

WIMPY

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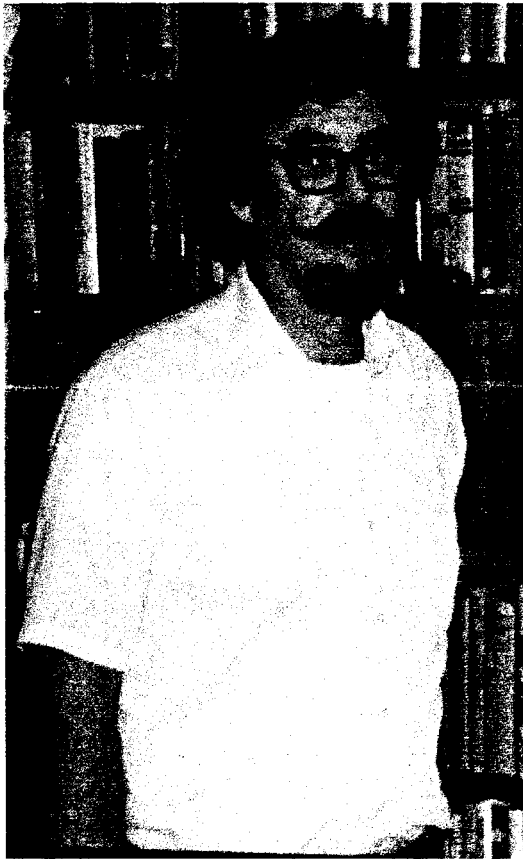
MSFA

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For Best Fan Artist



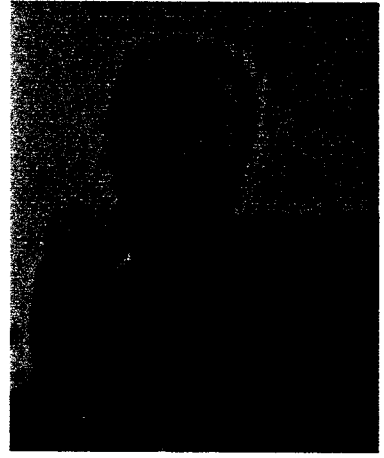
above - Dal Coger officiating at Cullen and Dale Johnson wedding; *at left* - Dal, A.Casini, Sylvia Cox, GEB, Bonnie James; back row - Richard Moore, etc. July 4th Party '94



Above - Dal Coger in front of part of his collection in the mid '70's



right - Dal Coger with Lou Moore in in 1976 Worldcon costume Contest as Poul Anderson's Nicholas Van Rijjn



*Above Dal Coger on left 1995, P.LCM 1976, PLCM 1971
Left - Jeff Crook & his '03 Darrell, Right Tim Gatewood talking about Coger Award with Michelle Ransom in crown*

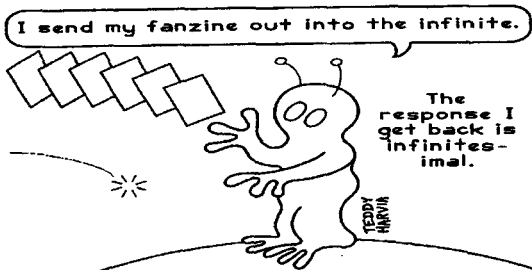


Far right PLCM 1971



Above Mike Kingsley & FANTASTIC that had Darrell Award story '03; Left Memphis State Science Fiction Assoc - unk, Lillian Weatherall, Barry Brown, Deb Claypool 1980 (PLCM is P.L. Caruthers-Montgomery)





MEMPHEN 281

March 2004

an unofficial publication of the Memphis Science Fiction Association. All MSFA mail should go to MSFA at PO Box 820514, Memphis, TN 38182-0514. Editor is Greg Bridges - 141 Stonehaven Circle, Jackson, TN 38305. Current editorship may vary but please send your mail submissions to the PO Box altho my home

address above would be fine, too. I may be reached telephonically at (901)664- 6730. Modemic submissions are encouraged as pure text or jpeg (I use Wordperfect9)and I retrieve those via 3bridges@charter.net . I would LOVE submissions and will be contacting those who have been so kind as to send us something in the past. All MSFA mail should go to PO Box 8205314, Memphis, TN 381820514. Our good Treas. is TIM GATEWOOD . The current dues are \$12/yr. This gets you 12 Memphen and the good will of those in the club. It also makes us infinitesimally happier to see you but not much (I should append that means that we so glad to see you already we can't be much happier). All are welcome at the meetings. It does help us pay our bills which are not inconsiderable as printing Memphen Does anyone out there still use Mimeo, or have a scanner to sell? How many people do you know can say their reproductive device is in storage? **PLEASE NOTE ADDRESS CHANGE!**

Artwork - **TOM FOSTER**, copyright 2003. Teddy Harvia, 2002

The cover is Dal Coger as Poul Anderson's *NICHOLAS VAN RIJN at the 1976 Worldcon*
MSFA Officers are as below - altho our usual elections are in Dec.

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Chairbeing - Greg Bridges (Memphis) | Meetings for the rest of the year |
| Prog. Director - Carlin Stuart | at the Central Library at 3030 Poplar |
| Treas. - Tim Gatewood | SECOND MONDAYS |
| Secretary - Renee Stuart | - 7pm |
| MEMPHEN archives - memphen.org (thanks to Tim Gatewood's efforts!) | |
| Darrell Awards - darrellawards.org (ditto for Tim!) | |

Memphis SF Association Meetings

SECOND MONDAY May 10thn - Central Library - 3030 Poplar 7pm to 8:30p The topic will be "**The Economy of the Future**" (what will be the production drivers and how and with how will it be transacted). Indicators from real world today, and possible Sci-Fi indicators such as Star Trek's 'Credits' or the demise of paper transactions, etc. Is the developed world headed towards more corporate control, more government control or are we headed towards some sort of religious control of our economies such as the Taliban or Iran?

WITHAL MEMFEN

Back to the Main Library

As most of you that receive Memphen are aware, I'm sure you notice that this is the first ish in a year. I've had people from Guy Lillian to many local people ask "Where's Memphen?" Well here it is. Not sure where it will go from here. I tried to make it a monthly for many years, rarely quite achieved that without doing it

as a one-sheet now and again but I will try from now on to do it as more robust quarterly at the very least.

I was in the midst of putting together this numbered ish of Memphen when Dal Coger died. I'd had plans of putting together a MS riverboat ride etc. Dal and Greta Coger were two that always enjoyed such forays. My first memory of Dal was his imposing figure looming in the back of the library meeting room at MSFA's first Library meeting. After talking to him and finding out he'd been an Army Sgt. Major when he retired I realized he was the prototypical Army Sgt. Major but with a literary bent,

certainly one of those his appearance belied his interests!

I'll have to admit that one of the reasons it's taken me so long to get this issue out is that it's a memorial to him and, now, others, having waited so long. I'm more than a bit embarrassed to only now getting this in print and in the mail. I've started bit of Memphen - mentally and electronically - more times than I can count.

I've done this newsletter for longer than more than a few of the readers will have been alive I suspect, at least off and on - with others lending a hand, some doing whole issues for years but having it finally devolve back on me. I think the lack of feedback sometimes wore them down.

The hardest issues are when friends die and I have to do an issue for them. I won't enumerate those issues but I'll have to admit that Dal was a great friend and the prospect of putting it out always a bit more sad than I could take each time I took it up. Plus having waited so long some may feel its superfluous. A tribute is never that or I hope that my meager efforts are not that if so its my fault and not the fault of my contributors.

As one loses friends and those close to you over time, I think the friends you do have take on more significance in ones life. At least that's true for me.

I've always valued most highly those friends of mine that I could have an intellectual discourse with, esp. if they were more informed, more insightful, etc. than me. Dal was certainly that and most of all he was able to tolerate my presence, even seeking me out for conversation when we were at meetings, etc.

Greta mentioned to me after Dal's passing that she felt he was like a father figure to me. I suppose there was a bit of that for me but for several years when he was a bachelor for a while before he met Greta, we used to go to conventions together, sometimes book hunted together, etc. I think that for me he was a melding of great friend, and father/brother figure that I had a great deal in common in. Our mutual love of books, history and current events. I took almost all of the courses he taught at Univ. of Memphis when I was getting my BA in History. He was always a fair instructor and interesting lecturer. Many students complained about his reading requirements, altho I always thought the required readings were very appropriate but then I love history!

All I can say now is that I know I will miss his friendship and presence and at this remove, he does come to mind when I make a great bookfind and realize he won't be there to share it with later or other times

during some interesting current event I know he would be informed on, being able to discuss it with him.

So, I'll have to say here in Memphen
Goodbye Dal.

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P.L. Caruthers

She had not lived in Memphis for over 20 years but she certainly was OF Memphis and had a good bit of impact on the Memphis Fan community. I know a couple of you may even remember her!

Sid Jones

You could probably count on one hand the number of MSFA meetings Sid attended (if any) but he was always there at Memphis Cons early on doing the video rooms at early MSCs etc. He was nice guy and I have to say that I hope that his wife Kay is doing well.

Also, too a long time active fan and author - **Harris Lentz III** - had a brush with the other side with 2 stints with open heart surgery (the last included literal stents!).

Additionally, I think this may be the biggest Memphen ever. I want to thank those that contributed and have been patient with me. I hope that it will reflect well on Dal and if it does its due to their contributions.

Tom Foster has given a great cover, as always. I do want everyone that votes on the Hugos or FAAN Awards to read the next line and keep it in mind next year when they vote, OK?

NOMINATE TOM FOSTER FOR FAN HUGO!

I admit I'm prejudiced since Tom is one of my oldest friends but I also think he has deserved at least a nomination for Fan Hugo award for many years. I've made an effort to get Tom on the Hugo Ballot and as I understand it, he came close. Unfortunately it seems that Memphen, too, was getting a few votes for Fanzine. I don't believe it would deserve such what with competition with Guy Lillian's CHALLENGER and Richard and Nikki Lynch's MIMOSA, etc. If you like this issue with Tom's superb cover of Dal as Nicholas van Rijn and all the other contributors in this issue, I won't complain too much about nominations as long as such nominations don't preclude the inclusion of the above fanzines, or FOSFA, etc. There are too many other consistently much better fanzines than Memphen, OK? Do think of **TOM FOSTER** when you nominate, tho!

A bit of news about Tom, too. They've just finished a major studio film in Memphis called FORTY

SHADES OF BLUE, starring Rip Torn. Tom was asked to do a number of paintings to be used on the set as the work of one of the characters in the film. There was some question as to whether any of it would show up on screen until the Artistic Director saw his art whereupon she plastered the art all over the walls of a number of the scenes. So watch the film for Tom's art! I esp. liked the portrait he did of Rip Torn. {{Geb}}

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DEEPSOUTHCON 42

Next issue will cover a bit more on Midsouthcon 22/ Deepsouthcon 42. Fifteen years later Deepsouthcon comes to Memphis again and we have one of the largest Fantastic Arts convention yet in Memphis. The first Memphis FantasyCon (1980?) had about the same number but it was a nightmare in a hotel meant to hold about 1/3 the number of people. I mostly remember how packed the stairwells were at that convention since the elevators were completely overwhelmed! This was the first MSC I didn't take any PHOTOS! Dern!

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Poppy Z. Brite Signing LIQUOR

At Davis Kidd Books in Memphis
at 7pm
13 May 2004

Liquor is PZB's new novel. PZB has written some SF, mostly horror, fantasy etc. tho. She's starting to get some real recognition in mainstream and this book is something a of culinary mystery.

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Southern Festival of Books

"The 16th annual Festival will take place October 8-10, 2004 at Cook Convention Center and the downtown Civic Plaza in Memphis.

The Southern Festival of Books is a free, three-day celebration of the written word featuring more than 200 authors and welcoming 20-25,000 people each year."

This will likely be Memphis only chance at this as the only reason that its here is that they are renovating the area its usually held in Downtown Nashville. They mostly ignore genre writers but often have some that might be of interest to those interested in the Fantastic Arts. I think we ought to support this both MSFA and MSC. Archon and Constellation are not opposite it, btw. The volunteer form is at

<http://www.tn-humanities.org/volform.pdf>

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The worst thing about doing Memphen is telling of the loss of dear friends. I fear the main reason for this long lapse was the loss of Dr. Dalvan Cogger last October 2, 2002. Since then we've heard of others from the local community who have passed along from this world - Sid Jones, P.L. Caruthers, to name a couple. All of you knew Dal; very few will remember Sid or PL since neither of them were active in local fandom since the early 80s, but they both will be missed by me, one way or another.

DAL COGER

Memorials

Dal was one of my oldest friends. I've started this so many times (mentally and at the keyboard), never been happy with what I wrote, so I will go with what emerges this time with some editing.

I first met Dal in 1971 not long after MSFA got started as the Mid-South Fantasy Association. The club had been meeting in people's homes for sometime; the membership had dwindled a bit with several regulars going off in the draft or to college (Randall Pass, for example, to the draft and Tom Foster to Washington University). Those of us still active fans - Jim Harris (who's still around and still active in SF circles online), myself and a few others - had the idea of meeting at a more neutral place, The Main Public Library on Peabody (which for a long time was almost across the street from where PL Caruthers lived, too, which just about guaranteed her attendance).

Jim and I arranged the room at the library, then ran off some flyers, etc. to put out in the libraries in Memphis and used bookstores, etc. Not sure what we did right, but we had standing room only in that room - somewhere over 40 people there, I'd say. I suspect we did not say what everyone wanted to hear, but we did talk about Science Fiction and SF fandom, that we were a primarily readers group altho discussion ranged over everything; so to be truthful we ended up with a list of people much smaller than the number in attendance signing the sheet to get Memphen's equivalent at the time. One name on the list was Dal and his second wife. The thing I remember most from that meeting is Dal being one of the Standing-Room-Only's, with his van dyke beard, then afterwards talking to him about fandom, that he had been part of Slan Shack. I think he was surprised we knew about that. He mentioned that he was in ALL OUR YESTERDAYS, but that the GI in the photo was not him.

I went home and looked at my copy of the book and admitted it didn't look like him.

After that Dal attended most meetings, invited us to his house often, and was always one of the first to volunteer or pitch in when help was needed. He would talk about his various friends in fandom, those he met in the various Michigan fan groups - Doc. EE Smith, Walt Liebsher, Frank Robinson, etc. I didn't realize that he had not been active in fandom since the mid 40's. Dal just dropped in on Memphis Fandom and made it better for his presence and unstinting support. He just fit in and we accepted him altho he was 25-30 years older than most of us. Why I never asked him for an article on his Michigan Fan experiences I will never forgive myself. At least Richard and Nikki Lynch got him to write something for them in Mimosa about Slanshack. Dal also was active in at least one Apa and was always kind enough to give me a copy which I always read but perhaps never told Dal my pleasure at reading them. I may approach Greta about doing some excerpts from them if possible.

A bit about Dal as I remember it. Dal was adopted but later got to know and come close to his birth mother (he met his birthdad at age 65). He grew up in Michigan. I have heard Dal talk of working on farms, haying as it was done in the 30's by groups of farmers gathering before sunrise to gather hay using pitchforks to make haystacks, throwing the hay into the baler run by the stationary steam engine, loading the hay onto horse drawn wagons, stacking it in barns, having huge midmorning breakfasts prepared by the farmwives, then going back to do more hay. Later on Dal was working in a war factory when he was drafted into the Army. He ended up in the Artillery, contracted Malaria while training, but then went onto Europe in '44. He mentioned that during his training he visited LASFA's meetings in LA, for example.

Dal decided to be career military (as a Sergeant), retired as such after 20 years in the early 60's. He spent most of that time - 13 years overall - in France and Germany. I remember when he saw my Gestetner and electostencil machine with which I produced Memphen, he mentioned that during the Korean armistice talks in Europe he was working on, that they had 100's of the electrostencil machines and Mimeos just like that lined up in a hall where the handouts were printed. Dal was a real bibliophile and when he was transferred back Stateside at the end of his final tour in Europe his books took up his whole household allotment; he had to pay for the rest of his household goods himself! As the household shipping allotment was some tons of stuff, he had quite a good

collection even then and he only added to it over the years, especially his Africana collection. His huge house was quite a wonderland for those that love books and houses decorated by bookshelves loaded with great books.

While in the Army in Germany, Dal got his BA in History through LaSalle extension, started his MA in History from Heidelberg extension courses which he completed in South Carolina where he retired from the Service and continued as a teaching assistant as he went on to get his PHD in History at U. of South Carolina. His emphasis was African History which for the mid '60's was perfect due to the increasing academic interest in Black Studies. Dal got a tenure track position at Memphis State University (now U of M) in fall of 1965. Dal's first wife Dorothy died about that time (1970), and he had remarried by the time he became active in MSFA altho that marriage was dissolved in the mid-'70's. In late 70's Dal met Greta Avery at an academic conference; they later married. Greta finished her Ph.D. dissertation on Wole Soyinka, international Nobel Prize winning African writer in English for the University of Colorado at Boulder after she moved to Memphis. Greta added her Amazon Blonde beauty to many, many meetings and since then has always been the perfect hostess of our gatherings at their house along with Dal. She had studied science fiction and fantasy in Scotland. We welcomed Greta and she's become a part of the local SF fan group, still helping with Midsouthcon and MSFA as much as possible.

With Dr. John Beifuss of the English Dept. and Dr. Micky Garland of the Physics Dept., Dal group-taught the first course on SF literature at Memphis State as part of the Comparative Literature Dept. sometime in the mid 70's. It was some years before the English Dept. had such a course, in spite of Dr. Beifuss's efforts. Of course Dr. Coger's main course work was African history; he retired as professor emeritus in 1996 -- not too long before he died in 2002 -- altho to work that long at U of M he had to join an age discrimination law suit, which went all the way to the US Supreme Court which chose not to hear the case at that time. Then U of M continued to ask Dal to teach even tho he was way past the age they had wanted him to retire!

Dal was a veteran SF con goer, and so was known at many Southern Cons; he often went to Worldcons and rarely missed a Midwestcon in OH. Dal was often Fan Guest at various cons over the years. So Dal was well known outside Memphis. For awhile in the mid 70's Dal and I went to cons together in his old Kharma Ghia - Kubla's and Rivercon's, etc. My finances at the time were pretty sparse, so it was nice to be able to split expenses on them, altho as I finished my BA in late 1977 I wasn't able to.

Dal and Greta from very early on hosted preCon parties for Memphis Cons at which many of the guests also attended. I have many fond memories from those parties, hectic tho they always were with doing last minute things for the con - collating Program Books, stuffing registration packets, etc.- the ostensible reason for the party! The Coger's two level house was always stuffed with Authors, Artists and fans for those gatherings. I always remember Davette Shands walking into one of those pre-con parties and turning every male's head there (This was long before she was Mrs. David Cherry and the sister-in-law of C.J. Cherryh).

For many years, Dal was the SF book reviewer (over 300) for the Memphis Commercial Appeal, at least until a regime change there which was much less friendly to genre literature. I always enjoyed reading his reviews as they appeared at the CA and have regretted the lack of sympathetic genre literature coverage there since that time. Altho Dr. Beifuss's son, John, Jr., is sympathetic, he covers cinema so not having Dal's reviews has been a real loss to genre readers in the area.

Dal was often MSC's spokesperson. He was blindsided at our first bid at DSC in the early 80's. The whole upper hierarchy - Jackie Watkins, Dale and Sheyl Staley, Mike and Pat Taviss - stayed in Memphis the day before the DSC where we were to Bid at Huntsville for the DSC when Sheryl had her baby prematurely. Jackie was the chairperson of the Bid but was also head of the NICU where Sheryl's baby went. So poor Dal ended up being just about alone with Richard Moore answering questions about the bid hotel and its vicinity, etc. which were thrown at them. The others probably would have known but had not had a chance to coach them. We almost lost to the first Wigwam Village bid as it was! Curiously we've never had a convention at that hotel (what was for a long time, the Omni Hotel) altho a Memphis Fantasy Con was held there in the late 80's.

Well, to say the least I've always considered Dal a close friend. As a Unitarian Fellow, he performed both my marriages (and, Memphis SF author, Dan Henderson's too) since as a Humanist Counselor, he could perform marriages. With Dr. Richardson he presided at Claude Saxon's Memorial services. There are too many of these memories to mention to be truthful.

One of the things I've come to realize in my life is how much I get attached to other people. Having been around Dal for so many years and having

so many things in common to talk about, it was always an experience I looked forward to with relish to be invited to his house. I knew we would be able to spend a few minutes comparing notes on the books we'd read, the great book finds to relate and display, etc. I enjoyed watching Dal show off his collection and seeing his pleasure at sharing it with others. He built his own annex in the back to display what was too crowded in his house (Dr. Richardson built a similar annex in the back of his house on N. Stonewall for his overflow, calling it his Baroom Manor which I sometimes called Dal's annex, too).

So as time goes along, I will miss Dal each time a particularly good book find comes along which I can't share with him and will miss his company when I have a beer at a con party when I might have been able to share it with his presence as I have in the past. I will miss his accounts of his experiences and the things he'd read and was suggesting I read. I will miss being able to do the same with him in return. He was a patient listener and always a pertinent conversationalist. I will cherish the memories of all the classes I took from him as I got my History degree as well as the multitude of fannish experiences. I will most of all miss the loss of one of my dearest friends.

Dal came close to being gone after the Austin, TX NASFic when he had his slowdown and near heart attack and double bypass surgery in 1985, so I guess I should be thankful for that. I just wish that this last illness had turned out as well. The only consolation is that we continue to have Greta Coger as our friend.

Greg Bridges

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I want to thank TIM GATEWOOD for contacting Dal's friends in the Memphis Unitarian community for remembrances of Dal which follow. The Memphis SF Fan Community knew all of these good people from our yearly contact with them at Dal's 4th of July Picnics so I felt it was quite appropriate due to our mutual friendships with Dal I might add that any typos, etc. are my own and not my contributors, altho their opinions are their own.

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DAL COGER

"PRINCE OF POLITICAL INCORRECTNESS"

Dal Coger was one of those guy's that looked like exactly what he was, a retired professional soldier, University professor, and Unitarian. Dal had a rugged jaw line like a

cartoon soldier or boxer, a military haircut side walled on the sides with a hint of a part on the one side, a broad chest sculpted by years of soldierly exercise and an assertive personality.

Dal didn't do things by halves. He didn't shave his truth to fit the audience, or hold back what he knew to keep the conversation conventional. Opinionated would be a gross understatement to describe Dal's stand on almost any issue.

I remember a talk he gave once at the Unitarian Fellowship. It was a talk about African politics, a subject which he had mastered and earned a doctorate in, and he wasn't reticent citing his expertise assertively on the subject. It wasn't so much the opinion Dal held regarding African politics as it was the timing of the talk. You see when Dal gave his talk, it was a time when any subject matter dealing with Afro-American politics, culture, motivation, or innate goodness was not questioned by proper Unitarians or polite society.

Not Dal, he lit into African politics with vengeance. For Dal scholarly study trumped sensitivity everytime. He cited specific leaders, nations, and crimes committed by African Americans in Africa. The audience listened politely and began to squirm. What Dal was saying didn't square with conventional Unitarian wisdom nor history as taught to college undergraduates. Dal's talk continued unabated and without compromise to the audiences obvious discomfort.

You see Dal was about teaching his truth as he understood it. No compromise, no shading, no political correctness. His directness, clarity, and willingness to take questions WAS Dal Coger. He was a man's man, a soldier's man, and an intellect's man. Dal's premature death left a small hole in the truth and for that I miss him.

Lackey Rowe

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Dal Coger

I met Dal at one of the first conventions that I attended in Memphis, sometime in the early 80's. Since both of us were ex-GIs, we found a lot in common. Dal was highly educated and very intelligent, and could discuss almost any subject with a great deal of pertinent and objective information.

I never saw him out of sorts or angry about anything. He and I both were book reviewers, and I helped him get connected with an Internet site that was begging for people to review books.

He had a good sense of humor and if you didn't watch closely he could get you caught, in an instant. I was specially admiring of the way he conducted himself with the guests and panel members at the conventions. He had a way of putting them at ease and letting them know that they were really welcome there. He was a true gentleman of the "Old South", educated, intelligent, urbane and humble all at the same time.

-- Jack Jeffers

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I Remember Dal

Dal always reminded me of my father.

The biggest reason was the black plastic framed glasses. My Dad has some of those but my mother won't let him wear them in "company". For "company" he has to wear these wire rimmed glasses, but if you talk to him in the garden or when he's otherwise puttering around the house, he's got those military issue black plastic framed glasses on. (He's retired Army.)

Dal wore those black plastic framed glasses. I know he was also retired military. The glasses, the erect bearing, the jumpsuits reminiscent of a uniform: yep, Dal was retired military, just like my Dad

Something about being in the military must teach you how to enjoy a party more than many people. It's like a lot of people just don't get having a good time. But Dal seemed always to be enjoying himself, whatever the situation, but especially at the Con. Anytime I'd run into him at the Con, he had this great big grin on his face.

I remember when Dal built his library wing, on the other side of the pool. He conducted personal tours for each person who wanted to see his library. Dal loved books even more than most fans, and we definitely have a lot of book lovers in our midst. But Dal's interests were wider ranging than most of us, and Claude Saxon is the only other person I remember who could talk about more different books than Dal.

Dal loved to have a house full of folks, and he managed to get university, church, and fan folks rubbing elbows every

year on the 4th of July. Dal seemed most in his element at these times, when the world stopped by for a visit and he had lots of folks to just talk to.

I miss Dal. Wish I could sit down with him tonight and talk about a book over a good beer. (We'd discuss the beer first, of course. Priorities!)

By Barbara Gatewood

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DALVAN M. COGER

by Darrell C. Richardson

Dalvan M. Coger, professor emeritus of the University of Memphis, died on October 2, 2002.

He was a World War II Army veteran and a graduate of the University of Maryland and the University of South Carolina. For thirty-one years he taught the first science fiction courses ever offered in Memphis.

For almost his entire life he had been a book collector. He tells of his early interest in books. "During the Great Depression", Coger said, "I was living on a small farm in Michigan and the only library was a branch library in the back of a rural general store. It wasn't much but it was all we had until the day my Dad went to an auction sale. For a dime he bought a whole cardboard box full of books."

Dal cut his literary teeth on that box of used books. They included David Copperfield, Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch, The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, and Tarzan of the Apes.

Before he reached high school he had read a great number of books in many fields and he became an incurable bibliophile. He was proud to be called a book worm.

After moving to Memphis, he developed one of the great private libraries in the city. He lived behind a great wall of books in his home in East Memphis. Bill Thomas, columnist for the Commercial Appeal, called him "the sumo wrestler of book collectors, the King Kong of the literary jungle". He had so many books, over 30,000 at last count, there was no room left in the basement, the main floor or the attic. As a result, he built a new 36 feet by 14 feet building in his back yard, surrounding the swimming pool. He built it mainly to contain the overflow of his books and papers. Soon, he

had no shelf space left. This building has 27 book cases and 300 yards of shelves alone.

His library included everything from the classics, popular novels and detective stories to more than 5,000 science fiction books and pulp magazines. His special field of interest has been African history, and he has built a vast collection on this subject. He bought many of his books on his several trips to Africa. He has also written a book on Kenya. He and his wife, Greta, recently traveled the length of Africa beginning at Capetown, South Africa and going up the middle of the continent through the Sahara to the countries of North Africa.

When World War II came along he went to Europe as a machine-gunner, assigned to an artillery battery.

"We were getting ready for the invasion of Japan when they dropped the big one on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I could have gone home but I re-enlisted in France so I could get four more years of college under the GI Bill of Rights."

Not only did he go to college, but he wound up spending 20 years in the military before undertaking a second career as a history professor.

"I had a girl in the Bronx and as soon as I made Staff Sergeant, we got married. We were married for 22 years when she died of lung cancer in 1970. At this time I was working on my doctor's dissertation."

Dal's second wife also died of cancer. In 1979 he married Greta Avery, who has taught for over 20 years at Northwest Mississippi Community College. She is a graduate of Covenant College in Niagara Falls, New York, and has done further graduate studies in Scotland. She sings in the choir of St. George's Episcopal Church. She is also an editor (Margaret Lawrence Review) and writer.

Since the beginning of the Memphis Science Fiction Society, Dal Coger has been a mainstay and active member of the club. He had one of the better science fiction collections in the USA and was a nationally known fan since the early 1940's. He was a part-time resident and member of the Slan Shack, a big 3-story house in Ann Arbor, Michigan, which was home to the first commune of SF fans, out of which came several famous writers. He was a member of First Fandom, the elite club of early SF fans, writers, editors and publishers.

He will be long remembered by his friends.

As mentioned in Darrell Richardson's article, Dal lived in The Slan Shack. We recently came across an article on-line written by Dal about that Esteemed Residence. As this is a Special Dal Coger Memorial Issue, it seems appropriate to have a link to the article here for the edification of the readers.

The Legendery Slan Shack
By Dal Coger

(As seen in the June 1998 issue # 22 of MIMOSA
and online at

http://jophan.org/mimosa/m22/m22_p28.htm)

(I would like to reprint that article from MIMOSA as well as the photo of Dal that Richard Lynch took of him with Howard Devore - hint, hint Ye Ed. GEB)

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Speaking of on-line, Richard Lynch posted the following on the Science Fiction Writers of America website late last year: I hope I will be forgiven for reprinting it here

Dalvan M. Coger

Dalvan M. Coger, a science fiction fan since the early 1940s, passed away on Wednesday, October 2nd, from a post-surgery antibiotic-resistant bacterial infection.

Dal's activity in science fiction fandom began in the Midwest in about 1942, when he attended the second Michicon in the fall of that year. He was only active for a couple of years before he went into the military for World War II, but in that time he became friends with Al and Abby Lou Ashley and other people in the Galactic Roamers fan club in central Michigan, and as a result, spent many happy days at the most famous fan abode of all time, the legendary Slan Shack of Battle Creek, Michigan. Of that place, Dal later wrote that "fan visitors from far and wide came by to enjoy the Ashley's hospitality." Because he became stationed thousands of miles away, in California, Dal wrote that "I was immensely unhappy that I couldn't [often] share in this."

It was actually Dal's good fortune to be stationed at Camp Haan, in southern California, for his basic training, and during the relatively short time he was

there before being shipped off to France, he became friends with the LASFS crowd, including Jim Kepner, Forry Ackerman, and enigmatic Francis Towner Laney. Dal later wrote about that time, mentioning that "I was permitted to flop over the weekend in the [LASFS] clubhouse [on Bixel Street], and frequently spent Saturday nights there while on a weekend pass. Forry Ackerman and Morojo had made me welcome."

It was about 20 years of gaffiation after that, first in the military and then in academia -- Dal became a professor at the University of Memphis (Tennessee), where he was a notable historian and African Studies writer. He re-entered fandom in the mid 1970s, and became a sort of patriarch for Memphis fandom after that.

I met Dal not long after his re-entry into fandom, at a small convention in Arkansas where he was Toastmaster and introduced me to the convention's Guest of Honor, Bob Tucker. Dal and I stayed in contact with each other after that; it was probably our common interest in history, especially the history of science fiction fandom, that helped make us friends. And even though most of his time was still absorbed by academic interests, both before and after his retirement sometime in the 1990s, he still found time for some fan writing; I am pleased that Nicki and I were allowed to publish two of his fan history-related articles in MIMOSA. He was also a great conversationalist, and the times we met each other at conventions usually resulted in a couple of hours of shared stories (mostly his), about travels and times past, that were fascinating.

After Nicki and I moved to Maryland near the end of 1988, Dal and I crossed paths only every year or two, usually at Midwestcons we both happened to attend. The most recent time was this past June, and I remember him looking very energetic and healthy, much younger than his 80+years. For that reason, I don't think I ever thought that that might be the last time I'd ever see him. Unfortunately, I won't, and I am still trying to come to grips that. I am going to miss him greatly.

He was my friend.

A photo of Dal is at

http://fanac.org/Other_Cons/MidwestCon/m43-023.html

Rich Lynch

A Quiet Sort of Dignity

Remembering Dal Coger

by Tim Gatewood

Dal Coger was one of those rare people who could make you feel at home wherever you were. He had a quiet sort of dignity that you just had to believe came from many years of a very active life, one in which he had learned much about how to interact with others. He was also one of the mainstays of several communities and helped to bring them together at his annual Fourth of July cookouts.

As the other articles in this issue of Memphen state, Dal was a military veteran. I never really connected with him on this level, but I was aware that he had that background and I am sure it contributed to his attitude of getting things done with what was available without complaining about the situation or the work at hand.

In 1967, Dal and his then-wife Dorothy joined the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Memphis, where they became immediately active, and they remained so for many years. The UUF had been formed a few years before that as a break-away group from the Unitarian Church of the River. Dal had long-since married Greta was still attending the meetings there when I joined it in 1990, and he was considered the most conservative member of the UUF. I never saw Dal as a conservative, though, just a realist – he saw what he saw and he told it like it was. He was never cruel or mean in his comments, but he was able to be as blunt as the truth required. I found him to be enthralling when he spoke about Africa, his area of particular speciality as a historian. The Unitarian Universalist community in Memphis was one of the ones in which Dal was a mainstay, especially in the UU Fellowship.

Dal was a Humanist minister, one of the few non-religious and non-governmental people in the entire State of Tennessee authorized to perform weddings. He and I had several conversations about what it meant to be a humanist, and, as usual with Dal, it was very interesting to hear what he had to say on the subject. When Barbara and I got engaged, we considered using Dal's services for our wedding, but settled on Rev. Jean Rowe of Neshoba UU Church, instead. The wedding took place in the basement at

Prescott Memorial Baptist Church, just a few rooms away from where the UU Fellowship met (and still meets).

Another community in which Dal was very important was the University of Memphis. He served as a Professor of History there for many years, and in such capacity, he took several trips to Africa, where he collected books and met the people and did all the other things one would expect a Professor of African History to do there. His stories from his trips there were always fascinating and his take on the politics of that continent were usually shown to be true later by developing events there. Dal retired from active teaching at the University a few years ago, which gave him time to finish a large addition to his house to hold the overflow of his expanding library.

Of course, most of the readers of Memphen will be familiar with Dal through his involvement with SF&F fandom. Others have written about his history in fandom, including his near membership in First Fandom. What some may not know is that First Fandom is only open to those who can show they were active fans before 1940}. Dal was a prolific fanzine writer, being a member of several amateur press associations (APAs), a habit he continued into his later years. In fact, he was still showing me copies of *The Cult*, an APA with a rotating Official Editor, just a few years ago. I believe that anyone who writes regularly for 50 years is going to come to terms to with most of their demons, working them out by exorcising them to the written page, and this may have contributed to Dal's quiet sort of dignity.

When the group that had been putting on Midsouthcon for many years finally decided to take the plunge and become an incorporated non-profit, it was no surprise that Dal was elected to the first Board of Directors for the resulting fan-run corporation. He served as a member of the Board of the newly-reborn Midsouthcon for several years and many meetings of the Board were held in his home. This was in addition to the annual *Thursday-night-before-the-Con* gatherings at his home, where the registration bags were stuffed full of goodies, any guests who had arrived early were met by all, and you could count on getting at least one good meal of the weekend there. I don't think it is stretching things too much to say that Dal's annual 4th of July and *Thursday-before-the-Con* parties were the highlight of the local SF&F fan calendar, even surpassing Midsouthcon itself for those who worked on the Con.

Dal also wrote book reviews for , among others, the *Commercial Appeal* (the Memphis daily newspaper), and I

know it bothered him when they stopped doing SF reviews, because it meant one of his avenues for self-expression was closed. It is good that he found other venues to have his writings appear in, including *Mimosa* and others.

While many fans consider collecting books to be just part of fandom, it is actually a separate hobby. There are fans who read a book once and take it to a used book store to trade it in for others; there are fans who don't read, but get their SF fix through t.v. or movies; there are fans who check out books from the library. Dal was not one of those -- Dal was a collector. This we had very much in common and I have to say that he had my great respect and admiration for the book collection that he had amassed over the years.

All in all, Dal was the most complete person I ever met. Just being around Dal always made me feel better, as if his competence and confidence would rub off somehow. To say that he will be missed is not accurate -- he will be remembered for as long as any of us who ever met him are here, and the memory will be a sweet one.

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Professor Dalvan Coger: (1923-2002)

a tribute to a self-made man

By Bert Weesner

I have always been impressed with the self-made man who hurt no one on the way. Frank Sinatra will always be identified with the song, "I Did It My Way", but his way involved help from powerful people. Professor Dalvan Coger was one of those rare people who succeeded through intelligence, self-motivation, and persistence. His way respected all people.

When he was a private in the U. S. Army, his potential was recognized by an officer. This gentleman asked what an intelligent man like him was doing as an enlisted man. Dal took the advice, earned a Doctor of Philosophy degree in History. After retiring from the Army, Dal became a professor in the Department of History at the University of Memphis where he became renowned as an expert in African history and politics.

He was matched in intelligence and interests by his wife, Greta, a professor in English Literature.

He served as President of the Peter Cooper Unitarian Fellowship, where he often was the featured speaker. He was ordained as a Humanist counselor. His thirst for knowledge led to his interest and involvement in Science Fiction as an avid reader and writer. His interest in literature led to his building his own library and stocking it with over 30,000 textbooks. He was a much sought after speaker in several areas.

Despite all of his accomplishments, perhaps the most admirable would be Dal's respect and love for people in all walks of life. People who met Dal did not and will not forget him. He did it his way.

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IN MEMORY:

Dalvan M. Coger (1923-2002)

DALVAN was my friend, for 37 years -- from the day we met at the old Hotel King Cotton in downtown Memphis where the UU Fellowship was meeting at that time. His friendship was very precious to me -- he was always there with his humorous stories (would call just to tell me the latest one he had found), with his regular socials (the small dinner parties and, especially, the annual Fourth of July picnic), with his invitations for us to join him and Greta for lunch after the Sunday Fellowship program), with his friendly concern and advice when needed -- and he never forgot a birthday. He was a friend who cannot be replaced -- and I will miss him for the rest of my life.

DALVAN first came to the Fellowship on September 19, 1965 and became an active attender right away, then joined the membership on January 22, 1967. He served as Vice President for 1969--70 and as President for 1970--72. He was a regular Fellowship speaker for 37 years -- during those years he was a speaker-participant in 12 Programs and 65 times was the sole speaker (14 November 1965 to 15 September 2002 when he received the Dr. Peter Cooper Service Award.)

Dalvan, a retired Army veteran (served in WWII) and a retired history professor (University of Memphis), was a book collector (was very fond of science fiction), a humanist (was a counselor), a traveler (made several trips to Europe And Africa), and a writer (did many book reviews for *The Commercial Appeal* and was a published African studies writer). Dalvan died on October 2, 2002,

at St Francis Hospital a week after lung surgery -- he was 79.

Dal van liked the verses of the Rubaiyat -- these two are in tune with his philosophy, the philosophy of a religious skeptic who believed the purpose of life is life.

Into this Universe, and why not knowing,
Nor whence, like Water willy-nilly flowing:
And out of it, as Wind along the Waste,
I know not whither, willy-nilly blowing.

Ah, fill the Cup: — what boots it to repeat
How Time is slipping underneath our Feet:
Unborn To-morrow and dead Yesterday,
Why fret about them if To-day be sweet!

-- Louise Bybee

Louise Bybee is the editor of The Lamplighter, the decades-long-running newsletter for the UU Fellowship.

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P.L. Caruthers

Some Memories

P.L. Caruthers died on 27 August 2003. The vast majority of you who receive this locally won't know who PL was. She graduated from Memphis Messick High School in 1969, started out entranced by Star Trek, read what was available about Trek (what there was of it in the late 60's) then read the authors that wrote for the show and found she liked SF in general. I introduced PL to fandom, induced her to come to MSFA meetings in the Fall of 1970 and she went on to be VERY active in Southern Fandom as well in the 70's and '80's. In the 70's that meant you were active in Fanac (SF Fan Activity) which at that time was mostly writing for fanzines and Apa's. For PL she mostly wrote for APA's (Amateur PResS Associations) but she also wrote for Genzines - general circulation fanzines with general articles and reviews, etc. (I'm not going to define fanzines!). PL was active for the most part in SFPA and perhaps MYRIAD, two different APA's (look them up, if you have an interest in was known as amateur SF journalism), as well as having articles in various genzines.

PL as far as I know didn't go to College long, at least not while she was in Memphis. Not so much for a lack of ability but funds (and perhaps lack of self confidence). I remember going to her Father's house

shortly after I met her while she still lived at home and thinking that there far too many people in that family in far too small a home. I know she had several other siblings but the only one I knew of was her sister Becky who also attended MSFA meetings the first couple of years until she went off in military service. I was told not too long ago that Becky had died of cancer some years ago when I showed a slide of Becky, Jim Harris and Dr. Richardson at a meeting at George Bradfute, Jr.'s house.

To do a bit of explaining, as most of you know MSFA started in May 1970. BY that Fall there must have been 5 or 6 dozen people attend meetings of MSFA. The number of women who had attended could be counted on one hand and the ones who had not been attached to a significant other was non-existent. Now for a young male interested in the study of female anatomy, esp. ones that had a mind I might be interested in too,, this was unacceptable. One day in a fit of inspiration (insanity?) as I was checking out books from the Memphis State University Library, I realized that every student that signed out a book did just that, they write their name on the card, so that subsequent readers could see who else had read the book (or more exactly taken it out).

I then took a notebook and spent some hours surveying the Science Fiction that MSU had on their shelves (no great task I'll admit but they did have some hundred's (oddly scattered as that library uses both the Dewey Decimal AND the Library of Congress systems!). I wrote down all the female sounding names, then began adding check marks for the number of SF&F they had checked out. I then made a list of those that had checked out 2 or more SF&F.

Then I steeled my nerve, looked their number in the Student Directory and called, using a spiel along the lines of "I saw that you had checked out several of the same SF books I had and thought you might be interested in the local SF club?". I will say that was one of the hardest things I ever did, by the way; but hormones do have their effect!

PL was one of those on that list. She was not the first but she was definitely the one that stayed the longest in Fandom and certainly had the most effect in and on Fandom. Others attended into the late 70's, tho. PL also ended up being one of the first women I dated. Then as it turned out she went to High School with my first girlfriend (which is why I know PL attended Messick).

How would you describe PL at the time? Average height, often with a calm, almost sedate way about her. When I first met her she had dark hair which soon became a light auburn, the colour it remained later. She had a way of positioning herself at gatherings where she could take in everything going on, and enigmatically smiling about man's foibles, making pertinent comments.

When PL first came into the group she was Pamela Lynn Caruthers, if I'm not mistaken she had signed out her library books that way. At the first meetings introduced herself as Pam Caruthers. Later on she became PL, primarily because her siblings used to like to antagonize her by calling her PamPam (referring to Flintstones character and also the written sound effects of the Batman TV show of the time). Now having known her as Pam my poor psyche couldn't morph around PL, it was embedded somewhere deep in what passes for a cerebrum in me that she was Pam. I would blurt that out upon seeing her. She did correct me, explained the reasons and I did try to switch but it had to be a conscious switch. I would still blurt out "Hi, Pam!" then go "Oops, ummm, PL!" when I saw her flinch a bit.

For that (and other reasons I never quite grasped), PL developed a mild antagonism towards me (as my wife is often ready to point out to me I am often quite clueless). Being clueless, I didn't realize this until PL was doing what is now Memphen during 1977, 1978, 1979. I was in the midst of finishing my History degree at that time, was working 60 to 75 hours a week so had drawn back from doing too much in local fandom. I helped a bit with the Halfacon that we did in 1977 and with Just Imagicon in May 1979 both of which PL was very instrumental in getting going. Whatever the reasons for that antagonism, I was mildly amused for some reason at it. During the late '70's and early 80's while she was still here PL was MSFA's secretary and Treasurer too. The Treasurer's book that just recently devolved to Tim Gatewood from Rene Stuart was PL's, decorated with 3D stickers and calligraphied by PL with her neat penmanship marking the members payments. If memory serves me right she was also MSFA Chairbeing for a time, too.

For the first 10 years or so that I knew PL she never had a car of her own, rode the bus and worked at fast food restaurants (Burger King, etc.). She worked for awhile at the Overton Hero sandwich shop on Madison Avenue, a few blocks from where she lived in Midtown

Memphis. She used that name for her SFPA zine, if I remember correctly.

Eventually, she had some one talk her into taking Optometrists Assistant courses at the Southern College of Optometry in Memphis. SCO is on Madison so it was an easy bus ride for her and after that she was able, with an Opt. Assistants salary, to get her own car, etc.

About the time that Nancy Collins was chairman of Imaginitacon and Imagicon in 1980 and 1981, PL helped at least with the first of those two conventions. Some time between those two cons, PL moved to Little Rock, AR to live with some friends there. Later on I heard that she married Larry Montgomery and was living in AL, then she was PL Caruthers-Montgomery. During the late 70's and early 80's PL was Vice President of the Southern Fandom Confederation then later became President from 1987 to 1992. Early on she was declared SFC Mixologist and Recruiter, too.

Dan Henderson wrote a story that was published in Analog in 1978 by the name of "Carruthers Last Stand", which many said he named after PL but he said it was the street in Midtown he lived on for a long time.

At Midsouthcon 9 (1990) PL was our Fan Guest of Honor which brought her back to Memphis from AL. I saw her now and again at DSC's or Huntsville Cons I went to but had been told that of late she'd GAFIATED a bit, even was having a bit of health problems. When I heard from Guy Lillian III, that PL had died, I was shocked as I remember a vibrant woman with her own mind about how things should be done. I suspect that's just how she'd like to be remembered.

I always thought PL Caruthers was a talented person with her own demons to fight, whatever they were, which, added to her own lack of self confidence, held her back. She rose above them to some extent but never achieved what I thought she could have. She was an artist and was a capable calligrapher - she did the headings for the SFC Bulletins for some years and also did the current Logo for the SFC - the crossed Sword and Rocket one, I've been told. As I remember her APAzines were readable, too.

As Guy Lillian III has pointed out himself, with her passing goes a real personality in Southern Science Fiction Fandom, an odd mixture of lack of self confidence and brashness, having found a niche among us she worked her way up to. I wish her well where ere she may be.

I've thrown in a few photos in this ish of her I took back in the 70's (found a box of negs I never had printed recently).

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Sid Jones

I first Sid him about thirty years ago - along with Johnny Fulton (SCA's Bearkiller in Memphis), as I recall. He had been in poor health for the past several years and he passed away last night. I'm attaching below a note I just received from Ray Neilson (of the Memphis Film Festival). Someone really should have figured out a way to stop this dying crap by now!

Harris Lentz III

Harris-

I don't know if you've been told, but Sid Jones died last night. I had an email from his wife Kay this morning. At that point, she only told me that she had taken him to the hospital last night and wanted me to call her this morning. I think he had already died but she wanted to tell me personally. He apparently had trouble breathing. She said he had previously instructed her not to call an ambulance or go to any extraordinary procedures. Kay and Steve Williams took him to the hospital but he didn't make it.

Kay said he had wanted to donate his body to science and had done some paperwork on that. But given his size, his body has now been rejected for that purpose. Kay told me Sid has asked her to keep going with running the video rooms at the Memphis Film Festival for as long she could or for however long the festival held together. I was really touched by that request. It has become more and more of a financial struggle in recent years because of the economy, a shrinking audience, increased competition, escalating costs, etc. I've been determined to carry on despite all this, and now with Sid's passing and the dedication he had I am even more motivated to go on no matter what. I can't even tell you for sure how long Sid has been involved with the festival.

Sid was a vital part of any success the Memphis Film Festival had over the years, and I will always remember him for his love of movies and his willingness to serve despite the severe health problems he fought for a long time.

Ray Neilson

HERE BE MADNESS?

A while back I got a note from Midsouthcon's illustrious former leader and *bon vivant*, Cullen Johnson, who had just returned from Midwestcon in Cincinnati. It was mentioned there that there was no Worldcon bids past 2007, i.e. none for 2008 at all (2007 has Columbus, OH and Tokyo, Japan vying, so we should see at least a group from Columbus having a party at our DeepSouthcon next year!). (now there is a Chicago in 2008, as ya'll might have noticed their bid Party at DeepSouthcon!)

Cullen ended the note with "Memphis, Worldcon 2008? Is this madness?"

My own reaction is YES, this be madness!

What is following is NOT in the least an interest in a Memphis in 2008 worldcon bid (certainly not against Chicago!). This is just a bit of fun on my part as an intellectual exercise on a topic that comes up at MSFA and MSC meetings now and again. I might add the words of Gen. Sherman in 1863 that "If nominated I will not accept, Of course, if I remember correctly, Sherman lived in Memphis helping Grant plan his move on Vicksburg in 1863.

But let us examine the situation. We've often jokingly discussed the possibility, with the result that the absolute most we might consider is a NASFic. Various factors have mitigated against any effort on our part (we're not fools!).

What are the requirements for a Worldcon or NASFic? At least from what I know, they are similar to what you would need for any Con, albeit a different scale and number!

1. Facilities - Hotel rooms, meeting space within walking distance, restaurants, etc.
2. Concomm willing to do all the work involved (which is a HEAP of work, that 4 letter word, btw!) as well as local support
3. Various urban attractions

1. Facilities

A. Meeting Space

Probably the least problem. The obvious site would be the *Memphis Downtown Memphis Convention Center*. I'm not sure how it compares with recent Worldcon meeting space but here are the numbers. I suspect others will do that once I've printed this!

It is 350,000 sq. ft. parking for 1000 cars plus 2000 more adjacent. It has a 125,000 sq.ft. of column free exhibit space with space for 650 10'X10" booths, divisible into 3 sections (floor supports 330 lbs./sq.ft)

31 breakout rooms with 74,000 sq. ft. meeting space, a 2100 seat performing arts center, 28,000 sq.ft. ballroom (and adjoining kitchen with food service handled by the Marriott Corporation.

The prefunction Foyer has 15,000 sq.ft. where registration would be held.

Additionally, 2 or so blocks North is the Memphis Pyramid Arena with 90,000 square feet of meeting space and various meeting rooms in addition to the Convention center and may possibly be used.

To give perspective on distance, North Parkway (which is just past the entrance to the Pyramid) intersects 2nd. St. at about the 400 block. The Convention center is at 250 N. 2nd.

B Hotels - a major problem, I've always felt. Although there are claimed to be 3,140 rooms in Downtown Memphis, the Convention Center was built at the very North end of the Memphis Downtown, there is almost nothing North of that point, discounting the Pyramid. All the sleeping rooms are South of the Convention center with the South end, the *Peabody Hotel*, 12 blocks or so away from the Conv. Ctr. (abt. 3/4 mi.)

First, what's immediately available to the Convention Center?

a. - across the street is the the **Marriott Convention Center Downtown**, attached to the convention center. The property has completed a \$12 million refurbishment of its existing 402 rooms and is adding another 200 new rooms by the end of 2004. The \$16 million addition is scheduled for completion in May 2004., the hotel provides food service at the convention center at 250 N. Main and some meeting

space itself (14 meeting rooms) but not a lot. MSC has considered this but room rates are high

b. - **Wyndham Memphis Garden**, 300 N. 2nd (there's no 1st. Street, that's Main). This is the old Brownstone where MSC 15 was. It has 230 rms, 4848 sq.ft. Mtg. Space.

c. - maybe a stretch at 100.N.Front St. is the **Comfort Inn Downtown** with 71 rooms. Some may remember the Fantasycon on Mud Island which used this as their Hotel, their Writer Guests were Marion Zimmer Bradley and John Norman (yes!). This is close to the monorail for Mud Island and is inexpensive.

So in close proximity is only about 700 rms. maybe 900 Then is

- at 40 N. Front is the **Sleep Inn Motel** at Court Square. 124 rms

- at 22 N. 3rd. St is the **Downtown Howard Johnson** inn 118 rms (cheap rooms)

- at S. Court and Main is **Marriott Springhill Suites** which has 102 suites plus in development the remodeling of an old Kress's 5&Dime into another 46 suites

- at 2nd. and Madison St. (N&S numbers change here) is the **Madison Hotel** with 110 rms.; upscale with 2 Presidential suites and 38 King Suites, start at \$190 -several blocks South of this are the Hotels clustered around the Peabody

- the **Peabody** is at 149 Union at 2nd. with 468 rooms and a fair amt. of function space itself. Across the St. at 160 Union is the **Holiday Inn Select Downtown** with 190 rms (the first Memphis Fantasycon which had a 1000 members was here when it was a Ramada). Next to the HI Select is the **Best Western Benchmark** (it has a Denny's) with 124 rms. Across 2nd. at 185 Union is the **Radisson Downtown** with 280 rms, there were several Memphis Fantasy Cons here. Also close by here is the **Talbot Heirs Guesthouse** at 99 S. 2nd. with 9 suites, upscale prices.

- at 175 Peabody Pl is **Hampton Inn & Suites** with 110 rms, the most Southerly of the hotels.

Additionally are the developments around the Memphis Grizzlies Basketball Fedex Forum such as "Lee's Landing, a new \$35 million development near the FedEx Forum, will include a 201-room Westin Hotel, a 520-space parking garage, and restaurants including Sleep Out Louie's."

Now a few may say that 3/4 of a mile is not so bad, esp. with the Downtown Trolley. These are not free and Memphis opted for small trolleys that were bought from Lisbon, Portugal and Melbourne, Aust. then reconditioned (you can see the Lisbon ones in an Alec Guinness WWII

spy movie that I forget the name of) and hold only about 20 people. They run about every 5 minutes or so on Main St. from the Amtrak Sta. To the Pyramid – 120-150 an hour maybe double that if they use the return route on Front or 2nd St. Three or four hundred an hour wouldn't cut it I don't think as a people mover.

Of course, I've never worked on a worldcon bid but within a 1/3 mi. radius there are less than a 1000 rms. and I count only about 2000 rms within ¼ mi. that are usable in downtown unless you start counting the Medical Ctr. Ones, etc. There are almost that many rooms at the Grand Casino alone in Tunica, 30 mi. South of Memphis! I know that Church of God in Christ has over 30,000 attend in Memphis but they are housed from Forrest City to Tunica to Millington TN plus there's a Southern Baptist Convention in June 2004 with 50,000+ coming up. Can't imagine where all those people will be staying!

A Memphis/Worldcon would likely be a smaller con as fewer would be likely to travel Midcountry – no matter that we have Elvis, etc.:-) I suspect that long term, the Bicoastal Cons – East and West Coast Cons in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Los Angeles, maybe Chicago now and again will continue to be the bigger cons. Altho St. Louis is making noises about another one, I don't think it will be a big one either if they get it. Partly it's the aging of Fandom and the effect of DragonCon's draw. The aging of Fandom is beginning to drop the number of fans willing to spend weeks of their lives working long, long days putting them together. With the memberships being so expensive the lower income (generally younger fans) are being cut out plus the main hotels having very high room rates that tends to put people off. I know that for many years I stopped going to world cons, then started going back when I had a good job but even then was paying off the credit cards I put the trip on for the rest of the year. It takes a commitment that most people are not up to, I love SF and love seeing and hearing all the authors and the Hugo Awards, etc. but with 2 memberships (\$350 about) plus 4 nights stay (\$400 – 700) you're getting to over a \$1000 to just attend. That's a chunk of change for anyone.

So by 2008 Worldcons may be smaller but even with just 3000 people you're probably talking 1500 rms minimum. Doable maybe but a tight fit and that's if we start talking about the whole downtown. I keep thinking of Dal Cogger having his heart attack in 1985 walking back from the con in the heat to his hotel at the Austin, TX Lonestarcon I NASFIC in 1985.

Memphis on Labour Day is just as hot, maybe hotter with more humidity.

A website that is of interest about the billion or so dollars going into downtown Memphis renovation, etc.

<http://www.attractievestad.nl/world/cgi-bin/printpage.cgi?forum=2&topic=1134>

(umm, need to do a bit of cut&paste there!)

Enough for FACILITIES lets skip to Item 3 as it will be short

3. AMENITIES – having grown up in Memphis I think there is much of interest. Also, being local, I don't usually think of the one EVERYONE else thinks of as THE attraction – Elvis and Graceland. Sort of like New Orleans and Mardi Gras, best avoided if you're local, I suppose. But Elvis is STILL in Memphis. No where else can claim that. Also, Memphis is the real home of the Blues and Rock & Roll, Beale St., Stax Records with a tradition of great music. Also there's a great Zoo, the Pink Palace Museum, the National Civil Rights Museum in the Lorraine Hotel, the Ornamental Metals Museum (with a GREAT view of the Mississippi River) (and speaking of which) the Mississippi River with Memphis fabulous riverfront park, daily riverboat rides from the Memphis riverfront cobblestones a couple blocks from the Convention Center (largest cobblestone riverfront in America), Civil War sites – the river battle, the CSS Arkansas was built about where the Pyramid is now, Confederat Cavalry assault IN a Hotel in Downtown Memphis, etc. -, Chucalissa Ancient Indian Villiage, Indian Mounds in the City (across from the Ornamental Metals Museum), The Memphis Belle B-17 on display, Mud Island Museum and Exhibits, etc. The best BarBeque in the world comes from Memphis, too! There are great restaurants in Memphis too, some right in the Peabody Hotel, maybe not the number of restaurants you might find in New Orleans or other larger cities but then Memphis Metro area is well under 2 million.

Then too, only about 35 miles from downtown Memphis are the Tunica,MS Casinos, largest casino complex outside of Atlantic City and Las Vegas if you are among those that find that 'entertaining'.

Under Amenities should also be mentioned the travel distances - the closest large city is St. Louis – 280 miles to the north unless you count Nashville 250 East of Memphis. Otherwise its at or over 500 miles to Chicago, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Charlotte, Dallas, Atlanta so air travel is the most likely way to get to Memphis. The Memphis airport is as good as anyone's and if you freight yourself in it's the world's busiest for air freight! (or is

Tokyo's busier?). Memphis does have Amtrak and the trolley turnaround is at the Amtrak Sta. in Memphis so you could take an all rail trip right to the door of the Convention Center if you leave from Chicago or New Orleans. Not sure who else could make that claim.

I could think of a few more things but there are Amenities here in Memphis

If interested in more about the downtown Memphis area go to

<http://www.downtownmemphis.com>

Now

item 2. – Concomm – There having been a couple dozen conventions here in Memphis – MSC at #22 and attendance at MSC at about 800- 1000 –we do have a competent concomm at least. But a worldcon or NASFIC? Ummmm, our core concomm is about 2 dozen at most, maybe, and that's really not enough for what we attempt to do, already. A convention that's between 2000 and 3000 would need at least 3 times what we currently have locally working on it. For one thing we have at MSC about 100-200+ from out of town. For a 3000 person con, that would mean about 2000+ more people from out of town, meaning a lot more handholding, etc. We would have to have dozens and dozens more volunteers, mostly people that don't know any of our concomm. I suspect that for the most part the core of those that work on Worldcon's haven't a clue who any of us are that work on the MSC committee are.

Now that didn't stop the Charlotte, NC worldcon bid awhile back but I'm sure their complete lack of LOCAL con experience much less major sized con running experience had to be their biggest handicap. Irvin Koch (who used to come to MSFA meetings in the '70's when he was working at the Milan Arsenal) worked really hard on the Charlotte Worldcon Bid but could never overcome lack of an experienced local fan community in Charlotte.

Local support beyond what Concomm we already have is not too likely. Memphis is among the poorest major cities in the Nation and is sited in the middle of the poorest region in the Nation, with the highest illiteracy rate of any of them. Very few of our concomm for that matter can afford the costs of attending a worldcon as it is, much less taking the time off from work to work on it is my general feeling.

In sum, Memphis has the meeting facilities, the sleeping room are too spread out and the concomm is far too few. As there has not been a Worldcon in the South

since Nolacon 2 in 1988 (not counting Lonestarcon 2), there is not a indigenous committee with that much experience.

This is not completely exhaustive but it is getting a bit long. I realize I should do some checking against other worldcon bids – successful previous ones and current bids but I'll leave that for my readers. Not sure how the Convention Center stacks up. Probably not as good as some and better than others I'd suspect.

Now for the note that inspired this article!

Subject Midwestcon

From: Cullen Johnson <cullen@net>

Greg,

I went to Midwestcon in Cincinnati last weekend, and wanted to tell you a little about what went on.

The usual suspects were there - Steve and Sue Francis, the Cincinnati fen (including now expatriate Cincinnatians like Roger & Pat Sims and Dick Spelman), Gary and Corlis Robe from over in East Tennessee, Pat and Naomi, Jack Chalker, the mighty Resnicks, and so on. Three room parties on Saturday shilling for different Worldcon bids (Los Angeles, Kansas City, and Columbus - the Yokohama bid was sadly unrepresented).

Then, of course there were late night dissertations by Mike Resnick about the sad state of SF movie audiences (Dan Caldwell heard all about how what glaring plot holes are in popular SF movies).

But - of course - there was smoffing. And that's my real topic.

There apparently is NOBODY bidding for the 2008 Worldcon. What's more, every US region is eligible. I listened while someone tried to talk Steve Francis into running a bid (his exact answer was "no"). But that got me thinking - MidSouth? A regional bid, combining forces of Tennessee, Kentucky, Alabama, Arkansas, and maybe Mississippi? Possibly in Memphis?

Is this madness?

Cullen

Since Cullen wrote this, Chicago has thrown in their hat

<http://www.chicagoworldcon7.org/>

They threw a great party at MSC 22!
Love have some discussion on this.