

# Motley

Jim Benford

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## How it's going?

I'm enjoying the FAPA mailings a lot. They remind me of fandom in the old days: there are number of quite different peoples: some historians, some convention types, some eccentrics. Just like fandom was decades ago. The big variety in points of view is refreshing. It's also refreshing to be an APA where politics is not prominent nor as visceral as it was in the APA I left last year.

Of particular note are John Coker's *Stories From The 1st Fandom Archives*, the FAAPA memberships listing and Gordon's *The Past Recaptured*. The latter really took me back to the old days, reading names I had not thought about it in many decades and reminding me of how many people I once knew are no longer among us such as Boyd Raeburn Elmer Purdue, Rosler, Dan MacPhail, Bruce Peltz. The list is too long and inevitably will get longer....

To tell you a little more about myself: I spent a lot of last year editing, with Greg, a high-end anthology *Starship Century*. It will be out in both e-book and trade paperback by the next mailing so I'll send you a description of the book and its contents in that mailing. We're going to give the proceeds to research toward interstellar travel.

I'm a traveler. I'm been traveling internationally for 64 years, to about 60 countries now. Last year I made too long international trips, one across the South Pacific and the 2nd to the UK and Spain. (Spain in particular really appeals to me especially the food, wine and architecture, which are unique.) This year there are 3 major trips to come. In 3 weeks we're flying down to Costa Rica, boarding a ship going through the Panama Canal and out across the Caribbean all the way to San Martin. It will take about 3 weeks. Next fall were going to London and then on to Venice, board a ship which goes along the coasts of Italy, then Yugoslavia, through the Aegean to several islands, including Crete and Rhodes, then up the Turkish coast to Istanbul. Will stay in a Istanbul for several days as we have never been there before. Only a month later were going off to Australia to spend a month with our daughter & family, who live in Melbourne. So 3 big international trips this year and one or 2 domestic trips as well. And my list of future destinations is getting very short is getting very short. Except for Antarctica, I have not been to only one continent and that will change when we dock toward the end of February in Columbia.

Lately I've taken up cooking and learn a lot from wife Hillary, who learned cooking in French restaurants in the 1950s. Am especially interested in the more exotic cuisines such as Indian & Spanish. It's completely changed my attitude toward grocery store shopping. I now and carefully look over the variety of things available and have been finding many interesting exotic foods such as gourmet ketchup, canned seafood from abroad and the huge variety of sausages now available. Unfortunately, in midyear 2012 the state of California outlawed foie gras, which is one of my favorites. So it's become a problem for some recipes. I think it's particularly stupid law as it is entirely possible to get around: simply

bring it in from another state or from abroad.

*As I said last time, I'm going to use material from other contributors in Motley, so here's another piece by brother Greg:*

### PHIL DICK IN ORANGE COUNTY



Phil reading the Orange County Register

I met Philip K. Dick in 1964, and it struck me how funny he was. I had just read *The Man in the High Castle*, and expected a rather dour sort. He had a way of comically falling out of a chair. At dinner he smoked a cigar and ate spaghetti simultaneously.

When I came by to go to dinner in the 1960s, I would at times hear something like a cheap motorbike banging inside the house. It was Phil, hammering at an Olympia typewriter like a woodpecker on meth; with one letter change, he was indeed a wordpecker on meth. Once when I arrived he said, not looking up, "I can finish this novel tonight if I go straight through to dawn." I pointed out that the speed he was on needed dilution at least, and took him to dinner. And he finished it the next morning, he said.

My being an identical twin fascinated him, as it did Heinlein. Phil thought he'd write a novel about twins, and I suppose in some way he did in some of the more confusing novels. He also asked me lots of questions about time and quantum mechanics, especially for background for *Counter Clock World*. He thought entropy was a great metaphor but I could never make sense of the eventual novel. In that time he was moving from wife Ann to wife Nancy, and remarked, "You'd guess that a guy who won the novel Hugo would do better with women." I thought it a doubtful syllogism.

Then he moved to Orange County in 1972, still steamed up about an earlier break-in at his home. He imagined the FBI was responsible. I found he didn't much like the aspects of the county that I found best, such as the beaches and ocean. He never visited my home perched high up with a view of the town and ocean in Laguna Beach. Only slowly did I realize that he was agoraphobic, so vistas and great weather mattered little. He liked

churches, he said, and questioned me closely about my being an Episcopalian. He felt the gospels were powerful messages we should all study intently. He was writing an interminable Exegesis and consulted me on it, but I never read more than a few passages. Not my thing, unlike his novels and especially the short stories that snagged my attention in the 1950s.

As success came to him, he was generous to the poor. He told me in 1981 that he had made \$180,000 that year and gave most of it to charities. Even though he lived pretty close to the street himself, he knew what it was like to be down, and tried to help people. The one person who would not have believed in the prominence of Philip Dick in our culture now was Phil Dick himself.

About that time I used some connections in the CIA to inquire with the FBI about Phil, and the break-in. Word came back that there was no Dick file at all. When I told him that he said they had probably destroyed it to "cover their trail."

He did love music and spent a lot on his FM system. With Tim Powers he often listened to major symphonic works, and mentioned that he could not quite register the nuances from the left speaker. Later, Tim told me, he went to a doctor to check and found that he was losing his hearing in the left ear. "Thank God," he said. "I was afraid it was in my speakers!"

Somehow that sums Phil up to me.

I found him hard to quite appreciate as he became more intent on the meaning of scripture, transcendental matters, and the Bishop Pike brand of Christianity. Often Phil had, shall we say, a continuity problem. He spoke of hearing a voice from the cosmic sky but what he heard from on high tended to vary often.

I was intent on running a plasma physics lab and so saw him infrequently, though I did continue to urge him to move and enjoy the pleasant aspects of the county, instead of his strip mall neighborhood. In spring 1982 I realized we hadn't spoken for a year, so I called and made a date for dinner. He was jazzed about the rushes of *Blade Runner* he'd seen and wanted to talk about it.

Days later, I heard he had died. When Tim Powers called to tell me about the memorial service, I flipped open my appointment calendar and found that the day and time were precisely when we had scheduled to have dinner.

It was what we have come to think of as a Phil Dick moment.

-Greg Benford

## Mailing Comments

Fantasy Amateur/Curt Phillips I loved the CD! I like that the time-binding retrospective theme. The Louis Armstrong 'Swing that Music' piece is one of my all-time favorites. The music of the jazz, swing and early rock eras now seem much better to me than they did when I was very young. Of course much of it was overdone, in particular the big band stuff. But there is no doubt this tremendous energy and it. I remember reading a remark by a German civilian in World War II, when you could pick up the US forces radio from London, first heard Glenn Miller. He thought "we can't beat people with music like that!" I understand how much work you're doing to hold his organization together and I certainly hope you're and we are successful in doing so.

London World Con In 2014 I think I'll go to this, because I go to London every year anyway so may as well time it to coincide, although August is not a particularly good time to be there.

Number 1/Mike McInerney Good to see you in here! Although with our paths cross seldom now, we used to share a lot of jokes, illegal things and especially our points of view. One old-timer that reminds me of you a lot was Steve Davis, who you know died almost 2 years ago of cancer. I miss him all the time.

Opuntia/Dale Speirs This is one of my favorites. In your many small issues are lots of gems. I particularly liked some of the movie descriptions and your critical look at many things in the science fiction past. And I like your detailed treatment of economic questions. I'm curious: why is it called Opuntia? Do you grow them, a genus of the cactus family? If you grow them in Calgary, they must be very hardy. I do, but I'm perhaps 1000 miles south of you. My largest are the Burbank Spineless, which grow famously fast and are very easy to propagate.

Nice distinctions/Arthur Hlavaty There's too much vitriol in this for me to read it for long. You really ought to tone down your attacks on Republicans; you're sounding like Obama (!).

Lofgeornost/Fred Lerner I like much of what you do, in particular the piece about the Sherlockians was quite interesting. I'm a big fan of the Holmes stories. Of course the Jeremy Brett portrayal is the best there's ever likely to be. But I do like the current modernized version, the new TV series *Elementary*. Its Sherlock is strikingly close to the insight-filled original./ I get the reference of your title "Incidents Of Travel In The Mountain West"; refers to *Incidents Of Travel In Yucatán* by Stephens, 1841.

Fadeaway 22 /Robert Jennings I like your treatment of old science fiction pulps; you pay more thoughtful attention to them than most people do. Have you collected your columns about the pulps? It would be useful; you ought to do it someday if you haven't already.

King Biscuit Time /Robert Lichtman I love this account of Cynthia's life and art. I remember great times with her and Lou at their place in the Mission district. I had not seen her for perhaps a decade and was surprised to hear of her death, although course I knew she was quite old. The artwork here done, in paper medium, is quite attractive, especially the cover. I particularly liked your account of her character, which was unique in my experience. She was always so gracious and, as you say, so soft-spoken. Of course the older gentleman

from LA is easy to identify. I think you've written a very fitting tribute to Cynthia. Those of us who knew her will always remember her.

Alphabet Soup /Milt Stevens. I hear you about understanding the technical papers that we 3 Benfords have written about galactic beacons. After writing technical works for 45 years now I am still surprised at how many non-technical readers are unable to grasp the essence of scientific thoughts. You might like to know that Greg and I wrote an accessible short version for *Analog* that appeared in 2000 by Nick. I think I will send it to you by e-mail.

A Propos de Rhine/Jim Caughran You say "Arizona, California and other states have run out of money by tax avoidance". Nothing could be further from the truth; California is one of the highest taxed states in the union. The upper bracket income tax rates rose by 3% to a bit over 13% on 1 January. The sales tax is slightly under 10%. California's fundamental problem is that, for a decade, it's budget has been growing faster than the economy, which is it's tax base. That's unsustainable. It's also hostile to business, with excessive regulation, convoluted processes to make anything happen. (Even after the hurdle of an environmental impact statement is successfully passed, 50% of projects are delayed by reactionary environmentalists.) This causes a dearth of new starts and a steady exodus of businesses and the wealthy taxpayers out of the state. Meanwhile, we have one 1/3rd of all those on welfare in the United States, but only 12% of the population.

Snickersnee /Bob Silverberg There's more here about your health than I have learned from you in many conversations we have had about it over the last few years. It was good to see the whole arc of the story. I note a copy of *Spaceship* on the cover of one of the other fanzines in the mailing. My word! You've been doing this a long time.

Entropy Blues/Graeme Cameron Yes, Greg works real hard when he is guest of honor anywhere. I remember in particular the 1999 Worldcon in Melbourne where he had a major presentation, speech, panel or some such every day and was always available. You say you're 'curious to learn more' about *Vacuum* and *Void*, our early fanzines. So am I! Here's what I know: Greg's memory is that we produced it in carbon copy in late 1954 and sent to a handful of fans. There may have been 10 copies made. My memory is that we produced it between issuing *Void 1* in early '55 and *Void 2* later that year. I think it's probably impossible to find out the truth of it now because I don't think any copies exist.

Although I left *Void* after issue 13, I appear to have the biggest collection of the early *Voids* any anywhere in private hands. There's a pretty good group of them at the Eaton collection at the University of California Riverside. Greg has substantially fewer early *Voids* than I do, tho I have none of the *Voids* after 13. Two years ago when I was at Ted White's, he told me that there were a considerable number of the last issue *Void 29* upstairs in the attic in a box. However the entire attic is full boxes in jumbled condition. It would be a major labor of weeks to sort out what is up there. But they would probably find a treasure trove of old fanzines if someone were willing to put in the effort.

Motley 2, for the 302<sup>nd</sup> mailing of FAPA, is from Jim Benford, 1041 Los Arabis Ln., Lafayette, CA 94549. Phone is 925-351-4667. New e-mail: jimbenford@gmail.com.