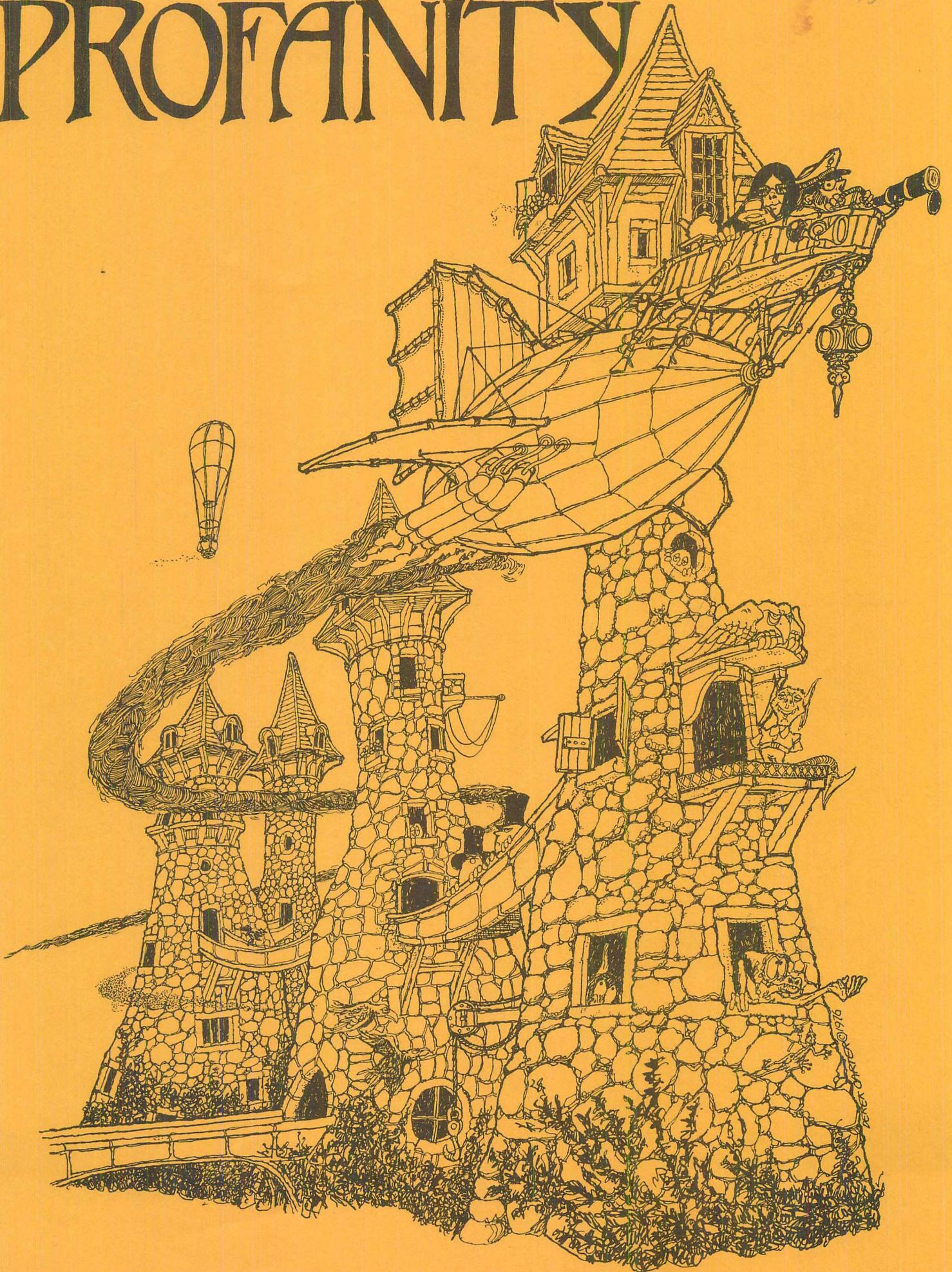


PROFANITY



AUGUST 1977

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fused (and subscription funds impounded.) Back issues: 3 for \$2.00. ...farno, farno.

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# Swearing In

## INSIDE HERE:

Cover by Derek Carter!

Swearing In: editorializing

Con Comics -- artwork: Linda Miller; script: BEP (In order to keep  
this going, I may have to publish more frequently...)

Rivercon 2 GoH Speech: Poul Anderson (art: Bill Rotsler)

LASFSians Limited: an attempt to introduce various LASFSians, who are  
somewhat known already outside L.A., to 1977/8 fandom, and let you  
see what we have to ~~put up with~~ offer. In some ways, these arti-  
cles may tell more about the delineator than about the delineatee.

Harness Razing: Phil Castora (art: Linda Miller)

Mike Glycer: Publishing Jiant or Something Worse: Elliot Wein-  
stein (art: Bill Rotsler)

Ruth or Consequences: a brief squib on the works of R. Rendell: BEP

The LASFS Marches On... : an attempt to give an overview of LASFS,  
its inhabitants, and activities. Part 1. BEP (art: Rotsler)

Fanquet Speech - 1970: Jayn Gallion (art: Bill Rotsler) (NOTE 1)

Tower Trivia - February 1977 (NOTE 2)

Blessings and Curses: letters, none more than 15 months old... .

Tales of the Days Hospitallers: Elayne (Part 1, I hope... .)

Back cover by Marc Schirmeister

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NOTE 1: Jayn's speech was never presented orally, a fact I was unaware of until this
month, as I was not present at the Fanquet. Ted Johnstone, who arranged the
Fanquet for Jayn, tells it this way:

"Jayn was really going to Give It to the LASFS. Especially since we
had had an argument right before the Fanquet about how many free meals
we were willing to give her. (I was willing to include her husband,
and his secondary wife, but I couldn't stretch the budget to include
Roger Lovin.) But then Hank and I both gave our introductory speeches
and said how pleased we were that a friend of long-standing had final-
ly Made It to success in writing, etc. etc. When Jayn got up she said,
'Well, I had this speech, but I don't think I can give it now. Thank
you.' And she sat down."

NOTE 2: The Trivia entry for 3/1/77 ends in the middle of a sentence, No further page
was ever done, but the end of that particular entry is:

the Fontainebleau's function rooms), I finally gave up and admitted I

couldn't do it. Especially since Don Lundry wants to use sales booths as well as the standard tables, and I have never worked with booths before. I hate to jump ship on the Suncon committee, which has quite as many problems as they need already, but better now than later when I have already screwed things up by trying to do something I am not able to handle. Off went a letter of resignation from the ConCom, together with floor plans and other instructions they had sent regarding the huckster room.

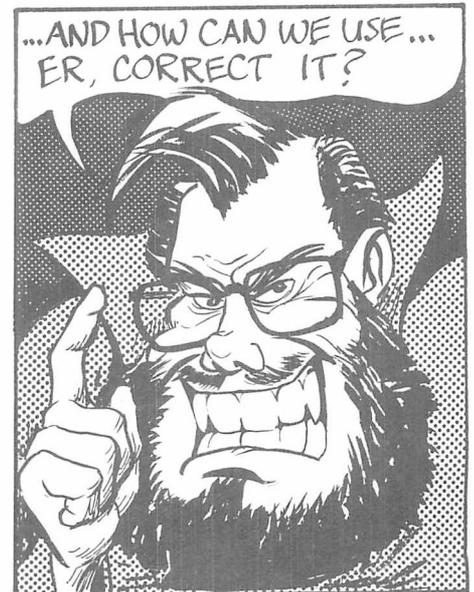
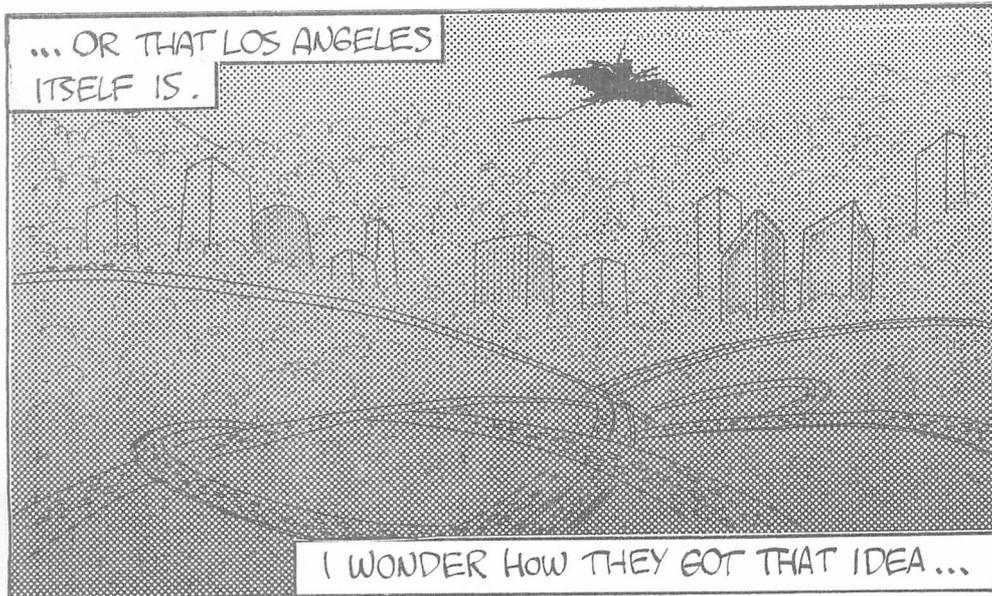
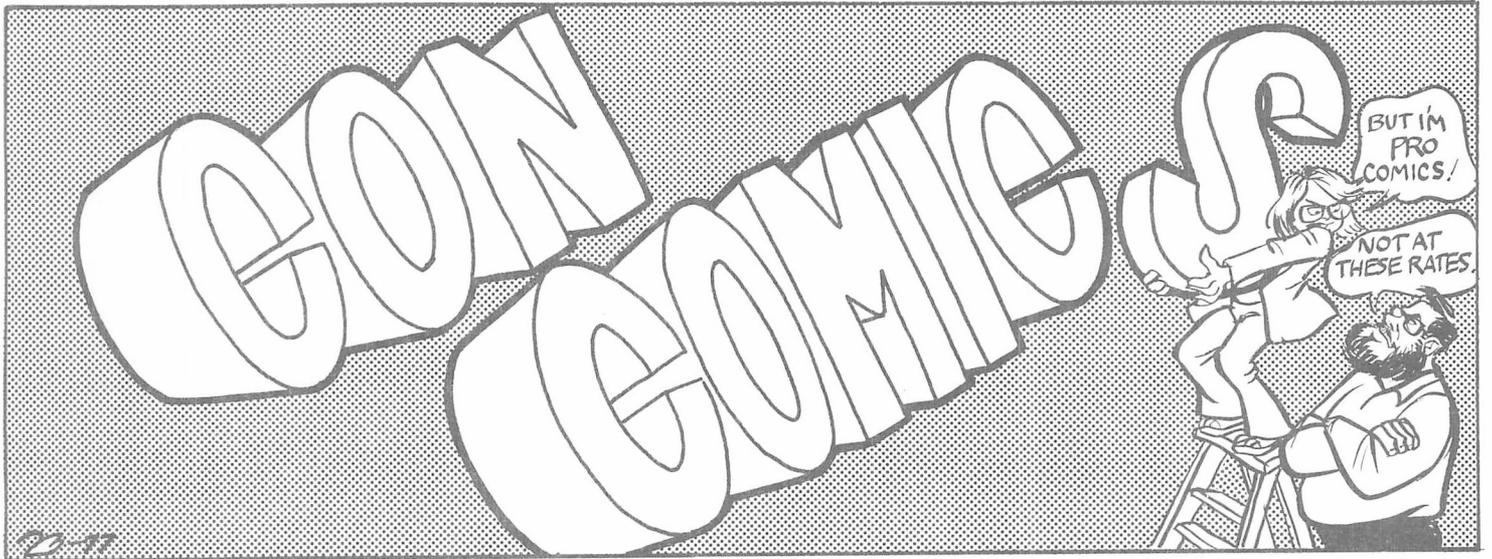
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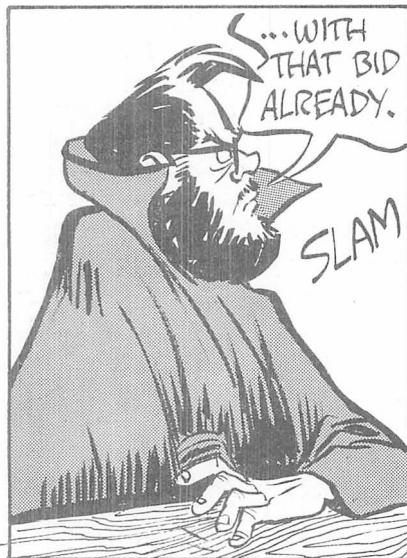
INSIDE ME: I'm going to crib this from the Stobclerzine I did in June, to get wider circulation to the ideas, if any:

Various people settle down to various Ways of life, if they settle down at all: familial; religious; hedonistic; social service; monument building; survival. Most of these are self-descriptive. The hedonistic Way includes all manner of living for sensory enjoyment, and the 'monument-building' Way includes all manner of working to leave one's mark on history/society/literature/etc. The 'survival' Way is the lowest level of living, and when it is operative it generally precludes concentration on any of the others. (One could argue that several of the others may be necessary -- or be thought necessary, anyway -- to survival. E.g., the religious Way, in which a person constantly beseeches some sort of divine intervention on his behalf, without which he cannot survive, but I maintain that such a situation makes the survival way primary and any other Way secondary. Perhaps I have left a Way or more out, but if I have someone will, I'm sure, tell me about it.

Personally, several of the Ways are unavailable to me. The familial Way is inappropriate unless one wants to consider the oft-quoted bromide about Fandom being a Family. Tried it once, wasn't much good at it, and didn't really like it. The religious Way is distasteful, whether one means the standard formal religions or the plethora of nonstandard, formal or informal, ones. In general, I prefer to continue my vague belief that I can only blame me (or occasionally others who interact with me) for what happens to me. The social service Way is unappealing; I am quite lazy and not at all interested in being a workhorse either at an occupation or at some volunteer center. Besides, I don't care much for People, much as I may like aspects -- or even all -- of a great many individual persons. Monument-building I've considered, in a small way, every once in a while, but without much success in seeing any way to go about it. I've managed to intrude my name on a few lists that will stay around the Microcosm for a while, but that's somewhat like constructing a sandhut for a starfish right above the low-tide line. As a Monument it isn't worth much. If I ever manage to complete the Fanzine Bibliography, and get it into circulation, that may be somewhat better -- but it tends to remind me of a little-known comicbook character named Supersnipe -- "The Boy With the Most Comic Books In America." Substitute "Fanzines."

That leaves the hedonistic Way, and, as far as I can tell, that's what I'm settling into. Actually, I'm not even particularly good at that, but it's worth working at. (Problems include: necessity of limiting the degree of concentration in any particular direction (or: overindulgence in A will have a negative effect on the ability to enjoy B); necessity for limiting total pursuit of enjoyment (or: failure to provide for the Long View has a tendency to push one into the Survival Mode); and necessity of acquiring partner(s) to share one's interests (or: part of the enjoyment is in recalling/reminiscing about the Good Times, and solitary indulgences do not lend themselves as well to such mental recycling as shared indulgences). I have run afoul of the first problem for many years, though there is presently some hope of correcting the mistake. (Weight is down more than 30 pounds since January.) The second has never been a problem for me; I've worked the Long View from multitudes of angles for many years. As for the third, we shall see... . As long as a reasonable number of the volunteers are female, something can probably be worked out. More parties, more cons, more con parties... . Would someone like to convince me this isn't the Way...?





# Poul Anderson

## GUEST OF HONOR RIVERCON 2

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, ladies and gentlemen:

First I would like to thank all of you for the great kindness and hospitality you have shown Karen and myself. You are making it a real pleasure as well as an honor to be here. Of course, this is no surprise, when so many happy memories attach to last year's Rivercon. I'm afraid it cannot be an annual event for us. We live just too far away. But we hope to be with you again in the future as often as circumstances permit; and we will always wish you a marvelous time at these gatherings, as well as in every other day of your lives.

Among our special enjoyments last year was the day after the convention, when Cliff Amos so kindly drove us around in this charming city. It happens to have been where Karen spent several years of her girlhood, and she was delighted to revisit well-remembered places. For my part, I was fascinated not only by the handsomeness and the distinctive character of much of Louisville, but by the sense of history.

True, quite aside from native Americans, whose ancestors seem to have reached this continent before the last ice age -- quite aside from them, California has about as long a recorded history as Kentucky, or perhaps slightly longer if you count Drake's visit of 1578. The Spaniards moved north in the eighteenth century, largely because they were worried about the British and the Russians moving south, and founded the Presidio of San Francisco in 1776. It was two years later that George Rogers Clark established a military base where we are meeting today. However, by then Kentucky had long been an Anglo-Saxon frontier, whereas the United States was not to get seriously involved with California for another couple of generations. Thus you who live here live in what has been a part of our country from its beginnings.

It happens that Karen and I were in Boston earlier this year. There, of course, you are really in the middle of American origins. At the same time, it has curiously many resemblances to my home area. For instance, several years ago I was there to give a lecture at MIT. This was when campuses all over the country were afflicted with riots. Such a thing happened the evening I was scheduled to speak, and the tear gas got a little thick; to my talk was cancelled. I came back a year later and gave it, remarking that it had been very kind of my hosts earlier to have gone to so much trouble to make a resident of the Berkeley area feel at home.

To some extent, Boston and Berkeley seem to me to be on the cutting edge of the future. But that is not invariably good. Louisville and places like it seem to me to be different, basically more stable. Naturally, I don't mean that they are static. Far from it. Tremendous progress has been made around here, and is being made, and I suspect it will prove more durable than the flashier developments on either coast. A cutting edge is useless without something solid behind it. The strength of America is, precisely, middle America. Louisville is actually a better place than Boston or Berkeley in which to reflect upon our bicentennial.

Yes, I'm afraid I too am going to make some remarks about the bicentennial. You may well already be weary of hearing that word. If so, my apologies. I would like to use it as a takeoff point, but I promise you, only as that. It does give pause for thought, this fact that our country is 200 years old.

Coincidentally, in a few more months I will be 50 years old. In case you wonder how that feels, I'll tell you that it's not bad when one considers the alternative.



and the politician, who were arguing as to whose profession was the oldest. The lawyer said, "When Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden, they had to have some rules to live by; therefore law is the oldest profession." -- "But before then, God took Eve from Adam's rib," said the doctor, "-- surely a surgical operation." -- "But wait," said the engineer, "in the beginning God created order out of chaos: that was an engineering job." -- "Ah," said the politician, "and who do you think created the chaos?"

As a matter of fact, not only was the Republic itself a fantastically bold venture, but later on there were countless utopian communities established in America, some of them on very strange principles indeed. How could a science fiction writer be more imaginative than, say, the Shakers, to name just one? The most successful of these undertakings, which is still going strong, took place in Utah. I hope my Mormon friends won't mind my remarking that their church, like our country, has a grand science fiction flavor about it. That ecclesiastical division into stakes and wards is pure Heinlein, isn't it? And so, by the way, is the raw courage with which their pioneers entered the wilderness.

A complaint often made against science fiction stories is that great events in them happen too fast, and are brought about by a few determined individuals. This is alleged to be unrealistic. Well, let's just look at the historic transformation of America. From the Declaration of 1776 to the annexation of 1848 that established us on the Pacific coast was a period of 72 years: one reasonable lifetime. The steam engine, the cotton gin, the combine, the steamboat, the railroad, the telegraph, the telephone, the electric light, the automobile, the airplane, the atomic power plant, with all their consequences, came in at the same headlong pace; and always you can easily identify the few persons responsible. We think it remarkable that just 66 years elapsed between the first powered flight at Kitty Hawk and the first manned landing on the moon. Sixty-six years! My mother has been around longer than that. Yet this accelerating rate of change is in the American pattern.

Other countries are changing too, of course. We are not unique in that respect. However, we are unique in that rapid change is not a recent thing with us; it is part of our tradition. Since 1776, we as a nation have led the world toward a better future.

This we do socially as well as technologically. Only think: Here we are, a huge, sprawling, incredibly diverse country, trying to get rid of ancient injustices and create a peaceful, democratic society where everybody gets a fair shake -- "with liberty and justice for all" as we say. We do have the advantages of common citizenship and, mostly, a common language, as well as pretty broad general agreement on what kind of civilization we would like to become. Of course we keep making hideous mistakes. But I tell you, if we with our advantages can't make a go of it, then forget any dreams you have about a whole world of peace and plenty. No way. We, here, today are making this attempt, perhaps a bolder and more radical attempt than any exploit of any science fiction hero.

A few of you may be thinking, "What about certain other countries? Aren't they trying something really new, a whole different stage of history?" Well, I don't imagine anybody here wants a partisan polemic from me. As for eastern Europe, I'll simply report what a friend of mine, a scientist, heard in Hungary when he was there in a professional capacity. His Magyar colleagues told him how Soviet geneticists have triumphantly succeeded in crossbreeding a cow and a giraffe, thereby producing an animal that grazes in Hungary and is milked in Russia.

Extrapolating from the past record of Communism, we can look forward to the day when a Communist government takes over all of North Africa and announces its intention of reclaiming the Sahara Desert. For 50 years thereafter, nothing happens. Then there is a shortage of sand.

Now I don't want to sound too one-sided. We are certainly not perfect. For instance, in this great land of ours, millions of people are idle. Fortunately, most of them have jobs. But I must agree that, under capitalism, man exploits man. Under soc-

ialism, it is the exact reverse.

Seriously. collectivism is nothing new. It is as old as the neolithic god-kings, if not older. The principal difference between Czar and commissar is that the Czar was less oppressive. As for China, I see little to choose between Chairman Mao and Emperor Shi Huang-Ti, founder of the Chin dynasty in the third century B.C. -- who put an end to a period of civil war, established totalitarian control, started the Great Wall and never mind the human cost, and did his best to scrub the influence of Confucious out of the culture.

Let us not feel smug. Here in America, we are repeating a lot of old mistakes ourselves, including our own brand of collectivism. Big government grows ever bigger, on the whole with the eager help of big business and big labor. Wider and wider, denser and denser becomes the web of regulations, fixed prices, minimum wages, quotas, tariffs, subsidies, allocations, penalizations of efficiency, and officious meddling, until we seem to be approaching a system like that of the medieval guilds. On the far side of them, if we continue on this road of retrograde evolution, lies the condition of the medieval serf. Many people even seem to want a glorified version of that. After all, the serf had a form of social guarantee. Though he could not leave the land on which he was born, he could not be ordered off it either. In one respect, he actually did better than we: unlike we modern taxpayers, he only had to work for his master one-fourth of the year.

This reversion to primitive forms of social order may be hastened by the collapse of the economy, which is no more or less than the system of cooperation by which we live. Such collapse is a probable consequence of continued inflation. Ever since money was first invented, inflation has resulted from debasing the currency. This remains true nowadays, in spite of our calling it Keynesian economics.

In respects like these, we are being untrue to our past, and thereby failing our future. It is no wonder that polls show the people are growing increasingly distrustful of government, and that at each election a smaller percentage of them bother to vote than did before, in spite of all scoldings and cajolings. I suggest to you that this is not bad, rather it is a healthy sign. Government is in fact doing much more to us than for us, no matter whom we elect, and more and more of the people know it. This leads me to hope they would support a well-thought-out program for reversing the trend, for reducing the size and activity of the federal establishment -- in due course, also the state establishments. Our aim should be not to see how much government we should have, but how little we can get by with. This attitude is not reactionary. Rather it is the collectivists of every kind who have been the reactionaries. They have recoiled from the vision of 1776, back toward almighty overlords. If we are to resume progress, to move in a forward direction, we must begin by retracing a good many steps.

I do not pretend that that will be easy, or that the necessary measures are obvious. On the contrary, if we do try to rebuild and expand the liberty of the individual, it will be as hard a task as this nation ever undertook. It will require great sacrifices, in large part because we will have to pay off on so many of our old follies. It will confront us with problems whose solutions demand our utmost wisdom; and nevertheless we will often be in error.

We have already encountered this unpleasant truth, in the course of a noble effort to get for every American his or her full civil rights in fact as well as in law. The paradoxes, the clashes of conflicting claims to equity, the anger aroused on all sides, the occasional tragedies, show us that there is no quick and simple answer. Indeed, it is not a case of good guys versus bad guys, it is far more a case of differing philosophies about what the rights of man really are, and of well-meant measures having unforeseen consequences.

Here's another, less well-known example of the difficulty of progress. Out in California we have the initiative, whereby the people themselves can propose and vote

on new laws. As a result, on this year's primary ballot there was a proposition which, if passed, would in effect have banned nuclear powerplants throughout the state. Now regardless of your own opinions on that issue, you must admit that it is highly technical. What would the respective environmental impacts be of building more nuclear reactors or going entirely back to fossil fuels? Even the experts disagree. And yet victory on the issue went to the side which had come up with the cleverest thirty-second television pitches -- hardly an ideal way to arrive at a decision.

At the same time, when left to themselves, the experts have perpetrated plenty of ghastly blunders, and some which are funny to everybody except the people directly affected. For instance, harking back to Boston, a certain glass-walled high rise building there keeps popping out panes with every slight change in atmospheric pressure. It is also sinking, not just the normal few inches, but apparently indefinitely. Seems the engineers forgot to check where bedrock is underneath it.

We have gotten used to the idea that our political leadership is, at best, incompetent. But it's scary when we find that our technological leadership is, too.

So to what extent can we contain this managerial society we are creating? How can we steer a course between rigidity and chaos? I have no simple prescription. But I do know that only by ever-continued effort, and by the fullest use of our intelligence, will we have any chance of keeping our liberties, let alone enhancing them. In fact, civilization as we know it will not survive very much longer without more hard thinking and more wise action than we have hitherto given it.

Now science fiction has always prided itself on being a literature of intelligence, written and read by people who actively enjoy thinking. To be quite honest, let's admit that a good deal of it is pretty witless or, at most, light entertainment for an idle hour. However, this is the case with every other category, too. Each of them, including ours, has the right to be judged by its best, not its worst or its mediocre exemplars. And surely we can agree that there is a great deal of food for thought in the works of Robert Heinlein or Ursula LeGuin, to name just two almost at random. This is true whether or not a particular reader happens to agree with an author, or with the logic that that author uses in developing the implications of his or her premises. Disagreement is a sharp stimulant for the brain. Every story with original scientific or sociological or philosophical content becomes the occasion for many a glorious bull session. Participants in these may well emerge with new ideas of their own.

Some stories have examined the nature and possible limits of freedom, explicitly and in considerable detail -- for instance, LeGuin's The Dispossessed, and several different books by Heinlein. Others have borne on the subject in less direct fashion, by exploring themes which are relevant -- for instance, leadership. We cannot think sensibly about a free society before we know something about the hero, the leader whom men will follow anywhere, whether he be the hero as Messiah in Frank Herbert's Dune, the hero as soldier in Gordon Dickson's Dorsai! or the hero in any of several other aspects. Strong leadership may or may not be vital to the survival of a free society. If it is, we need ways to encourage it to appear, and, at the same time, to keep it from taking over everything. If it is not necessary, then we must find ways to keep it from arising, lest the people themselves willingly give up their liberties to their hero.

Other writers, other stories have much to say on this general topic -- but not yet enough. Of course, we are all very far from wanting all science fiction to deal with the same matter. That would be fatally dull. We have a whole universe out yonder, a whole future, wide open for our exploration. Or say rather we have a whole set of universes and futures.

Nevertheless, I think freedom is a vitally important and tremendously exciting theme, out of which any number of memorable stories could spring. I hope more writers

will use it as our country enters its third century of life.

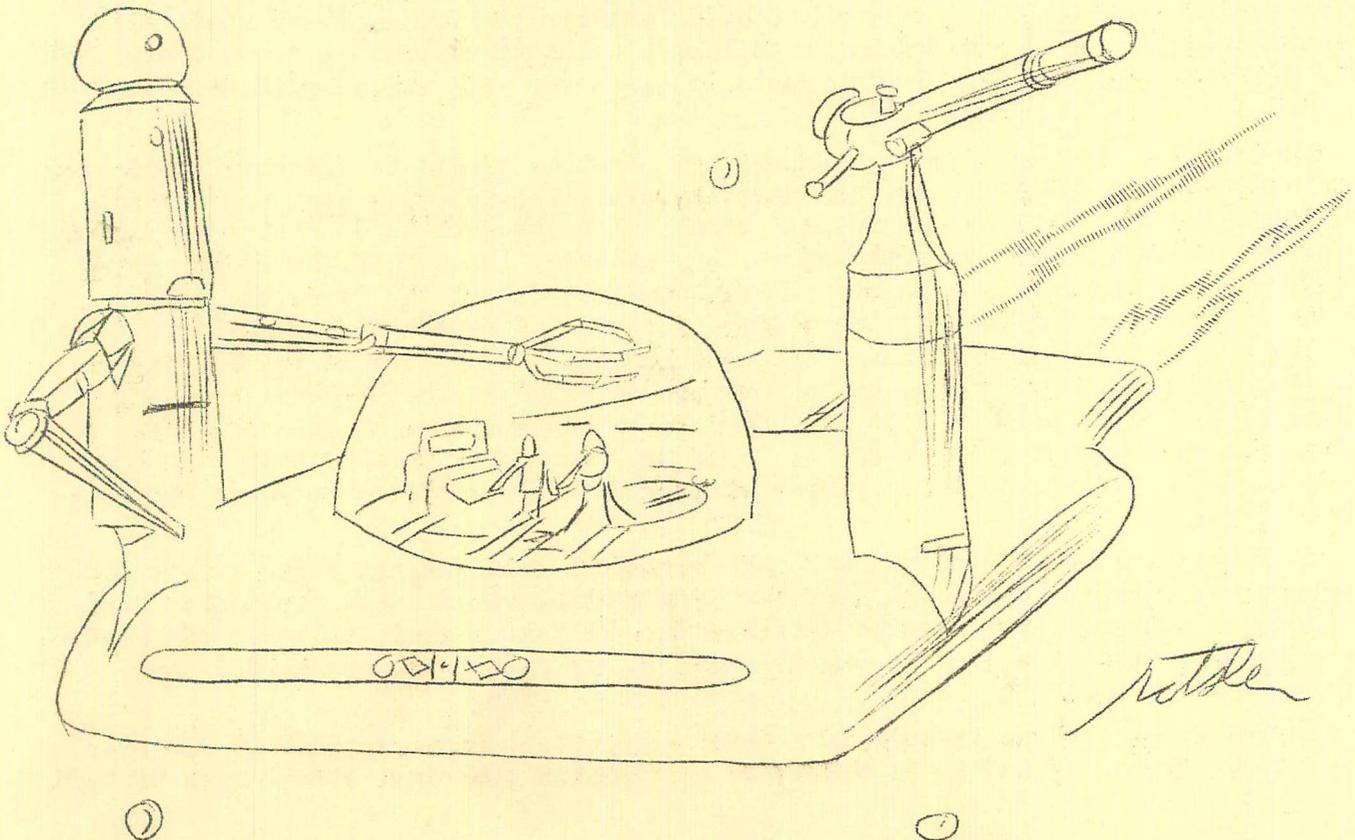
Needless to say, science fiction alone cannot provide answers to our human dilemmas, nor can it rescue the world. At most, it can provoke thought and, in a humble way, help some people, especially young people, get into the habit of thinking -- of looking at things from new angles and thereby seeing new aspects of them. That, though, is not so little, and certainly not easy. It challenges us, writer and reader alike, to give the best that is in us. If we do, then our smallest, most certain reward will be pleasure. It's just barely possible that, in addition, a few of us will be put on the track of ideas that may prove helpful to the common weal.

However that works out, good science fiction of every kind is always fun to read. The gathering together of good science fiction people is equally great fun. Therefore I am going to stop talking, so we can all get back down to our proper business of enjoying ourselves. Thank you.

Poul Anderson

Louisville

July 1976



Phil Castora:

# HARNESS RAZING

A great deal could be said about Jack Harness -- most of it, oddly enough, suitable (if not, perhaps, advisable) for a family audience. Though, again, much may depend upon the family. But I digress -- and so well, too... .

I must admit to having known Jack "when..." -- mainly because if I don't, the redoubtable Mr. Pelz will undoubtedly do something for which I will be sorry. In fact, my friendship with Jack goes back before his involvement with Scientology, an involvement which has been of great benefit to him, if not necessarily to the rest of us. Before Scientology, Jack was quiet. Taciturn -- getting words out of Jack was not at all unlike getting sense out of the LASFS. Since then, of course, it has been a matter of trying to shut him up. Every time Jack opens his mouth, a handful of puns fall out, and every time he closes it, he bites a couple in two that were trying to get out. If the pun is the lowest form of wit, Jack must risk a case of the bends when he rises to the level of a Polak Joke. In fact, I'm told that the Mohole Project was dickering for his sense of humor, but negotiations broke down when Jack refused to allow deductions for Pepto-Bismol for the Crews' stomachs.

Besides, he wanted extra to explain his jokes. You see, Jack also delights in obscure references to science fiction and other fantastic literature. "Obscure" is actually an extreme understatement. I mean, when he has to explain them to Marty Massoglia and Fred Patten, each of whom has read at least as much science fiction as has ever been published... .

Then, of course, there's Jack's taste in shirts. His taste isn't very good, but he certainly has a lot of it! Loud? -- he once got a ticket for wearing one in a hospital zone. Several of his shirts compare -- unfavorably -- to an H-bomb explosion in a paint factory. Dan Alderson was just telling me the other day that a project is being started to look for reply signals from the nearer stars. Recently, he has been wearing shirts which are, by comparison, more reserved. The explanation has been put forward that his tailor has gone blind, but that seems unlikely, as he must certainly have been unsighted in the first place. Further investigation must await finding someone sufficiently loose in the flue to undertake it.

Not everyone has had the fortune to sample Jack's cooking. You may or may not be surprised to learn that Jack is an excellent cook! I have sampled his cooking on numerous occasions over the years, and have, in each case, stopped only when stuffed to the gunwhales. On the other hand, I have not enquired too closely as to the nature of the dishes set before me. Obviously inspired by the oriental, his cuisine is difficult to characterize accurately. The nearest I can come is to describe it as part cosmopolitan and part off-the-wall. Only his greengrocer knows for sure.

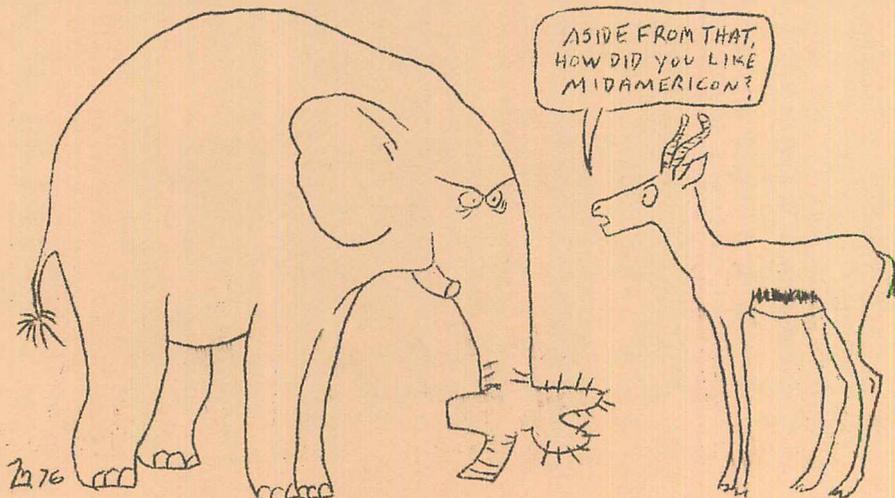
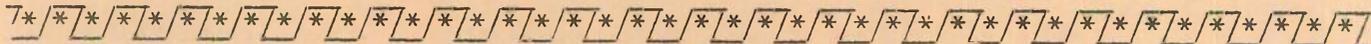
Jack's sense of the absurd has seldom been exhibited quite as patently as in the mid-sixties, when he set up housekeeping with the one and (fortunately) only Owen Hannifen. (I really shouldn't put Owen down -- he's a good man, and easy to take in small doses. Of course, there's no such thing as a small dose of Owen Hanni-

fen.) They set up shop as fans-in-residence in a quadruplex on Leeward Avenue, near Seventh and Vermont. It was a standard quadruplex apartment, with a livingroom, diningroom, kitchen, bedroom, and another bedroom arranged in a straight line from front to back. Unfortunately, such a simple arrangement was beyond the capacity of one sensitive fannish mind, whose owner promptly christened the place "The Labyrinth." The name was later augmented to "The Labyrinth of Space," with later moves resulting in quarters named "Labyrinth III," "Labyrinth of Valeron," and "Labyrinth Duquesne." I lived in all of these, though only for the last month of "Duquesne's" existence -- well, \$10.00 a month for sofa-sleeping privileges was pretty good even then -- and I can even bring myself to remember a few bits and pieces of life (if that's the right word) there.

For example, The Labyrinth was where HEARTS AT MIDNIGHT was composed: the world's longest-running one-shot. It was done over a period of several weeks by the simple expedient of leaving a stencil in the typewriter every Thursday night and weekend. The Labyrinth is no more, but those of us who lived in or visited it still look back upon it with a sense of longing -- for dramamine.

At the Labyrinth, as elsewhere in LA Fandom, one of the regular features of fan get-togethers was card games. Jack is an inveterate card player -- and a very good one. He plays poker, brag, bourrée, bridge, 500, hearts, and Oh Hell, all with skill and an occasional stab of intuition. At poker, his inventiveness has been exhibited in his creation of numerous absurdly-named variations of the game -- some of them actually playable. Card games have also been an outlet for his collector's instincts combined with his sense of humor. He owns, for example, a deck which contains, in addition to the usual cards, four 11's, four 12's, and the red 13's; and a deck with the red and black colors of the suits reversed -- a perfectly good deck, except that after a few minutes, all the suits look alike. Of course, Jack delights in substituting a funny deck into the game when playing with people who've never seen it before. We wouldn't mind so much if he didn't always win...

I don't know what else I can say about Jack that anyone would care to read. He has a mother and a father, but everyone else I know has, or has had, one of each also. He has a pair of sisters, but so do a lot of other people. They -- the sisters, not the other people -- weren't bad looking, but last I heard they were living at home in Pittsburgh. They're probably married now, I suppose. He has thin hair and myopia, but I can boast as much. (Maybe a bit more hair and bit less myopia, but what's a few diopters between friends?) I'm not as blond as he is, but a bottle of peroxide would fix that. And I'm not as overweight as Jack, but that may not last. Still, Jack is about as unique as anyone I've ever ~~met~~ met. If you don't know him, get to know him, and enjoy! enjoy!



Ellicot Weinstein:

# MIKE GLYER: Publishing Giant or Something Worse?

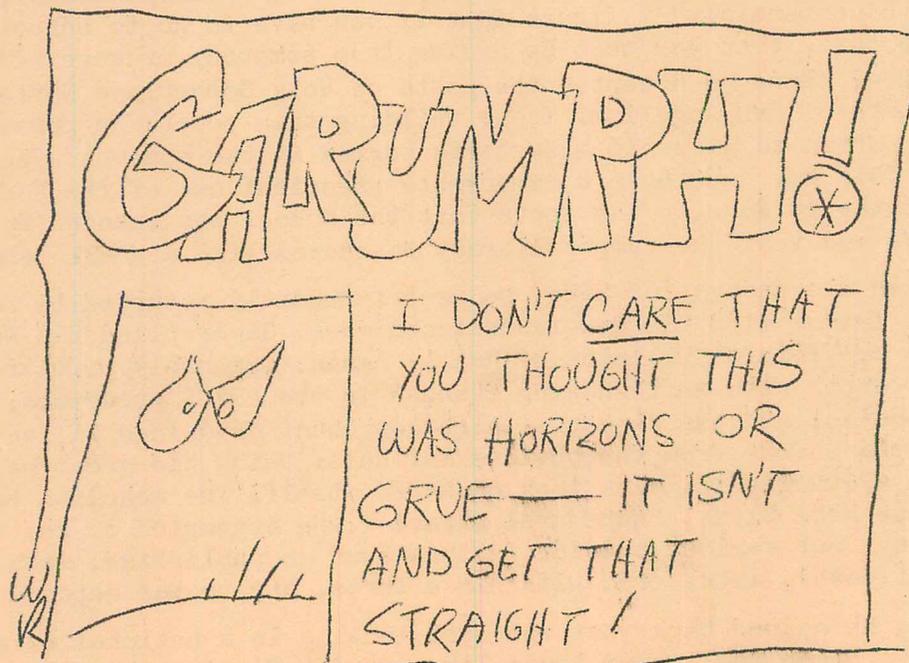
The fan we know as Mike Glycer (or other unprintable words) began his publishing career when many of us were still reading dog-eared Heinlein juveniles in the high school library. The fact that Mike was also reading dog-eared Heinlein juveniles in the high school library is immaterial; the point is that in 1969 he placed into meager fannish circulation the now famous *NEW ELLIPTIC*. This publication was sponsored by his high school, and was where such fannish greats as Richard Wadholm first saw print!

I met Mike one night at the Science Fiction extension course at the University of Southern California sometime in 1971. In those days the course was administered in actual classroom style, so that Mike's antics were soon noticed, and he and Yours Truly were sent post haste from the class after we came up with the true version of the third Dune book. (It was an attempt to relate the subversive Bene Brit to the sand mobiles; the result was *Dune Buggy*.) Glycer quickly progressed from there to actually running the course with me. At the end of 1971 we heard about organized (?) fandom, something known as the LASFS, which we joined early in 1972.

The Publishing Giant then started publishing *PREHENSILE* - the fanzine that hangs by its tale. His reputation spread. In *APA L* he began a long and vocal series of zines to establish what Jack Harness referred to as the Mike Glycer-Messiah Era. It didn't really matter who said what; if it was possible to have an argument about it Glycer was ready to swing his double-bladed axe.

All this made Mike extremely popular; it earned him the title of Mr. Feud. To keep fear in the hearts of all fans near and abroad, Milt Stevens started spreading the rumor that Glycer was an ex-sumo wrestler who tore Volkswagons in half. I added to the rumor: he also eats them for breakfast. Mike was very sensitive about all these allusions to his presence, but his only remark to me was, "You're beginning to look like a Volkswagon... ." This era of Mike's fannish career was stormy indeed, but after disposing of East Coast fandom and picking his teeth with Ted White, Mike settled down to serious fannish endeavors.

These endeavors included, of course, participation in a serious aggregation of hoaxes



and parodies that hit APA L in the latter part of '72. My ascension to the Official Emperorship of APA H (the APA for Hoaxes) made Glycer the prime partner in SF Hoaxdom. At LACon a group of us, including Norm Hochberg (Hollyn), Richard Wadholm, Jack Harness et al., gathered together and attacked a local MacDonald's to hold the first Ranquet. (This noble tradition has been carried on to this day, yet few remember the somber note of the First Awarding of the Hogus.)

Glycer was not yet ready to fade into obscurity through this emphasis on local fandom! He continued to publish PREHENSILE, and improved it with each and every issue. One of these improvements was getting Milt Stevens to help publish the zine. Also, not printing articles by me too often helped quite a bit. But the biggest improvement of all was in going offset and running up a multi-hundred dollar budget per issue.

By this time, Mike had established a certain mystique, and an aura that caused many to flock to Osceola St. to hear him expound on the ways of feud and nastiness. Soon, realizing that nastiness was a quality that many of us shared, Mike, Craig Miller, Milt Stevens and I started meeting every once in a while to discuss ways to rip off fandom -- The Gouge Gang, who steal from fandom to give to themselves, who make millions off of cons they run, who break the wallets of fans everywhere -- and to discuss the finer qualities of local fans who endeared themselves to us. Naturally, there is not all that much that can be said about most locals in a nice tone of voice, so our meetings quickly became known as Slandercons. At one of these famous gatherings, the Slandercrew invaded a pizza parlor (apocalyptically called Mike's Pizza) and ordered an A La Cruddo Pizza (everything on it -- except anchovies, of course). The pizza proved to be a formidable enemy and had to be attacked on several fronts. Mike took the east, I the north, Milt the south, and Craig the west. Ed Cox, who was also present, doodled in the center. After a long and furious battle, there was but one piece left. Tempting, but cold, and not yet ready to surrender. We prepared to leave the battleground, when all of a sudden the pizza leaped into the air and attacked Mike Glycer. A skirmish then ensued, which lasted but a few minutes and ended with an abrupt cry of "Die, Volkswagon!" After the mess had been cleared up, it was noticed that the pizza slice had finally bitten the dust. The sawdust.

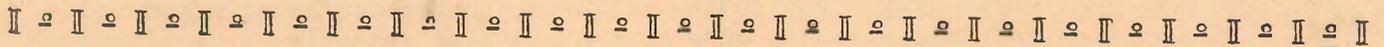
After the Battle of Pizza Flats, it became very evident that Mike had to leave town. He had insulted one fan too many, and a warrant was out for him. He took refuge in an abandoned college town in Ohio, and pretended to study popular culture for a year. We have suspicions about this year in Mike's life, because, when asked about "popular culture," he said, "Ah, well, we just study MacDonald's, Jack-in-the-Box, Andy Warhol, and the American Bicentennial." I figure that if you have to go to school to learn about things like that, then you must be hiding from somebody or something. Mike must have been desparate, since he accepted the posts of Holy Gopher and North American Kahuna in the Church of Herbangelism. Then, wielding this power, he persuaded the people in Bowling Green to give him a Master's Degree in the somewhat vague field of popular culture. This may have been a remarkable prescient use of The Force, or it might have something to do with the facts that the school was founded by Scotch Herbangelist Templars and that the campus library is shaped like a small German auto.

A year in seclusion was enough for Mike, so he triumphantly returned to Los Angeles to subvert the local fandom with his new-found techniques. Glycer plied his Powers and got himself installed as Official Collator of APA L. Again, immensely popular with the gentry, he lashed forth with earthshaking changes in the APA L structure. Screaming voices, mangled bodies, and the stench of high-copycount crudzines filled the air, but Mike stood above the clamor from the obvious infidels. Using his great popularity garnered from the APA L OCship, Mike took on LASFS itself. The monolith collapsed, and in the rubble stood Mike Glycer, Procedural Director. He attempted to restructure the mess in his own way, but various outside factors such as publishing, fanac, employment, lack of employment, etc., interfered with his efforts, and he was deposed ingloriously.

Dejected and hurt, he gained back what was lost locally in a national effort to change fannish history. He began publishing again like never before; an almost endless stream

of fanzines poured out of the Glycer mansion. ORGANLEGGER, a famous newszine in itself, became the first publication to bring fandom all the news it cared to hear, even if it was invented! (Later, in other efforts along this line, Mike affiliated himself with SFINCTOR, which was kidnapped sometime in 1976 and has not been seen since). ORGANLEGGER gave way to SCIENTIFRICTION, which became the best fanzine not to be nominated for a Hugo for almost three years straight. The Stan Burns Minireview, made familiar to an entire generation of fans in PREHENSILE, was resurrected and brought to new heights. Cagle-Locke interviews became an accepted alternative to rabies and was eagerly sought by humor-deprived fans everywhere.

It is only fair to end this capsule summary of Mike Glycer, Publishing Jiant, with a brief listing of his future aspirations. Mike is working on a coup to wrest the power-head of APA H away from Steve Beatty. He is also still trying to write the novel that will net him \$100,000. And he continues to try to work out the Ultimate Fan Feud, which will result in a dozen murders, five suicides, and many disappearances. Mike Glycer continues to wield the power that he gained through studies in Bowling Green, and he will surely take a Hugo, or even a Hogu, in his time. To quote a conversation we overheard: "Obi-wan Glycer? I haven't heard that name in a long time!" "My friends say that he is dead." "Not dead yet, only he should be!"



# Ruth and Consequences

Last year I started reading the works of Ruth Rendell, who is touted (by her publishers' blurbs) as "the new first lady of mystery - in the grand tradition of Agatha Christie" [Bantam] and "the New Mistress of Mystery" [Ballantine]. As far as I can determine, this listing is complete:

- 1964: From Doon With Death (\*)
- 1965: To Fear a Painted Devil
- 1966: Vanity Dies Hard [British title: In Sickness and In Health]
- 1967: Sins of the Fathers [Original title: A New Lease of Death] (\*)  
Wolf to the Slaughter (\*)
- 1968: The Secret House of Death []
- 1969: The Best Man to Die (\*)
- 1970: A Guilty Thing Surprised (\*)
- 1971: One Across, Two Down  
No More Dying Then (\*)
- 1972: Murder Being Once Done (\*)
- 1973: Some Lie and Some Die (\*)
- 1974: The Face of Trespass
- 1975: Shake Hands For Ever (\*) []
- 1976: Demon In My View []  
The Fallen Curtain and Other Stories []

(\*): Features Chief Inspector Wexford and Detective Inspector Burden  
[] : Not yet read...

If you like series characters, I can definitely recommend Wexford and Burden -- they are well drawn, and Rendell has provided a twist on the usual team-up of Scotland Yard detectives. (These are actually from the somewhat rustic town of Kingsmarkham.) She has the older, fatter Chief Inspector be the liberal easy-to-get-along-with one, and the younger, good-looking, happily married (to begin with, at least) Michael Burden be the conservative, prudish type. It works well.

If you read the non-series books, make sure you aren't subject to Depression. In the three I've read Rendell manages to catch one up in the view of a protagonist enmeshed in exceedingly likely circumstances, and proceedings inexorably therefrom toward his doom. The Face of Trespass is the most terrifying, but One Across, Two Down is almost as bad/good. ...BEP

# The LASFS Marches On...

THE LOS ANGELES SCIENCE FANTASY SOCIETY, INCORPORATED started life in October 1934.

It has gone through periods of great acclaim and through periods of disrepute -- and it may depend on the chronicler whose work one is reading which is which. To my view, LASFS/1977 seems to be somewhere in between -- rather a disreputable organization/group, but one which most out-of-town (or -state or -country) visitors still want to visit. Maybe just once.

A view of LASFS generally starts with a visit to a weekly meeting, which is always on Thursday night. Since September of 1973, the club has owned its clubhouse, a fact that has made meetings easier to hold, but caused a degree of moneygrubbingness to overlay many Official Attitudes and Actions. The Building Fund was started by Paul Turner, then Procedural Treasurer of LASFS, in 1963, when LASFS had been kicking around for 29 years meeting in private homes, sublet rooms, park halls, restaurants, and other such places where it had no control over the parameters of time and security. It took ten years to raise enough to buy a clubhouse, another to pay off the \$7,000. in loans from various members needed to meet the full price, and two more to realize the place wasn't large enough for the size of the membership we had managed to attract: 100+ every week. (During the pillar-to-post era, the standard meeting size was about 40-50.) The Building Fund, which had been relegated to paying off taxes and operating expenses, went into Savings Mode again. An investigation into possibilities of expansion of the existing site ran into governmental red tape of an incredible stickiness: in order to build a second storey, we'd have to provide parking for at least 11 cars (current spaces: 0; room on present property for parking: 0) and provide facilities for handicapped persons: restrooms, segregated by sex, and entry ramps (present restrooms: 1; ramp space in front of building: none). So we went looking for another building.

In June 1977 another property was found: two buildings, separated by a courtyard. We sold the old clubhouse at a \$10,000. profit, but still had to borrow again from various members to buy and renovate the new place. This time we'll have \$20,000. in loans to pay off, and it will certainly take more than a year. The degree of moneygrubbingness is likely to rise again for a while.

At the meeting, one discovers that LASFS is a big group made up of little ~~twits~~ groups. The comics freaks are clustered around Mike Frank, who is the current comic hustler for the LASFS, bringing in the latest releases along with the latest SF mags and paperbacks and some specialty items. (Most everything but the comics come from Change of Hobbit, as a service to LASFS by Mike. He also takes advance orders for the comics, at a discount, which saves the collectors the trouble of trying to catch each issue as it hits the stands.)

A larger group is fussing around with APA L, the weekly APA that has been going at LASFS meetings since October 1964. It has produced several fan-generations of LASFS-ians who think that a fanzine is the same thing as an APA, who call the compiled pages of APA L "an APA" instead of a "distribution" (or even a "mailing," seeing that there are out-of-area contributors to APA L. The fool who started APA L has several times regretted stealing the idea from APA F of New York, but there is nothing he can do about it now but sit back and keep his collection complete. At present, the APA L Official Collator is Marty Cantor, tobaccoist, Smokers' Rights Advocate, and neo-APA Manager. The OC serves until he quits in disgust or asserts rules that the contributors won't put up with. The job, as with most in and around LASFS, carries with it little thanks from those it serves, and requires a persistent and dedicated fool to continue in office. APA L is not Officially part of the LASFS. This has been asserted many times -- both by APA L and by the LASFS. The only control LASFS has over the APA is that it can refuse to let its meeting space be used for the thing. So far no dispute between the two organizations has become serious enough for that to occur.

ing while you were foolishly paying attention to what was going on up front, somewhere in the crowd of 100/ tightly-packed fans.

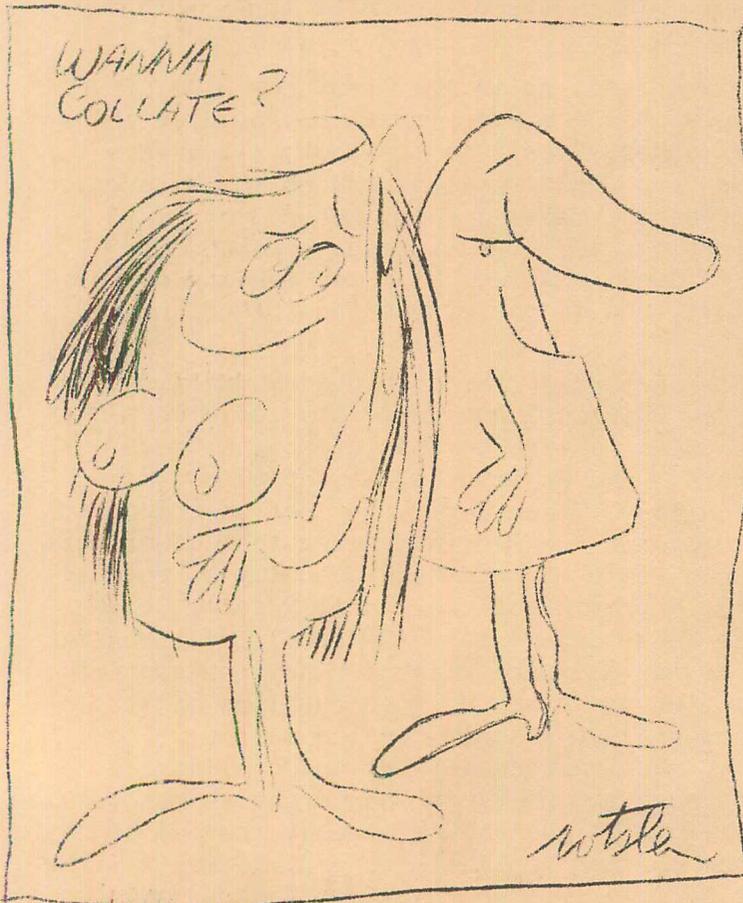
It may also be necessary to avoid various huckster-types, who will try to sell you: the latest 150-page Dungeons & Dragons fanzine/apa; antique fanzines at usuriously high prices; the latest issue of a "Star Wars" fanzine; membership in the latest scam Elliot Weinstein has cooked up; a lottery ticket based on the Hugo nominations, where you have a 1-in-625 chance of winning "up to \$100.00." Or various used and new books and magazines, fanzines and comics.

Group by group, pair by pair, one by one, they fade away. The last keyholder locks the place up, turning off the lights. (There are about 15 keys: 5 elected Procedural Officers, 4 elected Coraoration Officers, three appointed officers, and a few spares to be loaned out on occasion. Even the phone company has one, so they can get in to service the pay phone.) Determining just who the Last Keyholder is often appears to be a game of tag: "I'm leaving; you'll have to lock up." "No, I'm leaving, too -- So-and-so has a key."

Many first-time visitors to LASFS don't survive a meeting night. They disappear and are never heard of again. (Strangely enough, some of them actually join the LASFS, then disappear forever, though it is always made clear that guests have three free meetings before the heavy hand of the Treasurer falls upon them for their \$5. membership application fee. Very odd... .)

Those who do survive may branch out in their associations with LASFS. For instance, every Friday night the clubhouse is open for socializing. (An innovation since January of this year, it has been increasingly successful...sort of... .) From about 6:00 Friday evening, the place is open, and from about 6:30 there is at least one card game in progress there. LASFS has a standing regulation against gambling on the premises, as this would be likely to get the club in trouble with the fuzz, but since "gambling" is defined as games with money (or chips) in evidence, there is a wide

latitude for other games. The present favorite is Oh Hell, and there may be as many as four games of it going at the same time on a Friday night. This is loudly condemned by the non-cardplayers, but they appear to be in the minority at present. (One such took refuge in the Library, but a group of Hell-bent cardplayers invaded even that Sanctum in search of playing space. She managed to drive them out and into the somewhat smaller kitchen, but "they took the (Library's) card table with them as spoils of war." Occasionally some of the Friday-nighters do other things than play cards. They have even been known to discuss SF -- but that is in the small hours of the morning when everyone is high on fatigue toxins.



TO BE CONTINUED....  
(Card is now outdated as to address.)

**L. A. S. F. S.**  
**Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society, Inc.**  
**This World's Oldest Science Fiction Club**  
Established 1934  
Meets Every Thursday at 8:00 P.M.

11360 Ventura Blvd.  
Studio City, CA 91604

769-8843  
472-7785

The LASFS mimeograph starts running around 6p.m. Thursdays and continues until 8:30 so, when all those members who don't have access to better repro facilities have finished running their APA L zines. The OC puts the stacks in the collating racks according to some arcane scheme only he knows (or cares) about, assembles a sample distribution from which to type a Table of Contents, then pokes his head into the meeting room to yell for collators. A small gang of the latter assemble the 85-90 copies of the distribution while the ToC is being types on stencil and run off. Meantime, Dan Alderson, self-appointed Assistant OC and Record Keeper in extremis, makes cryptic notes on who is entitled to a copy. The whole schmeer -- Cover, ToC, and Contributions -- is finally assembled and distributed to the attendees (some of whom are acting as Agents for out-of-town, out-of-state, and even out-of-country contributors), around 10:30 or 11:00. After which, some people, who apparently come to LASFS only for APA L, go home. It's a Full Life... .

The Formal Meeting -- so-called -- starts whenever the Procedural Director arrives, or when it is finally determined that he isn't going to arrive any time reasonable (at which time the next senior procedural officer starts the meeting). 8:00 is the earliest time for beginning things, but 8:20 or so is more usual. The Litany begins with the introduction of any guests. They have probably already been trapped by the Junior Committeething, whose job it is to ferret out such non-members and obtain such pertinent data from them as: name, address, how long they've been reading SF, and how they found out about LASFS. The first and last items are publically announced to the membership (thus giving the impression that we're trying to find out who is leaking information about us to the Outside World so we can plug the leak). Guests with a good sense of timing absent themselves from the main meeting room before the Formal Meeting begins, thus avoiding public embarrassment. (LASFS occasionally has a problem with Junior Committeethings, since the membership tends to elect personable young females to the post. The reasoning, that guests would rather be greeted by such than by one of the hardbitten older male types, is sound, but not infrequently one of the oldtime members comes out of the woodwork after several years of non-attendance and finds himerself attacked as a guest. Again.)

The Minutes of the previous week's meeting are read, as is the Treasurer's Report. The latter is seldom listened to very closely, and a clever Treasurer could get away with cooking the books quite easily. (After several years in the post, I read a set of statistics from a month previous instead of a week previous, and no one noticed.) The Treasurer, sitting just inside the door of the meeting room, keeps a complete record of the membership's attendance at meetings and of dues paid, expenses met, and such. He hunts down deadbeats to extract dues from them (75¢ per meeting attended or cheaper rates by month, year, or Lifetime), and is one of the foci of the necessary moneygrubbingness of LASFS Inc.

The Formal Meeting trundles onward: Committee Reports (from appointed Committees, and self-appointed Committees); Old Business; New Business; Announcements (of almost anything, from the appearance of another issue of a fanzine to the latest status of one of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory's spacecraft); and Reviews (again, of almost anything, from films to books to TV shows to comics). There may or may not be a Program of some sort following these Standard Divisions of the meeting: an auction of miscellaneous material donated to the Building Fund (some of which may actually be related to SF in some way, but most of which won't), a preview of the latest Science Column by Dr. Pournelle, a session of some TV Game Show adapted for LASFSians. Occasionally the program is unintentionally diverting, as the audience gets to watch the auctioneer (or perhaps the Speaker) lose his temper at the constant interruptions of people going back and forth across the meeting room or just standing in the meeting room and talking loudly. It is hoped that the new meeting room set-up, which eliminates the necessity of going from the entrance through the meeting room to get to the socializing area, will improve things. Time will tell. (So will Newsweek, the L.A. Times and maybe even KARASS, but not more than one of them is likely to get the facts right on the matter.) Eventually, the meeting is Officially adjourned and everyone gets to stand around and blather -- or go out for something to eat or drink -- or wait in line for APA L -- or attempt to find so-and-so, who may have come in during the meet-

JAYN GALLION:

## FANQUET SPEECH - 1970

First of all, I'd like to say that I'm not so much honored as astonished to be here. I'm unused to being commended by the L-A-S-F-S. But since I'm here, and speaking as Guest of Honor, there are some things I'd like to say.

I've been a member of the L-A-S-F-S for eleven years. During that time I've had a chance to see the members of the L-A-S-F-S at rather close hand -- some of them much closer than I ever intended to or wanted to. I've formulated an opinion of the club on that basis. First-hand information is always best; you can believe what you see for yourself.

Last year, Gil and I had the unique experience of seeing the L-A-S-F-S on acid. Acid does wonders for letting you see things as they really are rather than like you wish they were. All my eleven years as a fan, I had the strange idea that fans were something apart from the rest of the human race -- special -- not star-begotten but certainly a cut above the rest of the unwashed hoi polloi that you see in a thousand suburbs across our great nation.

I was wrong.

The L-A-S-F-S is a microcosmic cross-section -- a microcosm -- in which you can see all too clearly the traits of character that make up the bulk of middle-class America. In short, with a very few exceptions, L-A-S-F-S is composed of the same two types of people as America itself. One: those who do all the right things for the wrong reasons, and two: those who do all the wrong things for the right reasons. These are the people who chose to honor me with a fanquet.

I could kid myself that you honored me because I sold a novel which you and I are pleased to call science fiction. I could consider myself complimented and be grateful to you that you have been kind enough to say, "We're glad for you, Jane. You've done well!"

Instead, I'm merely resigned. This is about what I've come to expect from the L-A-S-F-S. Now, as always in the past, I'm a convenient tool for half the club to use in annoying the other half. I firmly believe that none of you wholeheartedly desired to see me honored in any way, but that didn't stop me from accepting the honor done me. I deserved it. I worked for it. I accept it, whatever your reasons.

Those of you in category number one who worked to get me the fanquet, I thank you, even though you did it for the wrong reason. Whether you did it to prove something to your husband, your boyfriend, the club or your conscience is really irrelevant. Whether you did it to annoy faction number two is irrelevant. It would have been much better if you had been honest about your reasons, but not much better. The honesty would have benefitted you rather than me, since I know your reasons anyway and honesty is remarkably lacking in the L-A-S-F-S. That, at least, hasn't changed in the last eleven years. Perhaps the most honest of the Number Ones is Bjo. I'm told that Bjo said that since she had the most reason of any to block me and wasn't doing it, she didn't see why anyone else should. Thank you, Bjo.

To those who objected to my having the fanquet, you were quite right to object. But true to form, you contented yourself with objecting to my being honored here tonight when you really should have shot me from behind a hedge or at least tried to get me busted. You objected to awarding the fanquet for a piece of pornography, but you really should have objected on the grounds that my book, Biker, is likely to become the truth. You should have objected because Biker portrays the world that you in your righteousness and smug worship of yourselves are making happen. But, just like Nixon and Agnew and Reagan, you content yourselves with speeches against things and stating your position, and then sitting back on your fat asses, waiting to say, "I told you so!"

Well, you're not going to get the chance. While you are waiting for history to vindicate you, for the moral fiber of either L-A-S-F-S or America to weaken through honest exposure to reality, history is going to kick you in the ass. I don't presume to say that either Biker or the present American revolution is either well-handled or pretty, but both are stark examples of a reality that you refuse to face because it isn't nice.

Biker is a sex novel. No one would deny that, least of all me. But it's a sex novel which is part of a new kind of fiction, an honest kind of fiction. It's part of a species of fiction that accepts the basic fact that men and women fuck. And trying to behave as though they don't, either in practice or in print, is stupid and blind. For years science fiction tried to behave as though people didn't fuck, and the sticky-fingered gropings of the L-A-S-F-S are one result.

Nice people don't fuck. And if they find they must, they certainly don't talk about it.

It is good for a man not to touch a woman. But it is better to marry than to burn with passion.

All of you here tonight either do fuck, or wish to god you could. Most of you feel guilty about it. And you think that Biker is a dirty book because you feel that sex is dirty. To me, Biker is a love story. It's also a chilling vision of a distinctly possible future for this country. And contrary to what you might like to think, the brutal sexuality of the people in the book is stock behavior for bikers even now. I didn't invent it; I only reported it. The book is the story of how two people escaped from it together because they loved each other. Is that dirty? I don't think so. But it is fiction, because so few people ever seem to fine each other. And I see no way out of this situation, short of the honesty that is so rare anywhere today.

I would have appreciated your honest dislike more than the empty honor of being a L-A-S-F-S battleground. But as Hank always used to tell me, "It's results that count." All of us have got what we wanted most. I waited eleven years for this. I'm having it now.

It's too bad it's such an anti-climax.

\* \* \* \* \*

[Jayn Gallion/Jacobs/Ellern/Lamont received the 1970 LASFS Fanquet -- a banquet honoring members who made their first professional sale in the science fiction field during the previous year -- for her book Biker, published by Essex House in 1969, as Essex House original O124. The speech is printed here for the first time.

'Gil' is Gil Lamont; 'Hank' is Hank Stine.

... BEP]



WEDNESDAY 2/16/77: The Small World Syndrome has struck again with a vengeance, and I am mightily amused. It was -- to add yet another cliché -- stretching the long arm of coincidence to the point where it almost came out of its socket.

I mumbled about the Tower for the first few hours after we got home from work. Had dinner; rode the exercycle for the usual 8 miles while listening to see if there was anything important on the news. Eventually edged my way through the extra junk residing temporarily in the library and pulled the protective covers off the typer for long enough to bat out an APA L zine. All very humdrum. Around 10:30 I remembered that I had to go feed the Ox if we weren't going to have to stop to do so in the morning on the way to work, and while I was at it I might as well pick up some more Elephant Fuel, too. [I drink about two large bottles worth of diet cola -- generally Diet-Rite -- each day. It keeps the complaints of the diet-aggrieved guts from becoming unbearable, and I actually like the taste.] So I set out for the nearest market and cheap gas station that might be open.

Kalisher to Gaynor, Gaynor to San Fernando Mission, Mission to Woodley, Woodley to Devonshire. The Dale's Market is closed. Devonshire to the Freeway. The Shell station has raised their prices for regular gasoline. Devonshire to Sepulveda. The previously 24-hour Food King Market now closes at 10:00. Sepulveda to Chatsworth. The once inexpensive Chevron station is now ridiculously high-priced. Chatsworth to Balboa, I knew the Ralph's Market closed at 10:00. Balboa to Devonshire again, where the Hughes Market is still 24-hour. Cash in the case of empty bottles and go looking for replacements. The shelf where they should be is empty, but perhaps they have some in the back storage area. The night manager agrees to go look, and eventually comes back carrying a full case, which I take to the one open checkout line. And as I am settling the bill a voice comes from in back of me: "You're Bruce Pelz!"

Behind me in line is a chick who's about 5'6" and zoftig around the edges. (I never try guesstimating ages, as I'm not good at it.) "You don't remember me," she says, just as I do remember. The face was almost enough by itself, and the initial-jewelry she wore as a necklace finished the job: a large gold 'K.' "I haven't seen you," she continued, "in..." "...15 years, Kathy," I finished. Actually, it's a little under 14, if I recall correctly, since she went with me and Dian and...Ted Johnstone?... on an outing, then disappeared. I'd tried to locate her a couple times in the 1968-71 hiatus, but couldn't.

There probably aren't more than a half dozen still around fandom who'll remember Kathy Bernstein. Ted will; he had the best success in chasing her -- as far as I could tell at the time, anyway -- when she first showed up in 1959-60-61. And Jack Harness probably will remember; he sat next to Kathy at the 1960 Fanquet, with his eyes popping out and falling down her décolletage. (I have photographic evidence.) Ejo, who helped Kathy with some fan artwork she did, and Dian, and maybe a few more, will remember. Ted may even remember the "Old Bernstein Joke."

It wasn't more than about five minutes of conversation. She asked if I'd ever married Dian, and I explained that that was one marriage back. She's working on her third. She's living in Northridge, near CSUN, and using the Bernstein name again. I told her where the Tower is, and that the address and phone are in the book, and I suggested she call some time. (She said she was not in the book, so that route isn't open.) And we each headed for our respective cars.

I tried a few more cheap gas stations, which turned out to be either not cheap, or closed, or both. Then I fed the Ox at the Rinaldi Shell station at the same price I could have got at the Devonshire Shell station, and headed home.

I was -- and still am -- amused. There was a time -- there were several times, in fact -- when laying Kathy Bernstein was one of my prime goals. I never did manage it. But I feel I have now managed to lay a ghost -- and I'm sure I'm better off this way. I'd still like to talk with Kathy in a more casual setting, and find out what she has been doing over the past 14 years -- years which apparently haven't been very kind to her -- between 18 and 32. So I hope she eventually calls. But I don't expect it.

FRIDAY, 2/18: Having skipped LASFS last night, I went to the Friday Night Nonmeeting that Milt Stevens initiated in January. Less crowded, and still giving a chance to meet most of the people I want to see. Apparently quite a few others also stayed away Thursday night -- they'd had 'only' around 75 attending. I talked up the idea of starting a Friday-night APA, available only to those who show up Friday (unlike APA L, which can be obtained Thursday or Friday). A couple people sounded quite enthusiastic, but I doubt they'll do anything -- Marty Massoglia, who was the most vocal in favor, simply isn't a fanpublisher for anything like an APAzine. Still, it may be interesting to see if I can pull a Van Arnam and get something started by having one of my own zines available only Friday night.

Craig Miller, acting on information from Fuzzy Pink, had scouted a possible new clubhouse, with about four times the space of the present one, at approximately the cost of adding the second storey that we were considering. It's presently a block of five stores, and seems a bit too good to be true. Main drawback for some people is the fact that it's even further west, and therefore would take those who come from the Hollywood, West Hollywood, and other southeasterly areas about another 20-30 minutes to get to. (Bill Warren, one of the Directors, stated quite bluntly that he'd vote against it for that reason. And that, if we did decide to buy it, we'd lose his services as Maintenance. Shades of Jerry Pournelle... .) With 9 of the 11 Directors showing up sometime during the evening, an appointment was set up to go see the place en masse. Frankly, if the physical set-up and financial arrangements are all right, I'd vote for the place if it were in Torrance, South Pasadena, or even Lawndale. Driving from Santa Monica to the Silverlake area didn't bother me for the four years I did it.

I collected my new printout of the Fanzine Bibliography -- 14,000+ cards, A-L -- from Marty Massoglia, who had had it run for me. A few of the card boxes are beginning to fall apart from all the handling they've had in the last 20 months or so. I'll replace the boxes, I guess, but I really ought to find time to talk to Alan Frisbie about his claim that he can make the whole thing machine-sortable if I can tell him all the filing rules. Problem is, can I tell him all of the rules...?

MONDAY, 2/21: Keeping up with some APAs probably isn't worth the effort, but ... . The carpenters finished working in the garage this evening, and I could, at last, take down the protective coverings in the library. They have been working on the job since Tuesday: cutting a door through to the garage from the library, insulating the four walls (including the wall formed by the large overhead door in the front), then putting up drywall and wood paneling. Also putting in a new door to the back yard, to replace the juryrigged one some former owner had put in. Finally, putting in a T-bar paneled ceiling. All this constitutes Part II of The Great Garage Conversion, which production will eventually result in a game room plus office area.

Cutting the door through from the library was the biggest problem. The walls of the library, reasonably enough, are generally covered by bookshelves. It looked like a simple thing: take out one section of the modular bookcase (8' tall with five 2'-long sections) against the garage wall, and put the door through almost in the corner of the room. I dismantled the section last Monday and carted it out of the way. (I had to remove the bottom shelf by main force, as it, like all the others, is attached underneath to the side-poles, and the bottom shelf was right on the floor. Rather than unload the entire bookcase so that I could tilt it over and get at the screw assemblies, I jimmied it loose and figured to replace the shelf with one of the extras we still have kicking around...I think... .) When we came home from work Tuesday, another section had been dismantled -- with no damage to its bottom shelf, somehow -- and the books previously ensconced thereupon were stacked on the floor under the wall-hung shelves of the west wall. Seems that the door wouldn't go where we thought it would -- that area of the library wall would uncover part of the garage, the outer wall of the garage, and a nice view of the front walkway between the garage and the house. So they moved it over a foot.

Cutting a door through a wall creates lots of sawdust in the air. I'd put two sheets and four or five plastic dropcloths over the desk, the typers, and as many of the bookcases as possible. It was of little avail, it seemed, as the stuff got to the shelves anyway. I'd have hated to see what would have happened without the cloths,

TOWER TRIVIA 77-02-21

Around 10:00 -- p.m. -- I realized that I was once more on the brink of being jettisoned from The Cult for lacktivity, as I had not written to the previous Fantasy Rotator and the deadline for the present FR was midnight. There are many things to be said for giving up on The Cult, since there hasn't been anything worthwhile in its pages for years, but a Completist is not only entitled but required to be insane, and there is no way to collect The Cult without being in it, so... . After a successful expedition through the Library to the typewriters and a careful uncovering of the electric one -- folding up the plastic dropcloth with as much of the accumulated sawdust as possible still attached, and throwing the whole mess in the trash -- I pounded out a 1-page membership-saving Fractional Rotator, typed up mailing labels, grabbed some mimeo paper and envelopes, and headed for the LASFS clubhouse. [My own mimeo died a couple years ago, and I haven't yet budgeted for a replacement, since the LASFS mimeo is readily accessible to LASFS officers at any time.] 11:30 found me at the Van Nuys post office buying stamps from the vending machine and dumping 15 envelopes into the mail to take advantage of the fact that anything turned in before midnight gets post-marked with that day's date. Safe for another six weeks! I really must try to write letters for FR's; it's a lot cheaper, and much less nervewracking...

TUESDAY, 2/22/77: I am, in general, a Joiner. Especially when it comes to social or even quasi-social organizations in areas of interest to me. (It doesn't carry over to professional organizations, but that's another story.) It is probably a characteristic of the majority of fans, so I have lots of company, but the only one I can guarantee as being afflicted with Joiner's Disease is me. [Bjo Trimble once opined that if someone started a Turd-Kicker's Club, and made membership cards available, fans would rush to join it.]

In any case, there is a group in the LArea known as The Petards, which meets on a monthly basis at members' homes for parties. It was started as a place where inactive or semiactive LASFSians could meet away from the general melee of LASFS to converse and maybe even discuss Science Fiction, but it fairly soon became a drinking-and-party group. (The name is courtesy of the inimitable Rick Sneary, who sent a note to one meeting offering to be the "hoist" for the next.) It is invitational, with new members being proposed by present members and voted on by the present membership. Any of the two dozen or so members may blackball a proposed member and thus prevent his membership. In the eleven years of so that The Petards has been meeting, I've attended quite a few meetings as a guest of the hoist or some other member (most frequently the Moffatts), and in the past few years Elayne and I have been guesting at half the meetings each year. But every time there was a membership opening, I (and later we) managed to collect at least one blackball if I was proposed for membership. The most recent attempt was in early 1976; it didn't work, either.

At the FAPA Assembly Session at Burbess' on the 12th, Dean Grennell mentioned that he and Jean had sent in their votes in favor of our membership in The Petards again, and hoped we'd make it this time finally. It was the first I knew of another attempt, but I figured it would end the same way. It didn't. In the mail was a letter from the Secretary of The Petards -- the only officer, elected annually to keep track of members, meetings, and other things official -- Dave Locke, offering us memberships if we wanted them. I think I waited all of three minutes to call him and accept. He wasn't home. By the time I did reach him, later in the evening, we'd worked out a compromise: Elayne refused, and I accepted. Officially. Or something. In any case, The Petards and the Pelzes are stuck with each other for a while, which is fine with me. But I rather wonder... what did I do right in the past year?

THURSDAY, 2/24/77: Stage III of the Garage Conversion is done. The electricians came and put in the ceiling lights -- four fluorescent lighting fixtures with four lights in each. That thought to be enough light, even in an 18x19' room. All is not perfect, of course: since we hadn't originally planned to have the door cut through from the Library, the master switch for the ceiling lights is by the wrong door, and a table lamp inside the new door is necessary to give enough light so you can get to the master switch. A minor point. Two stages to go.

FRIDAY, 2/25/77: The first distribution of fanzines during the Friday night non-Meeting of LASFS was gratifyingly amusing. The lengths that some APAhack types will go to be considered a participant in a new APA is downright unbelievable. I arrived fairly early, ran off my second page, and started handing out NYET CHYEPUKHA 9 to other attendees. Marty Cantor then arrived with a carbon-copy zine (8 typed originals with four carbons each, for 40 copies), and began asking what the rules were. He seemed not to be coping too well with the idea that there weren't any. Charlie Jackson duly provided a ditto cover with his zine on the back, and Dan Alderson another page of Space War junk. Those with no contributions fell into three general classifications: (1) they ignored the whole thing; (2) they took copies of the zines and made loud remarks about endemic insanity in the zine-producers; or (3) they ran around trying to do something that would let them be contributors. Putridity was the Order of the Night. Alan Winston hand-scrawled his first issue on a blank page and handed me the one and only copy, for which I thanked him. I put it down on a stack of junk in the Blue Room. He then proceeded to locate a crudsheet copy of his APA L zine from Thursday and scrawl his second issue on that. It joined the first on the stack. Glycer and Weinstein, a bit more resourceful, located a typewriter and a stencil, and mimeographed a zine which had comments on the previously distributed ones. Therri Moore handwrote a page. It was given to Alderson, who had by then collected Alan's two single-copy zines. And Marty Cantor, for reasons unfathomable by anyone at all, handwrote a severalcopy second issue of his zine on the back of some Weinstein overruns from APA L. Alderson collected one of those, too. I haven't had so much fun watching Compulsive APAhacks scuttle around since I invented the Fractional APA L Distribution and didn't tell the (other) Compulsives about it, in 1965!

We shall see how long the insanity runs. I intend to keep doing a zine for Friday night distribution because it will get me to keep up the Tower Trivia writing and the development of ideas for LASFSian activities that would be useless in APA L. (They'd maybe comment in passing the next week, and the ideas would get buried in the ton of paper that is an APA L Collection.)

Resolution of the Month: Stick to games of Oh Hell, poker, and bridge; do not play Hearts. It is bad enough to get clobbered by the Atkins-Hulan-Locke combine last October, but when I can't play against Harness and Castora without getting totally skunked in only a few hands, I had better give up the game. It had been a long time since I'd lost my temper over a card game, too...

SATURDAY, 2/26/77: Most of the LASFS Board of Directors went to inspect a prospective new clubhouse in the central San Fernando Valley (about 20 minutes further west than the present one). It has about 4 times the square footage of our present place, and the price is right. The legalities need to be investigated, however, before we decide. And it's right next to a residence, though it itself is in a Commercial zone.

The evening schedule was sort of an embarrassment of riches. The Petard meeting was at Glycer's, and as new members it behooved us to go there. (Probably would have anyway, as there are people at Petard meetings we don't see anywhere else.) But in competition was a Poker-and-Computer-Game party at Craynes' and a miscellaneous party at Alan Winston's. (Craynes would not have cared about competing with Petards, as the poker group has only a very few overlaps with the Petards. Alan had asked the wrong person whether there was anything else planned for the date, and been told there wasn't.) LASFS needs something like a reasonably discreet Social Secretary to keep track of the schedule of parties, even if they are all invitational.

The Petard meeting was fairly small. Nivens went to Craynes instead, and Craig Miller and the Stevenses went to Alan's first, then to Glycer's. But we sat and talked with Locke, the Shaws, the recently returned Ed Cox, the Bratmons, and Roy Lavender (as well as others we see more frequently), and watched a Betamax tape of "Monty Python and the Holy Grail." The diet took a beating from the presence of too many highly edible pastry-things. And I wound up with two more stacks of fanzines for the collection -- the latest garnerings from Dave Locke and Mike Glycer.

TUESDAY, 3/1: Having tried for several weeks to visualize the set-up of the room in the Fontainebleau in which I was supposed to run a Huxter Room, using only a floor plan of the room as an aid to visualization (since I have never been in

# Blessings & Curses

... Letters

DENNY BOWDEN

15 June 1976

The suggestion you made about Hugo voting makes me wonder if a system might be used whereby the circulation of a zine could be used to place zines into categories. A zine might fall into one of these categories then:

|              |            |              |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Circulation: | 1 to 199   | 500 to 999   |
|              | 200 to 499 | 1,000 and up |

Using categories such as these might help to win awards for some of the smaller zines.

If problems occurred regarding which category a zine should be placed into, then maybe a requirement could be made for the zine to print its mailing list in at least one issue per year.

Another idea might be to categorize zines according to the total page production for the year, and instead of having zines nominated, a zine would have to be submitted by the editor to be considered for the Hugo. A preliminary ballot could then be submitted to all eligible voters, sort of like a primary... .

Your mention of the LASFS Saint Days was just enough to whet my appetite. Would you let us know more about these? Fascinating idea!

How do you inform visitors that smoking is NOT allowed in the Tower? I would imagine smokers are offended by that dictum. Sometimes I wish I could gently impress guests that we do NOT like to smell smoke in our draperies (and we non-smokers DO smell the smoke long after the smokers are gone). After smoking guests leave, we have to air out the house, or the smoke smell bothers us. You know, sometimes I wonder how smokers can be so inconsiderate; they might as well leave a few long-lasting ripe farts... .

[The LASFS Saint days are part of a scheme to wheedle money out of those who have it. As originally set up, there were three Levels which donors to the LASFS Building Fund could aspire to: Associate Friend of the LASFS (\$20.), Supporting Friend of the LASFS (\$50.), and Patron Friend of the LASFS (\$150.). \$150 appeared to be the most the club might expect to get out of any individual member. At that level one became a permanent recipient of the club's regular publications -- the newsletter DE PROFUNDIS, and any revived club genzine that LASFS might be foolish enough to publish -- and one's name was added to a list engraved on a permanent placque. But after six or seven years, it became quite obvious that quite a few individuals could be parted with more than \$150, and there ought to be a Level higher than Patron Friend. One of our Elder Statesmen, who has been a member since the 30's, Dave Fox, came up with the name: Patron Saint of LASFS. An individual engraved placque, an annual meeting reserved in one's honor. All for \$500 in donations. At present, there are 14 Patron Saints of LASFS, several of whom are in memoriam, and about another half dozen with less than \$100 to go before they join the list. And the top donors are getting up toward the \$800-mark -- sowe're considering that maybe there ought to be yet another Level, say at the \$2,000 mark. Nothing official has yet been suggested, but Fox has been talking about SuperSaints, and I have this weird idea of people becoming Ghods of LASFS, with various Attributes: So-and-So, Ghod of LASFS For APAhacking, ... For Poker Playing, ... for Bheer Drinking. And every additional \$1,000 would give one an additional Attribute.

We are not very subtle in informing visitors to The Tower that smoking is not permitted. There is a Linda Miller cartoon, originally done for a convention, posted on the front door. It shows a guy with a fire extinguisher nastily tell-



copy of one of his poetry magazines, SAPPHO; he says he himself destroyed all the other copies. And I wonder if any fans ever deliberately printed just one copy of a fanzine so they could claim to have something in their collections no other fan had?)

[If I find the space and time, I'll include a list of fanzines received since PROF 12 -- or at least those from trading-partners. I don't have an easily accessible list of those received by sub (very very few: LOCUS, NESFA zines) or through other memberships (DE PROFUNDIS, FANTASIAE...). I read all zines I get direct, though I don't guarantee to read everything in them -- of late I simply can't bring myself to read reviews of books or magazines. I don't generally read the zines I get in large clumps from noncollectors; I merely go through them for indexing, reading one here and there that looks particularly interesting. What I really regret is the lack of feedback from me to the tradazines. I have discovered that I have hardly anything to say in LoCs (or, for that matter, in APA mailing comments, though I do them anyway to meet deadlines.) So I do very few of them, and have no valid complaint (only regret) when someone drops me from his mailing list.

The main problem, of course, is time. I find I am looking forward much too avidly, I fear, to early retirement -- in about 19 years -- when I may have the time to do things I want to do. Meantime, whatever is the most interesting at the moment will take precedence, and that may mean more of these long-delayed issues of PROFANITY. I will hope they aren't again this long delayed, but I seriously doubt my ability to do more than two or three a year at best.

The poker players are used to having someone announce that he is "playing down" -- playing with only whatever amount he has in front of him and planning to quit when that is gone. The amount may be what is left of an original stake, it may be what is left of some small winnings, or it may be less than the total amount heesh has won (in which case heesh has probably been on a downhill run for a while, and simply unwilling to risk losing any more of his ~~xxx~~ gains by allowing such a run to continue). All players are used to the idea that the money is no longer theirs once it goes into the pot, and unless the departure of the player who has played down his funds reduces the number in the game to three or less -- at which point poker is no longer worthwhile/enjoyable -- no one complains very loudly. Except maybe Dr. Pournelle, if he's losing (which isn't very often).

I have a copy of the first issue of Goldstone's FANTASIA, Jan. 41, according to my listing, but not the second and third. They could, of course, be in the 42 unsorted boxes, but it will be a while until I get to those... .

The PAULA is indigenous to Colorado, not California, at this point. When I referred to her as "recently-become-local" I meant local to the MileHiCon area, not to LA. We have enough problems... . I find I am become more tolerant of obnoxious people in the last few years, but still unwilling to put up with them voluntarily. One of the few advantages of having such a horde of fans in the LArea is that it permits interlocking groups wherein one need not necessarily share company with particular obnoxious persons. Or they with you. (I have no doubt at all that I'm on various people's 'obnoxious' lists. So far, it hasn't mattered very much.)  
...BEP]

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HARRY WARNER, JR.

16 July 1976

You must know perfectly well that nobody except perhaps Ben Indick would cut up the cover to create trading cards. The big surprise for me in this group of photographs was Larry Shaw, whom I haven't seen for perhaps a dozen years. He always did sound like Groucho Marx when he talked, but I'm surprised at how much he looks like Groucho



sheet purposes. When I admitted to a meeting of Fanoclasts that I thus considered fanzines as ephemeral things, I was greeted with such a gaze of horror that I have mended my ways. I now retain ALL zines -- ALL -- and will bring a carton of them to another meeting for distribution. Surely, there is not such a fanzine-enthusiasm outside LASFS.

Nobody else wanted the Indickon -- I had to put it on! Unlike your Angeleno spouses who joyfully accompany their men (or women) to meetings, my wife has this peculiar illusion that fans are a bunch of nuts. Strange!

Well, I must be the one who is mellowing; my bemusement with Jessica has quite vanished, and, by golly, I rather like all her stuff lately. Guts she has! I admire someone who sticks to his or her way and is at last accepted (whether or not acceptance matters to a free person) by everyone.

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JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSON

pm 28 July 1976

I also had a pet ferret (name of Buzzy, no relation to F.M. Busby), who was sweet and cuddly and caused all manner of trouble around the house. He took a likeing to the drawer beneath the oven, where people generally keep pots and pans; he entered it from the back of the stove. After feeble efforts to keep him out of the drawer, we moved the pots and pans elsewhere and lined the floor of it with a towel and pillow for a bed. Usually, if we couldn't find him, we'd pull out the drawer and there he'd be snoring away. Ferrets are mighty good at hiding, but Buzzy had a soft spot for a certain squeek toy. If he vanished, we'd squeek the toy and he'd come scampering out of hiding to fight us for possession of the thing. He had a musky odor that became intolerable when he was frightened (all carnivores have it; it is the best developed in the skunks) and eventually we had to give him to a hunter who used ferrets to flush rabbits. I cried off and on for a couple months without him. I've never known a dog as playful or loving -- although as Buzzy got older, he lost the playfulness which marks ferret kittens, and was somewhat less adoring as an adult.

The folk on your trading cards certainly are a funny lookin' lot.

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STEVE BEATTY

4 August 1976

I've seen the Cinderella City shopping center in Denver, but got out spending less than \$10. -- i.e., nearly all I had. But I didn't go thru the whole thing; spent all three hours in the three bookstores (where'd you find a fourth one?) and bought two paperbacks and a Worlds of Fantasy calendar (halfprice because it was already April). Two of the bookstores had The Minikins of Yam, Thomas Burnett Swann's book, whose back cover has a quote from PHOTRON misattributed to MAYBE; this was the first I'd seen it in a bookstore.

When you bind your fanzines, and have enough of one title to warrant binding into more than one volume, how many pages/sheets are the optimum number for one volume?

[The fourth store was probably the one featuring used and rare books -- lower level alley on the (I think) south end of Cin City. It was closed when we looked.

About two inches is optimum thickness for a bound volume. I assume you're talking of having a continuing title, rather than a dead title whose run is too big for one volume (in which case you would simply divide it in half, approximately). I tend to go over the 2" limit if it means getting all of a year or all of an APA mailing into one volume.

My thanks for the FANZINE DIRECTORY, and apologies for not sending updates and corrections that I can obtain from my Bibliography. R.S.N. ... BEP]

DON AYRES

11 August 1976

The Tower Trivia section added a colorful term to my vocabulary that is SFnal in feeling as it reflects the imposition of change from the computer element that is permeating our society: "Dumped Core." Very good. I've no quarrels with computer technologists -- even did a fair amount of work with them during my thesis days: "A Computer Analysis of Scale Counts of Illinois Watersnakes." I'm even kind of surprised I didn't think of it earlier.

I wonder if, in the future, we'll speak of friends in a reflective and uncommunicative mood as being "down"?

Interesting to know that Frisbie is a pinballer. Too. Reminds me that one of these days, I want to turn this place upside down looking for the Ultimate Pinball Machine. (Gottlieb's "Outer Space" remains my favorite, perhaps because she was my first.)

[Er... I was under the impression that we already used the term "down" for someone in a reflective and uncommunicative mood: You're acting rather down today. Admittedly, it tends to suggest glumness as well.

For those who didn't get -- or don't remember, which is a greater probability -- PROF 12, "Dumped Core" translates as "unloaded all his emotional problems." Are there other instances of Computerese pervading the non-computer language? ...BEP]

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TONY CVETKO

pm 12 August 1976

I checked out the Higbee's SF selection a while ago (after the promotion) and wasn't impressed. Kay's is still the place to go in Cleveland, and even Wickliffe's pb store has a much larger and better SF selection than Higbee's. Still, the article was interesting and I'm glad you reprinted it.

Please, more of Linda Miller! The bionic ironics were superb!

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TIM MARION

21 August 1976

Ha! You think you have it bad with the PAULA...how would you like a PAULA that goes around attempting to seduce every male she sees? Quite a few of us (the Offutts, Ken Moore, Jim Bodie, myself, quite a few others) had to put up with a character like that at the infamous ARTKANE in Wilmington, N.C. Originally she started after me, but I cut her short every time I saw her, so then she zoomed in after Jim Bodie... poor Jim. I think Jim finally managed to sic her on a certain obnoxious Va. neo-pro (who rips off Jonathan Swift)...or perhaps sic them on each other. The only problem is that that didn't last for long and now both of them are after me at every convention I go to! Goddamn, it's a pity fandom has to put up with types like that...

[Some of them improve. Even the original Painfully Amplified, Uncomfortably Loud Aggrevation was definitely worse a few years ago. Now if she would just stop sending me letters in May which were written in October, complaining about not getting the previous June's fanzine that mentioned her... . BEP]

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PETER ROBERTS

8 October 1976

The fmz printout was interesting, if only to give me a mild feeling of comfort that, despite your 9,000+ A-K entries, I have a few unlisted items in the lower F's (some FUTURIANS, the Aussie FUTURIAN NEWS, and Speer's 2nd FULL LENGTH ARTICLE); doubtless,



# Elayne: TALES OF THE DAYS HOSPITALERS

After going the somewhat normal route of growing up and spending four years in college (as well as some appalling amount of money), I managed to squeek out with a totally useless Bachelor's Degree, and went out into the deep unknown -- the job market. Not only was I totally unprepared as to secretarial and business matters -- would you believe typing at 5 words per minute if I work at it? -- my BA was maybe worth the ink it cost to print it. (What would you do with a degree in Slavic Languages? Probably what I do -- read Tolstoy.) Anyway, this wonderful degree got me a job pushing papers in Medical Records - UCLA Hospital.

The only requirement for this job is to be alive (or show some semblance thereof). And maybe to have an IQ of under 100. It pays enough not to go looking for more -- and it pays me while I read books, crochet, etc.

At first I was assigned about 6,000 patient charts to keep watch over. These were my very own to file papers in, pull out for visits, and keep clean and neat. After nearly eight months of doing this (plus two books a day), I was promoted. Some six months later, I still have no idea of what my job is. I think Gofer-Head covers it nicely. I cover when someone is absent, fiddle with the time sheets, push papers around, and fetch charts. (This includes telling doctors "No, you can't have that chart; it's being compiled by the legal staff right now. You can get it in about two weeks. He's coming in to see you? Well, if you insist, but he died three weeks ago.") This still leaves much time to read, sleep, xerox private papers, and generally goof off.

However, there are days when it at least gets interesting. A few days a week I work in the Emergency Ward. I get to process the emergency forms before they get put into the charts. This includes reading most of them and xeroxing lots for research studies, etc. Also, I get to run about the ward looking for papers, and generally doing clerical work. (Hey Doc, I know he's bleeding to death, but you gotta sign this form from yesterday stating that this guy actually had a hernia -- and please don't get blood on the paper... .) Some of the things that go on down there are hysterical -- at least in retrospect.

An ER death occurred on the first day of a new doctor's job. Now these are rare -- someone drops dead in the ward. This new doctor was handling the case, and the guy died right there in front of the doc, the nurses, and the family. They hadn't had time to take the family away as they normally do, as the guy died in a corridor on the way to a room. The doctor, seriously, stands up, and, before anyone can stop him, says, "By the power vested in me by the State of California, I now pronounce you Dead." All the nurses checked and managed to drag the doc away before the family quit having hysterics and killed him, and someone got the family to a room and calmed them down. The nurses, carefully trying not to hurt the doc's feelings (besides trying not to crack up every two seconds), managed to tell him that what he did was a no-no. He apparently thought that the State of California required him to do this. No, the nurses explained, all he had to do was sign the death certificate and try to break it gently to the family later.

Other stories are even funnier. Someone came to an ER up north with second and third degree burns up and down his back, legs, and ass. (These are very painful.) Apparently his son was painting, and after cleaning up he threw the paint thinner into the toilet. His father sat down on the john, lit a cigarette, and threw the match into the bowl. All I can say is "OUCH!"

One of the recent ER reports had an interesting accident on it: Someone came in with a broken shoulder/collarbone; he "fell off of a church in Hollywood." ???

Then there's the doctor who walks around looking at patients, wearing a huge 5" button which says "Humpty Dumpty was Pushed." ... ..



SORRY, MISTER...  
MR. ZOTTLEBLUB IS NOT  
AVAILABLE AT THE  
MOMENT... WOULD  
YOU CARE TO MAKE AN  
APPOINTMENT?



SKIRIN 77.