banquets, both have outdoor activities in the woods, for OV camps and excursions.

This article is based on a Swedish one from 2016 published on e.g. the factful and fun SKRIVA list. That was when I first discovered this society. I now pushed it through Google Translate, but correcting the result - some Viking terminology is tricky! - I have edited and added to it quite a lot.

Some Paracosm

Do you know what a paracosm is? Read now to find out! The renown Swedish artist Peter Dahl died May 17th, aged 85, famous for e.g. his illustrations to the work of the 18th century poet and troubadour Carl Michael Bellman.

However, his favourite pastime since he was a little boy, was to play in his own world, which he called Caribanien. He dragged friends into his invented world and they would establish countries, go to war, have diplomatic relations, draw maps, write newspapers, etc - even build models of cities in Carbanien. Above Dahl beside such a model. Dahl's work with this world has been displayed on art shows and covered in TV programs. I like his models of trams! (Streetcars to some.) Dahl played in his paracosm, "a detailed imaginary world" (<https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paracosm>), until the very last. I met Dahl on the opening of an art show years ago. He seemed like a nice and very creative man,





Some time back I happened to see a documentary about the Bronte siblings, and they were into this made-up-worlds thing too, two centuries ago. Very much involved! Charlotte Bronte and her brother Branwell invented a world they called Angria:

<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/bront-juvenilia-the-history-of-angria>

Sisters Emily and Anne were into this game too, but later invented their own world, Gondal:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gondal_\(fictional_country\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gondal_(fictional_country))

<https://cavalorn.livejournal.com/256668.html>

There's more to find via Uncle Google, or <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/charlotte-bronte-200th-anniversary-how-the-brontes-created-a-completely-secret-game-of-thrones-style-a6994786.html>

An interesting detail, for us who have at times dwelt in the world of fanzines, is how they made small, handwritten magazines, like Blackwoods Young Men's Magazine. You can read it (well, the text is minuscule) here:

<https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/bront-juvenilia-blackwoods-young-mens-magazine>

It seems it hasn't been uncommon for creative people to invent words and play games in them. A well-known example is how the great pacifist HG Wells invented figure wargaming, something he called Little Wars. He even wrote a little book about how to play it:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Little_Wars

<https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-22777029>

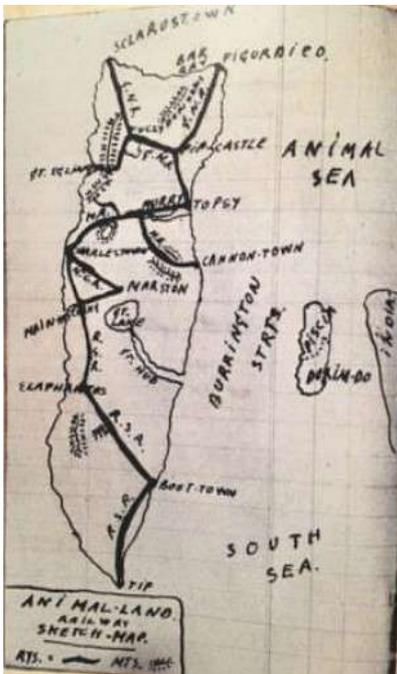
<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/3691>

In illustrations, you notice how Wells enjoyed his Little Wars (but not the Big Wars) well into adult age. Incidentally, Wells was also an early amateur journalist, publishing The Science School Journal, which had an first version of his The Time Machine, called The Chronic Argonauts:

http://www.colemanzone.com/Time_Machine_Project/chronic.htm



One of the Bronte's tiny magazines.



sure, but it's our world.

But we shouldn't forget the Mightiest World Builder of them all, old John Ronald Reuel, buddy of CS, who not only drew the maps, wrote the stories, sung the poems of Middle-Earth, but also chronicled thousands of years of its history and invented several languages so the middle-earthers had something to speak with.

For my part, I think that *older* invented worlds are much more interesting. In the 1970s or thereabout we began getting ready-made imaginary worlds, in the form of so called role-playing games. Instead of using your own imagination, think for yourself and be creative, you could just open your wallet and buy a box wrapped in plastic.

World building becomes totally uninteresting when that happens. When you just take over the imagination of others, the concept of creating imaginary worlds has deteriorated. Folks today don't create. They copy.

(I haven't done much world building. But if needed I'll think really hard about creating a background for sf stories, like researching for my Murder on the Moon collection. But it was more trying to create a possible *reality* - not a fantasy - of a future moon colony trying to make all details credible.)

Animal-Land made up by CS Lewis.

Unknown Nobel winner's sf story

In a second-hand bookshop I found the Swedish translation of a book by the the Danish Nobel Prize laureate Johannes V Jensen (1873-1950), titled Myter ("Myths"). It looked interesting, so I picked it up.

Four or Five of the 20 tales in the collection seems to have fantastic elements, I notice after a glance-through, of which the story "Post Futurum" is straight science fiction (and I'll return to that).

I had never heard of Johannes Jensen. Well, as a Nobel laureate I have surely seen his name (clarification: it's he who has the Nobel, not me; grammar is a strange thing...) but I haven't heard of him in connection to fantastic literature. I thought that Harry Martinson was the (perhaps) first to get a Nobel mainly for a work of science fiction, as Anlara is seen as the cornerstone of his literary career. But Jensen got his Nobel already in 1944 - probably because of the Academy's sympathy for the then still occupied Denmark - and his fantastic The Long Voyage epic is regarded as his literary cornerstone.

I stretched my fingers over the keyboard and began tapping for more info. Googling "johannes v jensen" "science fiction" - with quotes not to get all the Jensens in the world - gave an impressive 48 500 hits (YMMV). The top ones tended to be Danish, eg pointing to the clubzine of Danish SF Cirklen, Proxima No 5, 1975, dedicated entirely to Jensen. That included an article by Poul Anderson, "written in Danish" the zine informs. (Sidenote: I met Poul A on the 1979 Worldcon, forced my fanzine upon him, and afterwards got a LoC from him - in Danish. He knew that lingo.) Another Danish link leads to an article about "Johannes V Jensen's Gothic Connections" we hear of his other major work, The Fall of the King (1900-01), about a medieval Danish king. I haven't read it but the article claims that a doctor in it towards the end "remakes a human into a sort of super computer". So there's another fantastic element.

Poul Anderson (Danish-American, as you well know) has written about Jensen in English too, in his All One Universe (1997), a collection of essays and short stories:

"/Jensen/ invented a whole new literary form for himself, the 'myth' - a sketch which in a few pages, whether a straightforward description, fiction, or fantasy conveys an intensely personal impression of something, someplace, or somebody," he writes. "Jensen also wrote The Long Journey, a six volume series of mythological-historical novels stretching from before the Ice Age until the voyage of the

Beagle. The series incorporates fantasy. Some of the characters live for centuries and one chapter of /Anderson's/ The Boat Of A Million Years is a homage to Jensen. Since Jensen also has characters who may be the originals of Odin and Thor and shows the Cimbrian invasion of northern Italy." SF Encyclopedia also covers Jensen. It doesn't mention my find, Myths, but the different parts of The Long Journey, and describes the author this way:

"Danish poet, author and essayist, author of detective novels as by Ivar Lykke; awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1944. He is best known for Den Lange Rejse (1908-1922 6 vols; trans Arthur G Chater, vols 1-2 as The Long Journey: Fire and Ice 1922 UK, vols 3-4 as The Cimbrians: The Long Journey II 1923 UK, and vols 5-6 as Christopher Columbus: The Long Journey III 1924), an epic myth spanning humanity's Evolution in Darwinian terms from its origins in a temperate Scandinavian Eden before the Ice Age, where a Prometheus figure introduces Technology, through to the threshold of modern times with the explorations of Christopher Columbus; Inventions frequently punctuate the tale, thrusting humanity upwards."

He also wrote detective novels, under pseudonym. Not bad. The Long Journey is available in English translation here: <https://archive.org/details/TheLongJourneyByJohannesV.Jensen>

It was originally published in Danish as six separate books over a period of eleven years. The English translation omits the part titled "The Ship" (which deals with the Vikings!).

I also find the academic paper "The Reception of Danish Science Fiction in the United States", by Kristine J Andersen (2006), published by Purdue University:

https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1081&context=lib_research

A quote: "*Johannes V. Jensen...has possibly never been identified as a sf writer outside of The Anatomy of Wonder /ed Neil Barron/ This reference work classifies The Long Journey: Fire and Ice and The Cimbrians, as 'a classic prehistoric fantasy' and compares it with the best works of J. Rosny ainé and William Golding's The Inheritors. Jensen's use of Darwin's evolutionary theory to imagine the long development of the human race certainly seems to qualify it for inclusion in the genre.*"

There's certainly more to find about Johannes Jensen, but I've already found four votes for his definite inclusion in the fantastic genre, from Proxima, Poul Anderson, SF Encyclopedia and finally Perdue University's Kristine Jensen.

But his Myths (Myter) has hardly been mentioned. My volume is a selection, according to the introduction by the Swedish Academy's Anders Österling, chosen in co-operation with Jensen. We learn that Jensen's Myths is really nine volumes, published between 1907 and 1944, and that Jensen saw his myths as "the free treatment of a theme in a short form...a piece of pure and precise description of reality or why not a speculative excursion into fantasy". I believe that's at least half a vote more.

Now we have established that many people have heard of Jensen (it was just stupid me who hadn't) and we have four and a half votes for that he strayed into the wild field of the fantastic. So we just need to pin him down in the area of good old scientificity.

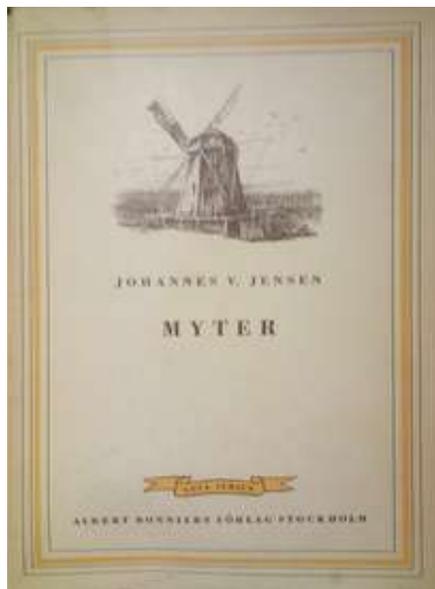
Which we can do with his short story "Post Futurum" (from Myter, "Myths"), a story I haven't seen mentioned anywhere, anytime, by anyone before.

We meet scientist Dr Pickles who have collected a bunch of reporters to demonstrate his new discovery:

"Every second we experience is by the force of the constant progression of time already a past," he explains. "We so to say constantly thread into the future."



Johannes Jensen who won the lit Nobel 1944.



Swedish edition of J Jensen's Myths, with sf story "Post Futrum"

He then explains he intends to demonstrate his new invention. He raises his arms - and disappears! Big confusion starts, but then Dr Pickles appears again.

"Gentlemen! I have been standing here the whole time. You have walked right through me, I have heard everything you have said ... Look around, at the floor, to the sides, upwards to the ceiling to see where I have been, in the three dimensions available to you - don't you understand that I was in the fourth?!"

Then comes some scientific mumbojumbo on time, dimensions etc, on almost Star Trek level and:

"Our laboratory have succeeded in making itself a master of transition from one dimension to another, without fatal outcome, as you have here seen."

Dr Pickles, after some words of the nature of man, offers the journalists to experience this transition themselves. He takes them into a room "unlit, but still not in darkness, you saw no walls, you were in a room-less place..."

'You bounce, gentlemen, Mr Pickles /sic/ said. Yes, you are already in the hallway to eternity. And here you see the door into the holiest.

In the background a thinly shining rectangle appeared, like when you from a dark room can see light all the way around a closed door, but it wasn't light, rather some unearthly fluidum...

"What you see is a corner of eternity, Mr Pickles said. When you are inside this door, you are in it yourself, within matter, beyond space and time, temporarily transcendentalised. You will there be in the fourth dimension, in today, yes mark my words, in the central now, all times, past time and the future in one and at the same time."

In that strange place the journalists meet Julius Ceasar, who is alive and well in this timeless place. After an hour the reporters come out and all rush to their newspapers to tell the sensational news, of Dr Pickle's invention (and perhaps also having an interview with Ceasar!), except one paper which was late to the demonstration, thus didn't take part and thus claims all was a lie (this paper is also for some reason is named The Lie). BTW, the newspapers in this strange world (of, probably, the future) has an alternative way to spread news. They are roared from giant trumpets, called "femophones" on the roof of the newsbuildings, said to be audible 25 kilometres away...

If we'd look through the further eight volumes of Jensen's "Myths" we'll find more stories like this. I contacted the Danish sf expert Niels Dalgaard who said that "Post Futurum" was originally published in the avantgarde magazine Exlex, #26, 1926. In total Jensen wrote five stories about mr. Helge Pierrepont Pickles of which four were clearly sf and the fifth, "Lord Pierreponts Memoirer" is not fantastic "a kind of literary satire", Niels says. The first story "Mr. Pickles", came in the newspaper Politiken January 1st, 1910, a monologue by the partly cyborgised Pickles. The second, "Billedet" ("The Picture") came in one of Jensen's Myths collections, a near-future satire on the art World and possibly futurism. Post Futurum was the third. "Det talende hoved. Mr. Pickles endeligt" ("The talking Head. The End of mr Pickles") was in Verden og Vi # 1, J1925. On his deathbed, mr Pickles considers that the cancer he' suffers is the seed of a new life for. (Story info from Niels D – thanx!)

These stories sound exciting! And "Post Futurum" and other "Pickles" stories could very well defend their place in any of the American pulp magazines of the time!

All Your Zines Forgotten

The first Swedish fanzine wasn't published in 1954 (titled Cosmos News, BTW) - it was the 8th. Vår Rymd ("Our Space") came before this, published with 7 issues in 1952, from the Stockholm astronomy school club Andromeda. I know JHH may not agree, possibly because it wasn't he but I

who found it. It was it in the Royal Library in Stockholm, probably donated by an earlier Andromeda member in the early 1990s.

The 7 issues are (badly) mimeographed on one side of the pages (which runs to 48 in total) and have lots of sf material, beside material on astronomy - which most would agree also connects to our space-inspired genre!

No 1 (dated March 1, 1952) of 3 pages has the short story "Mars attacks Venus" on just over 1.5 pages, making the majority of the issue's text sf. No 2 has the short story "Victor Torry's Adventures" and starts the serial "Captain Future as Saboteur on Mars", which continues in No 3 - where the serial "The Uranium War starts". And so it continues. The issues, beside talk about stars and the planets, have brief reviews of sf novels, crosswords, speculative articles about future space bases and illustrations with spaceships, astronauts, space monsters and things like that.

Below the cover of No 6 (from my Twitter sf news channel). You see an astronaut fighting with a space monster in front of rocket:

<https://twitter.com/SFJournalen/status/1075380789536268288>

The publishers are named, but often prefer to use a "signature", which was actually standard in Swedish mainstream press at the time. (Locals will be familiar with signatures like Bang, Kar de Mumma, Jolo, Red Top, etc.) Among co-workers were Åke Schwartz (signature: Svartas), Åke Henriksson (Ossvald), Lennart Henriksson (Jones), Sven Miller-Uri (Mille), Johan Asplund (Joga), Karl Bjelke (Charlie) - to this comes signature "Enrique" (no real name mentioned).

Note how they begin with a Captain Future story (an early fanfiction) in No 1, the character who was popular in Jules Verne Magasinet which had folded half a decade before. This indicates the publishers had read JVM, this and that they reviewed sf books tells us they were sf fans, and the first in Sweden to perform the fan activity of publishing a fanzine in a group.

It's not strange at all that they came together in an astronomy club. It's just like US fen who came together in something called the International Scientific Association, and astronomy is also a science. It doesn't matter they don't use words like "fan" or "fandom", it would be unknown words for them.

There had been rumours about the Andromeda club and their fanzine for a long time. I myself first heard about it from (if I remember) Sam J Lundwall in the late 1970's. But nobody knew more or *had seen* their fanzine! I'd speculate that there must have been contacts between Andromeda and the early Stockholm club Futura. That's the only way such rumours could turn up. And later all in Andromeda (and many in Futura too) gaffiated and all who knew about the fanzine dropped under the horizon. And you couldn't find the fanzine until it turned up decades later in a Royal Library donation.

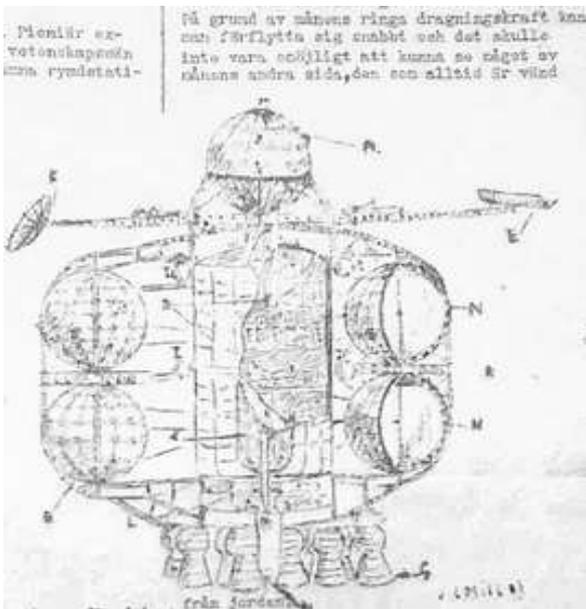
(I have made a PDF of Vår Rymd's complete run, a bit blurry but readable - being snapped by my mobile's camera -, but's in Swedish of course. 50 pages, incl a 2-page intro by me.)

Finally: the other day the greenish lobby group IPBES yelled that "1 million species will be extinct within decades", a silly and gross exaggeration of course - it's fanzines that are REALLY threatened! Only a single one remains in print today in Sverifandom, SF-Forum, and only 2-3 come as PDFs (by me and Club Cosmos, unsure how to count Wolf, since long in Italy). People prefer the often rather dull "social media" environment and as postage has skyrocketed - further rises are announced! - it practically guarantees no amateur fan can afford to mail stuff on paper.

What can we do to save the fanzine tradition?



Astronaut fights a monster on the cover of "Our Space" #6 says "Fantastic tales" in upper right and "Read 'They Died on Mars' in lower right."



Detail from article about a future Moon expedition, 17 years before Apollo. Rather advanced futuristic stuff!

It's a very commendable activity to scan old fanzines and make them electronically available! Though it's a bit like taxidermy on animals soon to vanish, you must continue with that Holy Task. (But add PDFs too, plz!) There's so much of cultural value in the fanzine tradition. In fact the Royal Library have heaved a stack of money on PhD Jerry Määttä to do a study of Swedish fanzines, 1960-90. Fanzines have wit, speculations, humour, silliness, serious talk, feuds, literary analyses, a unique DNA not found in other media. If we lose them, all is lost because, while the 'Net has all fake news:
All Knowledge Is Contained In Fanzines!

Doris Day

A Day of grief and sorrow! Doris Day has left us, 97 years old. I think I've aired my fondness for Ms Day, the girl next door - with lots of spunk! Watch "Calamity Jane" and you see what I'm talking about. She could sing, dance, act and never lost her vigor and energy, despite having several bumps in her life (like a husband who embezzled all her money).

There's a certain science fiction atmosphere in her song "Tic Tic Tic", geiger counters and radioactivity (from "My Dream is Yours", 1949): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6iOF2UU-Ww>

*There's been a new invention
It isn't any larger than an adding machine
It's only fair to mention
Though it's a new invention
It's one that you have heard about but few have ever seen
It doesn't do division and it doesn't multiply
It doesn't want to be a bird, it doesn't try to fly
It came about because they made a big atomic bomb
The new invention's clicking and because of all its ticking
I know where the idea came from
I tic, tic, tic, why do I tic, tic?
What amazing trick, makes me tic, tic, tic*



Poster to Doris' sf film *The Glass Bottom Boat* and a frame from it.

And definitely sf is the feature film "The Glass Bottom Boat", which takes place in a space research environment. In an opening scene we for instance see an anti-gravity device. The whole film is here (with Greek subtitles...): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caBRGOoJrWM>

If anyone know of more skiffy connections to Doris, tell us. (I have a tiny one. Harry Martinson called Earth Doris in his space poetry cycle Aniara.)

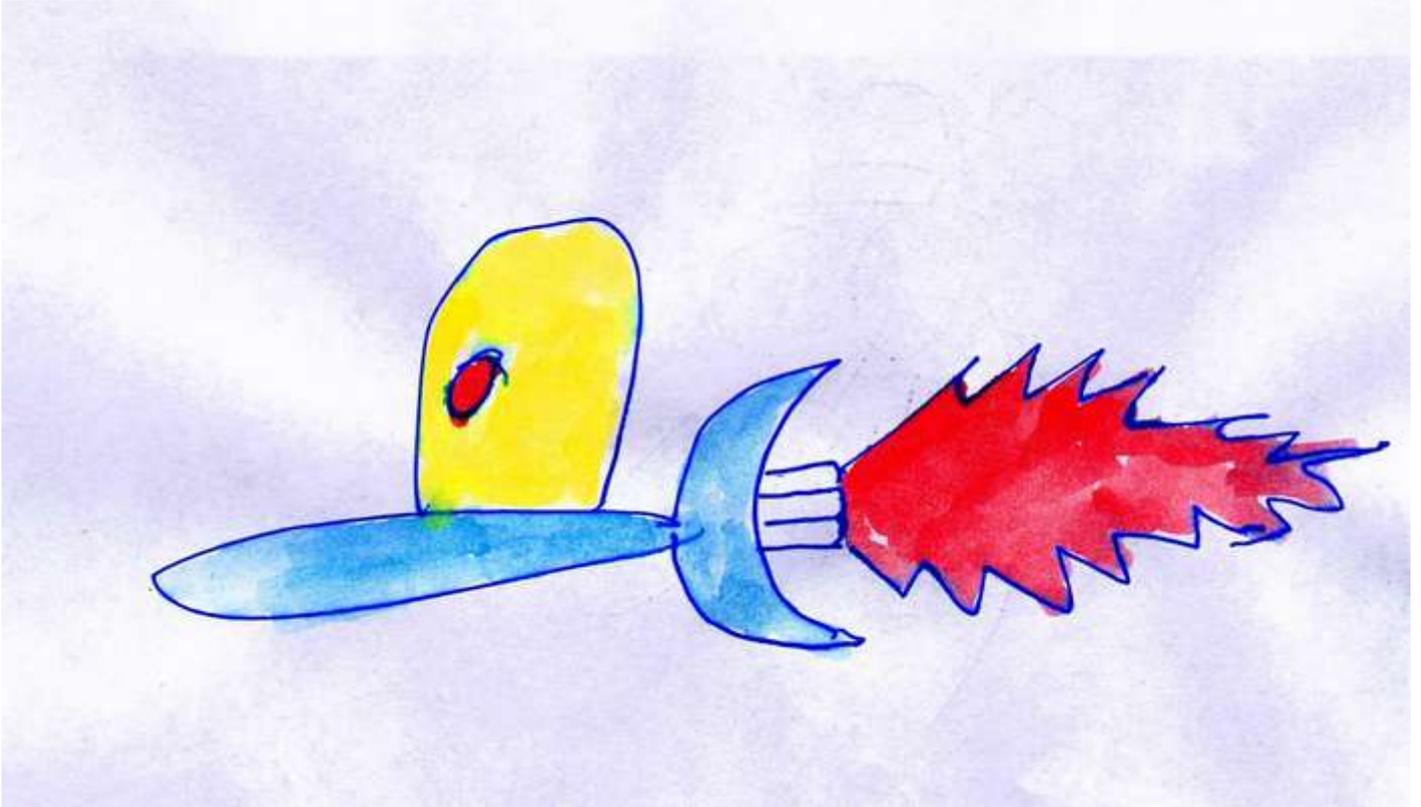
They don't make ladies like Doris anymore.

LoCol

I sent last ish to s few (not many) outside EAPA, just to promote the APA. Just a couple of reactions:

Lars "Lon" Olsson: Thanks, Ahrvid, for Intermission 84 with the beautiful words about Grodon!

Ed: He also sent a new drawing. I like rockets. And here it is:



Denny Lien: Thanks, Ahrvid.

The "coming next issue" bit on The Valhalla Order got me to thinking about definitions of "some kind of fantasy fandom." It seems that a number of the points you note for fringe-credit could also apply to, say, the Freemasons:

"lived in a mythological world of magic and strange gods" – well, mythos involving world of quasi-magical aspects of involvement of the Judeo-Christian God, anyway (as I understand it)

"used aliases and dressed up in costumes" -- yes

"use an ancient-sounding constitution" -- I don't know if I'd call Masonic origin story a 'constitution,' but one might do argue so

"have membership tests" -- oh yes

"different degrees you can reach through tests and work" -- yes

"have regular banquets at fixed dates" -- I don't know, but I believe lodges have regular meetings at fixed dates

"publish a clubzine" -- there seem to be a number of Masonic magazines out there; I don't know how many are "clubzines" of a specific lodge

"governed by a sort of high council" -- I think this applies to almost any club of any sort, at least by loose definition

Don't know about "guilds for different interests" or "outdoor activities in the woods," but I wouldn't be surprised.

Besides the Masons, I'd think the definitions above could be stretched to things like The Golden Dawn, The Rosicrucians, or many college Greek letter societies (who may have a joking 'magic/strange gods' link via a mascot or the like, and who may dress in costumes at least for certain college parades and such). Maybe even Morris Dance clubs. . . ?

Ed: You have a point! However, The Order of Valhalla and similar groups (like in fandom) has

artistic, cultural or entertainment aims, while other organisations exists to promote some ideology. You can read much more about the Order of Valhalla in this.

Eddie Stern: Hi Ahrvid,

Sorry for the delay in responding but apparently I'm having trouble with outbound fanac@fanac.org mail. I'm putting Intermission 84 online and you can see it at <http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/Intermission/Intermission84.pdf>

What year did Intermission start?

Thanks...Eddie Stern, Fanac Webmaster

Ed: I have no ambition to see Intermission on Fanac.org, but your welcome to put it there – it is already there in the EAPA mags (but psw-protected). The zine started in 2012.

Peter D Balestrieri: Dear Ahrvid,

Thanks so much for writing. I enjoyed Intermission and will pass it on to zinesters. I will also think about who might be interested in EAPA and let you know.

Ed: Thanks! Yes, everyone should tell folks about EAPA! And I hope all the work with the Rusy Havelin collection goes well!

WAHF Niels Dalgaard who gave me some info about Johannes Jensen, which I have used in that article (above). I'll send this issue to a selected few outside EAPA again, hoping to promote the APA – which, as said, needs new members.

mAiLiNg CoMmEnTs

Robin Usher: I'm sorry, but I can't give you any comments. You've made your contribution even *more* difficult to read than before - something I thought was impossible! Multiple, narrow columns in light yellow on a light blue background with an eye-disturbing pattern... You have to drastically change the layout if you want anyone to read what you write.

William McCabe: Oh, there should be a good chance that that documentary series about Stieg Larsson will come to an English language TV station (and if so, maybe to Youtube too). I just read that Stieg's Millennium series has just pushed over 100 Million copies in sales. There's an interest. "Penny dreadfuls" was a concept from the mid 19th Century and on, because they couldn't become cheap (costing just a penny) until several inventions made them possible: 1) Fast rotary presses for printing, 2) production of cheap paper from wood pulp, 3) railroads, which made wide distribution possible. About "gothic"...it comes from Sweden, perhaps. The Goths was one of those tribes that roamed Europe and invaded Rome in the early middle ages. But it is claimed that before this, they had migrated from southern Sweden, which to this day is known as "Götaland" (= Goth-land), which includes the provinces "Västergötland" (West Goth-land) and "Östergötland" (East Goth-land) There's also the Swedish Baltic island of Gotland. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goths> The Goths leaving today's Götaland should have happened a few hundred years before the Vikings, which may lead us to believe that the Vikings were themselves descendants of the Goths. The term "Gothic" as in literature or architecture was – Google tells us – adopted by the French as meaning "not classic" or "Germanic", ie not Roman or Greek. This then came to first indicate a certain architecture, often applied to gothic cathedrals, and later to scary literature. I guess – it's just a guess – that the combination of a mysterious past and intimidating architecture with dark stone corridors and damp crypts filled with spider web made people think of such stories as "gothic". I like the idea of some sort of EAPA zine with contribs from EAPAns. (More below.)

Garth Spencer: Ghu is a fake Ghod. *Roscoe Rules!* (von Witting should know that.) You had the idea of an EAPA fanthology (McCabe thought along similar lines). That would be a good idea. You can use any of my stuff (but I want to have a last look first on my stuff, fixing typos, polishing, there's always small things) and I think I have quite a lot of stuff that can be used. But how is it with material

from others? Much is very introvertal. You should dig many years back, perhaps, and find material from members who have since left. Getting more activity into the fanzine world would be a wonderful thing. Otherwise everything will just degenerate into kids dressing up in silly costumes from TV shows on media conventions, which in my view isn't a real fandom at all! (it's media fandom, and is totally different, lacking the lineage from real, true fandom)

Some Events Joe R Struly Been to Lately

April 30 is Walpurgis Night in Sweden, and in the evening people gather to watch big bonfires and listen to student choirs with spring songs. Here from the Kinght's Island, with the Stockholm city hall (famous for the Nobel banquets) in line with the flames.

(Below). May first (a k a April 31st = Mercer's Day in fandom) with demonstrations, incl this gang of nincompoop's promoting the murderous ideology with communism waving the hammer and sickle – which makes me sick.



(Below again.) May 7 I went to a local IT firm that showed the annual Google I/O event on a big screen direct from a stadium in Silicon Valley. That's the show where Ungle G present their latest news – among them a new phone, a new smart hub with a camera, new functions for Google Assistant. AI is moving forward fast, resulting in the new function of live subtitles on their phones, where speech is interpreted by learning networks and it seems to work fairly well (I think it's the same function you can get on Youtube, with Google owns).



**The Wizard was a failure. He couldn't cast a spell
He was dyslectic.**



From a Gallery art show opening, May 10 with a group of Berlin enthusiasts. There's a sort of myth (or not?) that the marble of Hitler's Reich chancellery was reused in Allied victory monuments, Holocaust memorials etc. The gallery showed pictures of this. I talked a bit about World War 2 with these people, a subject I have read lots of books on. Some of "Hitler's marble" is even rumoured to have been taken to the US and used in the Chrysler skyscraper.

May 11, another art show. It was the Sista Styvern ("Last Penny") artist society, which owns one – of the few left- of these cute 1800s cottages that once dominated the Södermalm district and their exhibition was partly outdoors (since the house was too small). Those housed were old workers homes, where a whole family could live in one room, heated by just an iron stove, no WC (just an outhouse) and freezing cold in the winters.



From a Europe Day in the EU representation in Stockholm. There was a panel debate about the future of the European Union, followed by some food (and wine) from different EU countries. The woman in glasses is Larissa from Ukraine (who I tend to meet sometimes on events like this) but living in Sweden since many years. (She's been seen in Intermission before, I believe.)

***IF YOU CAN'T STOP READING IT YOU
NEED SOME SCIENCE FICTION!***



Went to a speech May 21 by Bart Moeyaert, Belgium, the winner of the 2019 Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (ALMA) for children's literature. Here he shakes hand with some in the ALMA jury. His speech was about his childhood and using your imagination. Lindgren was one of his favourite authors when he was a kid and he longed to spend time with the kids from Bullerbyn and Saltkråkan.



From the EU elections, different dates in different member countries, (but the same week), but in Sweden Sunday May 26 (you could also vote up to two weeks in advance). Polling stations were set up here and there manned by volunteers (I got the impression most were personnel employed by the local council). Here's from a polling station set up in a local library. Results in Sweden were that the xenophobic Sweden Democrats gained a little (but much less than feared), the Social Democrats, Conservatives and Liberals lost a little, the Centre Party, Christian Democrats, the Greens and left Party gained a little .

May 25 I happened to pass the Royal Gardens, where there was a big event called India Namaste (which is Hindi for "Hello!"). It was packed with people and a lot of stands with tourist info and Indian food. I've noticed nowadays are quite a lot of tourists from India coming to Stockholm and there are since long a lot of Indian restaurants in town.



And now, till next time:

So long!

(Hm, what exact length did you have in mind?)