

REVENANT #12

Revenant #12, May, 2002 produced for SFPA mailing #227 by Sheila Strickland
6204 Molino Dr., Baker, LA 70714 (225) 775-7048 sjstrick@concentric.net

Well, it's been a quiet two months in Lake Wob...er, make that Baker. The usual job stress of busy, busy, busy, hasn't let up. One of our part-timers is leaving; and the new person taking her place has no experience in library work, but has done various jobs. She's worked in a public health clinic, so she should know how to deal with the occasional irate patron. She's worked in a print shop doing paste-up, so that's one more person who can do flyers. We'll be losing one of our student workers this fall when she goes out of town to college, but we've also been able to add a page (student) position. Our new page has no experience in library work either, but has a good background and we think he'll pick it up quickly. He starts next week, as well; and we hope he'll be at least fairly knowledgeable by the time our graduate leaves.

As far as vacation plans; I'm planing on attending Deep South Con next month; and will be staying on an extra day in Huntsville to see the Space Center. I may go to Canada in August, but that depends on finding a reasonable fare.

Movies? Haven't seen any! I'm going to try to see "Attack of the Clones" and "Spider Man" over the next two or three weeks.

Jazz Fest

I did what's becoming my usual run at Jazz Fest attending Friday and Saturday of the first weekend. My sister came down to see it for the first time in several years. When Virginia first moved up to Canada, she used to come down every year to go to Jazz Fest and visit friends who still lived in the area. Once Alison was born, she had to skip it for a year or so, then began attending again. When Alison got old enough that she couldn't easily miss a week or so of school, she had to stop once more. This year, however, she decided Alison was old enough (12) to make it with just her Dad in attendance at home and made the trip down. (And as an aside, not that Don is an irresponsible parent, but he works very long hours; not the best set up for sole care of a very young child.)

Virginia flew into Baton Rouge on Thursday afternoon before the first weekend of Jazz Fest. She had started in Buffalo where it was snowing that morning and came in on packed flights all the way. She wasn't the only one coming in for Jazz Fest. While waiting at the airport, I overheard at least two groups of people waiting for arriving Fest attendees. We stopped to get some boiled crawfish for supper; then after eating, Virginia wanted to go cemetery hunting. She had found one listed online that some of our relations are buried in and thought it might be near Zachary. We found the cemetery and the grave of one of the men in question. It was beginning to get dark, so we had to give up before exploring the place thoroughly.

Next morning we didn't make a very early start. That combined with the heavy traffic in New Orleans (lots of people were headed for the Fest) meant that once we went

by my brother's place to drop off Virginia's luggage and made it out to the Fairgrounds, the band I wanted to see that morning---the Savoy-Doucet Cajun Band--- was finishing up their set. Later, though, I was able to see hear Ann Savoy being interviewed about her latest project. She contacted several musicians in the folk or rock fields and sent them tapes of classic Cajun songs that she wanted them to record. They picked their favorite; then recorded it; then she added back-up by members of her band and other "authentic" Cajun musicians. It's a nice line-up. She and Linda Ronstadt do one together; John Fogerty does "Diggy Liggy Lo", Richard Thompson sings "Les Flammes d'Enfer". The CD is titled "Evangeline Made". After hearing the interview, I had to get it; and I'm glad I did.

I also followed my usual practice of mostly staying away from the very big names where it would be very crowded. It's also a good way to discover new to me artists. Coco Robichaux was a new one for me this year---he did blues with a Dr. John sound. Sunday, I did join the crowd in the Blues Tent to hear Chris Thomas King play a too-short set. I enjoyed hearing him live for the first time as he did a mixture of "modern blues", as well as more traditional sounds like the song he did in "O, Brother, Where Art Thou?", and "John Law Burned Down the Liquor Store", which he recorded on the "Down From the Mountain" CD.

The weather was hot as is usual; mostly cloudy Friday and mostly sunny Sunday. There were some opportunities for shade, but most of what I wanted to do was outdoors in the sun and heat. I did my best to keep sunscreen on, but missed a few spots Sunday and wound up with sunburn on one arm, and the back of my neck.

Grad School Merry Go Round

A few years ago, I decided it would be a Good Thing if I went back to school to get my Master's in Library Science. I wasn't particularly interested in going to school for itself so much as the additional job opportunities a Master of Library and Information Science degree would give me. The drawbacks were time and money. I'd have to keep working full-time to pay the bills, so classes would have to be squeezed in here and there around my work schedule. LSU has a Library and Information Science Program, but that's about a 30-minute drive from my house; and even further from work. Doable, just not real convenient. What got me into seriously planning was the announcement last year that the library system would reimburse a certain number of employees for tuition. So, onto the merry-go-round of college admissions I jumped. The only part of the application process I was worried about was the GRE. I had taken it years ago, and at that time had my scores sent to LSU. I called the graduate admission office and asked about it. "No problem," they say, "we still have your test scores." "Even though it's been a long time?" "Oh, yes; we'll have them. Not right in this office; but we can get them." Great, I thought, that'll save a chunk of money and some time. I sent in all my applications forms, my letters of recommendations, my "statement of purpose" intending to enter in the spring of 2002 with classes beginning this past January. And waited. And got back a letter which more or less said, "We have everything we need but your GRE scores." Called them again. "Oh, no, we don't have your GRE scores; it's been too long." "But, you

said..." "We don't keep them that long." Fume, fume on my part. I had to take the GRE again. I still wanted to start in January, so I signed up to take the test a couple days after I got home from my Christmas trip to Canada. I should have studied and didn't. My verbal scores were high, my quantitative and analytical low; but I hoped verbal ability would be regarded as more important for a librarian than mathematical ability.

The scores went in and I waited. And waited. About time classes started, I figured I probably wasn't going to make it into school that semester. Several weeks ago, I called to find out what next. I was told to e-mail a request for delay of admission until this coming fall. Which I did. And waited again. Two weeks later, I called. "Oh, we need your transcripts from Southeastern." (I attended Southeastern Louisiana University my freshman year of college, then transferred to LSU, where I graduated.) "You need to talk to ----, your advisor." Of course, she was unavailable at the moment, so I left a voice mail message; and didn't hear back from her. I called the next day; she wasn't in; but a different person told me, no, they had my transcripts, and my application was in line. About a week later I got a letter from graduate admissions saying my application had been sent to the Library Science college. And I waited again. A few days ago, I called the Library Science School. They told me the Dean had sent a favorable recommendation to the Grad School---which they apparently lost. They sent another and told me I should be hearing from them shortly. I'm not holding my breath, but I think I'm in!

And for a change to something no fun at all:

Death Should Take a Holiday

Or at least I think he should. That worthy gentleman has been taking too many in the SF and Fantasy field of late. Others mentioned R. A. Lafferty and Chuck Jones last time; but the list keeps growing. I "met" Damon Knight only once at a book signing; and never met Bruce Pelz; but I knew of them well and was sorry to hear of their deaths. The loss that hit closest to home, both literally and figuratively was George Alec Effinger. He came to SwampCon, the local SF con, many times. He was usually at all the local cons. He was a fine writer. *When Gravity Fails* was a superb work and the Muffy Birnbaum stories a delight. I knew of his health and money problems through the years; though I hadn't heard many details in the last decade or so. I'll miss him.

Mailing Comments

The New Port News: You mention missing the music in the movie version of "Lord of the Rings"; I recently borrowed the radio version that the BBC did in the 80's (?) from the library. It's well done, even though abridged. They included some of the songs; but I didn't like their choice of music---a little too heavy on the boy soprano for my tastes.

Ct weber on the SciFi Channel being on 157---the local cable company here uses numbers above 100 only on its digital signals; then rents you a box so you can get those numbers. I hadn't heard of any company doing it on just regular cable---if that's what you have. I had digital cable briefly when it was the only way I could get the SciFi channel; but

dropped it when I discovered I couldn't watch one channel and record another. Since then, SciFi is on regular expanded basic; and digital has the dozens of movie channels and music video channels.

The Patriotic Route: Sounds like a lovely trip. It's funny that we would be in such close proximity so far off. My sister drove me by Niagara Falls on our way from Buffalo to Toronto. It was after dark and she wanted me to see the Falls lit up and to see the Christmas lights in the town. We had to do a bit of driving before finding the Christmas lights, but they were worth the drive-by. We didn't get out at the Falls; we just looked, and opened the windows a bit to hear the roar. The Falls are a very impressive sight, even with all the commercial and tourist trap aspects surrounding them. I wouldn't mind seeing them again.

My sympathies to you regarding your mother and her situation. Losing someone to Alzheimer's has got to be terrible. It was hard enough on me when I lost my parents; but I think seeing them go through Alzheimer's would have been even worse.

Twydrasil and Treehouse Gazette: You mentioned receiving the Eucharist at your friend's mother's funeral; and later discovering that it should have been for believers only---I thought the Catholic Church reserved Communion for baptized Catholics only, not just believers.

Ct Schlosser on the meaning of "Genderov". Wouldn't it mean, "son of Gen"? I seem to remember that "ov" means "son of", and "ova" means "daughter of".

Ct me and my fuzzy TV signal. I suppose I will need to do something as the signal seems to be getting worse. It's still fuzzy when I watch with just the TV alone; and now it's getting bad even running it through the VCR. I remember my aunt several years ago mentioning that she had called the cable company about the quality of the signal and was told they couldn't do anything about it; that because of the distance the higher numbers would be fuzzy. It sounded like a brush-off to me; but maybe they'd give me a more credible excuse if I call.

The Sphere: Congratulations on the third of a century string milestone. Very impressive.

Spiritus Mundi:

Ct Gary B: I don't think "O, Brother" was Oscar eligible this year. It might have been last year, but it doesn't really fit into "Best Original Score" or "Best Adapted". Let's make up our own category, shall we? How about "Best Use of Music in a Non-Musical"? Getting back to actual categories, I was glad to see Howard Shore win best original score for "Lord of the Rings"---nice music.

Ct Dave on missing the poetry of LOTR. I missed it, too; but I'm not sure how well it would have worked on-screen. So much of the poetry is associated with music and that could be a problem to score. Background music is one thing; when it comes to music the characters are singing, it should be appropriate to the place. And deciding what sounds

“appropriate” for Middle Earth could be a challenge. There are rumors, however of more music/poetry making it onto the DVD out in August or the extended version out later this year.

Oblio: Your comment on enjoying spring training echoes what I felt this year at Jazz Fest. One afternoon, I was there sitting on the grass having just finished eating a spectacular dish of fried eggplant with shrimp and tasso sauce. I could hear music playing from several different directions; the sun was shining, a breeze was blowing. I was ready to settle in for the rest of the afternoon and soak it all in.

Sorry to hear of your back problems at Megacon. At least you were able to see and talk with a lot of people you admire. And I loved the account of your run-in with the costumed loon. Old fan trumps pushy costumed Trekkie---just as it should be!

Trivial Pursuits: I am moderately envious of your upcoming trip to Australia and New Zealand. I suppose one advantage of working for a multi-national corporation is the occasional opportunity to work elsewhere like you’ll be doing. Working in a foreign country should be an interesting experience in itself. I’m looking forward to reading a nice long, detailed account of your trip---with lots of pictures!

Yes, the Oscar broadcast was really long this year. I stuck it out to the very end, hoping that a miracle would happen and “Lord of the Rings” would get best picture or Peter Jackson best director. I wasn’t surprised when they lost; but it would have been fun to see it happen. As seems to be usual for Oscar, they threw in a lot of filler. Like you, I enjoyed Cirque du Soleil, but I don’t know why they were there. I also don’t know why Tom Hanks was there blathering on about New York.

Ct Gary Robe on your condo in Melbourne being a third-floor walk-up: Is that third floor American style or third floor Brit style that would be our fourth floor? Either way, you’ll be doing a lot of stair-climbing---hope your knees are up to it!

Ct David Schlosser as the movie Lothlorien as a place the travelers seemed to want to leave: Some of that could be traced to having to compress events in the movie. In the book, you can have both Rivendell and Lothlorien as havens of rest and comfort. In the movie, you can spend one scene showing the hobbits reuniting with Bilbo and relaxing at Elrond’s Bed & Breakfast; but have to spend the time in Lothlorien showing just how scary the Elves can be. Also, I had the impression that the Elves of Lothlorien don’t get out of their woods very often; and might seem more strange to Human and Hobbit sensibilities than the less cloistered Elves of Rivendell. (The Dwarves would think Elves were weird no matter what.) After commenting to Guy on the poetry/music that was left out in the movie version; I realized that we never hear the Elves singing in the movie. Music was a big part of what made the Elves Elves---it’s a shame our movie view of them was so limited.

Ct me: The notebook computer has indeed been fun. I bought it with an eye toward using it to write papers for grad school. I may also cart it along with me this summer on trips to work on SFPA mailings or such. So far, my biggest use of it is to play Spider Solitaire!

Travelers Tales: More people taking neat vacations! I could be jealous, but getting to read about them is almost as good as going; without any of the drawbacks of travel. And the pictures were a nice addition. Did Bear Bear drink that big drink all by himself, or did you have to help out?

Avatar Press: Thanks for including the pictures of Toni and Hank's wedding. By now, I've read Julie Wall's report, but it's nice to have the visuals to go along with the words.

Guilty Pleasures: Whine, whine, whine. Everybody gets to go on a fabulous vacation but me. Sulk, sulk, pout, pout. Well, not really---I'm glad you had a good time! I've wondered over the years if I would like taking a cruise. Usually I think no; but your cruise seemed to be have been without the drawbacks I've thought might be associated with one. You say the cabin was spacious enough, the food was good, not just plentiful. "...resting, reading, relaxing, eating and generally vegging out" sounds like a great antidote for stress!

I picked up *I Dare* at the library recently without realizing it was part of a series until I had read twenty or so pages getting more and more baffled all the time. I think I'd like it more if I started at the beginning. For some reason the library seems to have only that volume in the series, so I suppose I'll have to do an interlibrary loan request.

Ct Gelb and inflatable footstool---that's something I'll have to check out. I have short legs, myself; and have problems with those airline seats. In the past, if there's no one sitting beside me; I've tried tucking one foot up under me to get more comfortable. (If there is someone next to me, I don't usually have room for that maneuver.) I do that in movie theaters, too. Happily (?) I rarely sit at work, so I don't have that problem there.

Tennessee Trash: I'm sorry to hear of Isaac's health problems. We'll hope that the heart damage isn't permanent and the infection will clear up with no serious results.

a monument that neither government nor time can eradicate: So, you're not going to tell us exactly what the offensive word was? I can think of plenty of possibilities, but I'd be curious in knowing the exact expletive.

And to all:

I had already started printing when I realized I had forgotten to congratulate our Hugo nominees! Congratulations to Rich and Nikki and to Guy--good going! Apologies all around for the skimpy comments and natter. As I said, it's been quiet; but I hope for more next time. Hope to be seeing some of you shortly!