

# REVENANT #15

++++  
Revenant #15 is yet another zine cranked out at the last minute, this time for mailing #230 on a substitute computer while Sheila's two (yes, both of the little buggers!) computers and the old, cranky printer are all in disgrace and not worthy of being used. It's the end of November, 2002. If you don't already know by now, I am Sheila Strickland; and can occasionally be found at 6204 Molino Dr., in the teaming metropolis of Baker, in the less than stellar state of Louisiana. If you want to call on that quaint devise called the telephone my answering machine can be reached at 225-775-7048; and for now my e-mail is still [sjstrick@concentric.net](mailto:sjstrick@concentric.net).  
++++

I won't bore you with tales of woe concerning my computers. I'll just say they have both been a pain, but I have hopes that the laptop will be working again before the next semester. I'm still in school and plan to register for the spring semester, which begins in mid-January. My grades in this one course I've been taking are fine so far; but the work load has been tough. The class is listed as an introduction, but it's really about reference services. I've been doing the practical side of reference for 12 years; now I'm learning the philosophy and the reasons behind what we do. As I mentioned last time, the course is not really difficult, just very time-consuming. We had seven sets of questions, twelve each. We were given a list of sources and had to find the answers to the questions using those sources; but using each source no more than twice in a set. We also had a "webography" project in which we have to find ten web sites on a particular topic that would be of use to a particular library audience and evaluate them. The next part (which I haven't finished) is to look at and evaluate all the suggested sites from all the members of your group; then pick the ten best. Each group consists of 15-20 people, so that's a lot of evaluating!

Before the semester started; I had planned to take two courses this next semester; but with the amount of work I've had to do for this one; and considering the amount of work that the course I'll need to take; it'll be the only one. At this rate, it may be hard to get the degree in the required five years. (The MLIS requires 13 regular courses, plus a seminar.) And at this point, I'm not real confident of finishing at all. I spend my days off out at LSU working on assignments; and looking at the courses to come, I'll be doing a lot of that. I'm not very confident of my ability to do the creative and innovative work that will be required later on. This is the only MLIS program in the state; but any other would be just as rigorous, if not more so.

## The once and future Canada

Just before I started class and went totally mad, I went up to visit my sister and family in Canada. It was the usual August weather here in Louisiana---hot---and I was hoping for a little relief up there in the north country. It was hot, there, too! Really hot. Hotter than it was at home some days. Since I've seen most of the tourist sights in Toronto I'm interested in, we did some driving up north and west of the city. There were no specific "sights", but I got a look at the (hot) countryside and small towns; and we walked around in some (hot) nature

conservancies. It was nice to be out in the fresh air and it would have been just great in more clement temperatures. There was a river (and my notes as to which one are lost) that we crossed on a swinging bridge. As part of the same area, though a different park, we trudged up and down a hill beside a pond and thought we'd make it to the waterfall. However, we walked on and on and on; and the thunder started rolling and the lightning started appearing nearer. My sister and I both thought the top of a hill in the middle of a field was not the place to be in an electric storm, so we went back! I am overweight and terribly out of shape these days, so walking long distances is not easy. They were hoping for some rain, but by the time we got back to their house, the rain had missed them. Toronto was having a dry summer, and my sister had to water their sandy soil garden every day.

I hope I'll make it back up there next year. The American Library Association is holding their annual meeting in Toronto next June in conjunction with the Canadian Library Association. Our system will usually pay the way for some staff to attend every year. I've been musing that since I'm a student member of ALA and would have a place to stay and might be willing to spring for the air fare, should I request the system pay my membership for the conference? It would be illuminating and educational to see the national conference; but I have my doubts as to whether the top brass would be willing to pay for me. Of course, WorldCon is there next year; and I'd really like to attend. It will probably depend on my class schedule and if I can attend the con without missing class.

## Louisiana Festival of the Book

I haven't had a lot of spare time since September, but I'm glad I made time for this. On November 2, in downtown Baton Rouge, the State Library sponsored the first Louisiana Festival of the Book. Events were held in the State Capitol, in the State Library, and in tents along the street. The weather was perfect for being outdoors---some sun, later clouding up. Temperature in the mid to high-60's, cooling off later in the afternoon. Lots and lots of authors; mostly from Louisiana, a few from elsewhere. They did readings, had panels and autograph sessions; you could buy books by all the authors there. It felt a little like a print-oriented SF convention! (No video room or gamers---but the riverboat casinos weren't too far away.) Just like a good WorldCon, there was too much going on at the same time to see everything and I missed some events I would have liked to have seen. Probably the highlight was when I sat in the Louisiana Senate chamber at a senator's desk and listened to Andrei Codrescu read from his works. I also enjoyed hearing Oneal Isaac telling stories. He's a local storyteller we have had at the library a few times as part of the summer program. I used to think I didn't like storytellers until the first time I heard him---he's wonderful! Some of his stories are set in Louisiana; others elsewhere. Some of are recent stories written by others; others old traditional ones. Like any good storyteller, he knows how to get his audience involved. As he told a story about an old miser and his mistreated daughter, he had the audience counting along with him in French the miser counted his money; and repeating the old man's threat to his daughter that "The only way you gonna get YOUR hands on MY money is over MY DEAD BODY!" The daughter becomes ill because of his mistreatment and dies because he refuses to call the doctor, but she is avenged.

Child abuse, death, and a ghost returning to extract revenge. Just the thing for a cheerful Saturday afternoon tale!

I was dead broke so I couldn't buy anything (the festival was free, hurrah); but I could have spent some serious cash in the dealers room---make that the sales tent. I was happy to see lots of people attending and I hope they'll do it again next year.

## Politics and other depressing thoughts

I didn't stay up late to watch the election returns; and I'm glad of it. Bad enough to have heard the news of the Republican wins the next day. One of the senators from Louisiana was up for re-election. Mary Landrieu (a Democrat) didn't win enough votes to avoid a run-off; so she'll be running against Suzanne Terrell, our current state Commissioner of Elections. Interesting that we'll have a woman senator no matter what. Of course, I'd prefer that Landrieu win, but Terrell is moderate enough that I won't be excessively disappointed if she wins. There was one extremist running who would have made Jesse Helms look like Ted Kennedy! I did get one surprise looking over the sample ballot---a distant cousin of mine was running for senator. I don't know the man but I recognized his name. I don't think he's ever held public office before; and I wonder why he ran. He finished far, far down in the election results; so far I didn't even see his name in the headlines listing results.

## Movies, Movies, Where are the Movies?

They're not here yet, is where they are. Of course I ordered the expanded version of "The Fellowship of the Ring". It came in just a few days after it officially went on sale. The extra and expanded scenes are worth it and I was having fun spotting the places where new material was inserted. I've watched the expanded version and some of the supplemental material so far. I still have the four versions with commentary track by the director, cast, and so forth. The supplemental material has been fascinating; a thorough look at how they made the movie. They spent an extraordinary amount of time and effort working out sequences and storyboarding action before filming. There's an amusing segment showing Peter Jackson and other crew members walking through the segment in Bag End with the object of seeing how the different sizes would play. "Gandalf" is played by a mask on the end of a pole another person is holding up as he reads the lines to Peter Jackson as Bilbo. Seeing this again only makes me even more antsy to see "The Two Towers". The best thing about having to wait is that it will open a week after my class final exam; and I'll be plenty busy until then. I've already requested the day off from work; so I may just be there for the midnight first showing (assuming there is one in Baton Rouge). So far, it's not listed on the online movie ticket sources.

On to a few scattered mailing comments. Apologies to those I skipped. I do read and enjoy them all, but the time press and tension keep me from doing as much as I'd like.

## Mailing Comments #229

Yngvi is a Louse: Your mention of Fifi at DSC reminds me that I missed seeing...uh, it?, her? whatever? Though after seeing her picture, I'm not sure if I'm sorry or not.

New Port News: Your comment to Poulette sounds like a detective in a murder mystery. "You see, Inspector, Mark Mundane actually wrote the blackmail letter on his PC using a font that looked like the old typewriter Joe Phan owns. That way Mundane could murder Phan and make it look as if Phan's blackmail scheme had backfired." (What can I say; I've been listening to an Agatha Christie novel on tape.)

Your back cover may be from 1970, but it could almost be run again today.

Variations on a Theme #16: Re: ct Gary Brown on why we need a web site. Well, we don't *need* one, but we could use one. Mostly for the same things Jeff has been putting up. There could also an explanation of apas, history of, links to other web or print based sources.

Historical Hugo Hysterics: Thanks for putting this together, Jeff. I suppose most of this could be pulled off the web, but I like having things down in print like this. Of course, now I have the dilemma of whether to keep it with the rest of the mailing or pull it out to keep as reference. Maybe I'll even go through and read some of those stories!

Spiritus Mundi: Ct me on missing Crescent City Con. Missing the convention itself wasn't a great loss; though I wish I'd thought to give you a call while I was down there. I enjoyed seeing Tolkien artist Ted Nasmith---I had his 2001 Tolkien calendar and liked it a lot. He's a Canadian, seemed rather reserved; but very passionate about art and Tolkien. A couple of friends of mine from Baton Rouge were down for Saturday, so we hung out for a while together. We went up to the bar in the afternoon and listened to Joey Grillot tell tales of meeting Ray Harryhausen and others. I've known Joey (or known who he was, rather) for years; but this was the first time I had seen him for more than five minutes at a time. He's an entertaining person. This was only the second Crescent City Con I've attended, and it's not been one of my favorites. I don't like the hotel much; and I miss having an actual con suite. They use the downstairs bar which is too small to hold many people and has only limited seating at tables and chairs. Plus they don't serve soft drinks! (Oh, the horror of not being able to flop on the couch with a Coke.) Many of the concom or the people working out front seem stressed out with the attitude of, "Well if you insist on being here, I'll see to you, but I have so many other things I could be doing you'd best not waste my time!" I realize there are a lot of stresses and problems running any con, but it presents a better picture to the membership if the staff is cheerful and relaxed with the attitude of, "Well, this may be a problem, but we'll solve it. We're all here to have a good time, aren't we?"

**Oblio:** I love the idea of a Krispy Kreme outlet owned by Jimmy Buffet. I can just see all the staff dressed in Hawaiian shirts and flip-flops. And they serve margarita flavored crème filled doughnuts. Did you see KK is expanding to Europe? American cultural imperialism at its best. Cf David Schlosser on your apazines as a diary. That's a good way to think of them. Your sons may feel they know you well enough, but your descendants my well want to know just what great-great grandfather Gary was like. It would be nice if I could read diaries from my grandparents or farther back; I don't know what they were like.

**Trivial Pursuits/Cruising ConJose:** I'm sorry to hear about Neil. I was about to write that it came at a bad time for you; but news like that never comes at a good time.

Thanks for the report on ConJose. It sounds like it was the usual World Con blend of good and not-so-good. That's a good idea of yours on the restaurant bookings (one each night). It's one sure way to be sure of a place to eat; and to eliminate the 15 minute discussion of "where shall we go?" I think it was at WorldCon last year when I heard someone in the crowded elevator asking another if they were meeting their friends in the lobby to have their "15 discussion on where to eat."

Re my comments this issue to Guy on Crescent City Con and the stressed-out staff: I don't know if you've ever been in a position to know; but do you know if concons try to do "customer relation training" with the volunteers? They probably don't have the time or they assume their workers know what to do; but some con staff/workers I've come across could use a few lessons on dealing with the public in a tactful and pleasant manner. One assumes that the con is at least partly being put on for the enjoyment of its members who have paid money to be there. They have not paid to be snubbed or treated as irksome disturbances. (If they want that, they can go to the nearest trendy/too expensive restaurant!) At Crescent City Con, I kept wanting to tell the workers, "Relax! We're supposed to be here to have fun!"

**Guilty Pleasures:** I can sympathize with Raphi locking himself out of his room. I managed to do that one time, myself. I finished my shower, and got back to the room and my roommate was gone. I had no key. I had my robe, I think, but not my glasses, so I was at a disadvantage. In our dorm, the rule was; if you didn't have your key, the house mother would let you use the duplicate key for a one dollar deposit. Except I didn't have any money on me; and she bit my head off when I called and tried to explain the situation. I didn't try to reason with an unreasonable person, but sat downstairs in the "girls only" section until my roomie got back.

Speaking of dealer rooms being supplanted by online sales; some of what I buy, I may be able to find online; but very often I'll see something in the dealer's room I didn't know about. (I might be able to go home and buy it online, but I'd rather get it right then.) Then, too, pondering purchases is part of the fun. You look at something, flip through the pages or admire it; go on to your next panel and think about it. Later in the day you decide, "yeah, I really do want it", then go back and buy it. That's not as much fun online.

You "sometimes feel like I'm not a real writer" because you don't write every day? No, no, a thousand times no! You're a real writer because you write. You finish your works. People buy them. I'd say don't worry about the ideal or what you're "supposed" to do. Whatever works for you is what's right.

Passages: Loved the wedding report. And the pictures. It sounds like a far more colorful wedding than I've ever attended! But no pictures of Marie Antoinette?

Home With the Armadillos: Gorgeous cover. My sister has done some quilting and I admire hers. We have many quilting books in the library, and I look at them and wish I could do that, too. I know, though, I don't have the patience for the fiddly work necessary. On the quilts or fiber art question. I think of quilts as bed coverings that are pretty, not just functional. Fiber art sounds to me like something that only hangs on the wall as an art piece.

Does Allie think she's heading for the U of Victoria? That's a beautiful area of the country. After WorldCon in '93, I went up to Seattle to visit a friend. One day we drove up to Anacortes and took the ferry over to Port Sidney(?) through the San Juan Islands. It was gorgeous. We took the bus down to Victoria and walked around a bit. I was impressed by all the baskets of flowers hanging from the buildings; and almost equally so by the enormous ferry we took. Up until then, the only ferries I'd been on were the ones that cross the Mississippi River around here which hold only a few dozen cars. This one probably held a few hundred and had three decks for people to sit or walk. We spent a lot of time out on deck, and my friend made sure I was there to see Friday Harbor as we came in. She said it was worth seeing, and it was. I haven't been back since, but I'd like to see the area again.

The other people by the pool in Vancouver were disturbed by Allie's *ear* piercings? I thought pierced ears or even multiple ear piercings were mainstream these days. For that matter, body piercing is getting a lot more common. And what business is it of theirs what your weight is? Rude people abound, it seems. Maybe they just wanted the place to themselves.

You mentioned reading the Tanya Huff books. I liked the vampire series, though I liked the earlier ones better than the later ones. If you haven't finished them; I'll just say that after a certain major event in the central character's life; I thought they went downhill. I tried the first one in the "Quarters" series; but I kept feeling like I was reading imitation Mercedes Lackey, and couldn't get interested in them. Maybe I'll give them another chance.

And to all: Apologies, once again, but I haven't worked out how to get 30 hours in a day, yet. I'm hoping to have some extra time in the semester break to work on fannish endeavors again. I'm already making a mental list of what to do when finals are over. Reading and cleaning house are high on the list; but working on the next issue of this zine is there, too.