

SIRRUISH 12

KELLY  
FREAKS MINICONTA

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ART WORK: Cover: Kelly Freas, page 2, Tim Kirk; ppg. 5 thru 14, Mike Gilbert and Tim Kirk; Back cover, Mickey Rhodes

Please use this remaining white space to send us some ideas for some striking bumper stickers....

FIAWOL

KC in '76

SF means Super  
Expletive Deleted

# hanging out at the Ishtar gate

Virginia Tiffany(Ginger):

Did I see The Exorcist? Horrors, no! -- but it reminded me that there have been references to the Cock-Lane Ghost in two books I read fairly recently. I did a little research in an old book I picked up years ago, The London Magazine for the year 1762, and found eyewitness accounts of the affair in a series of articles that kept London in an uproar for 3 months. The story begins as a typical poltergeist display centering on an 11-year-old girl, and 1½ years later (about Jan. 1, 1762) degenerated into a spiteful attempt to ruin a gentleman's reputation. The true poltergeist kept intruding into the faked demonstrations, with confusing and fascinating results. John Dickson Carr could make a marvelous tale of it.

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Leigh Couch:

From time to time I consider dropping out. When I get to feeling like absolute parasitic deadwood, this thought pops up in my mind. This past year was some kind of ultimate low in my life. Events conspire....

I refused the job of principal at my school, and a gung-ho young man was hired. He immediately laid on us that there were a lot of teachers and we could be replaced. It went on all year. I worked about as hard as I did the first year I taught. It was rough! He ended up nominating me for Outstanding Elementary Teachers of America. This, friends, is a shuck. I wish I could buy stock in the company because they must make a fortune. I know it has cost me about \$30.00 for the book and the paper weight (which will be displayed on my desk during parent-teacher conferences).

I have my contract signed for next year and I grow tired thinking about it. This is probably the wrong time for me to be writing anything for a fanzine. I'll feel better after Midwestcon.

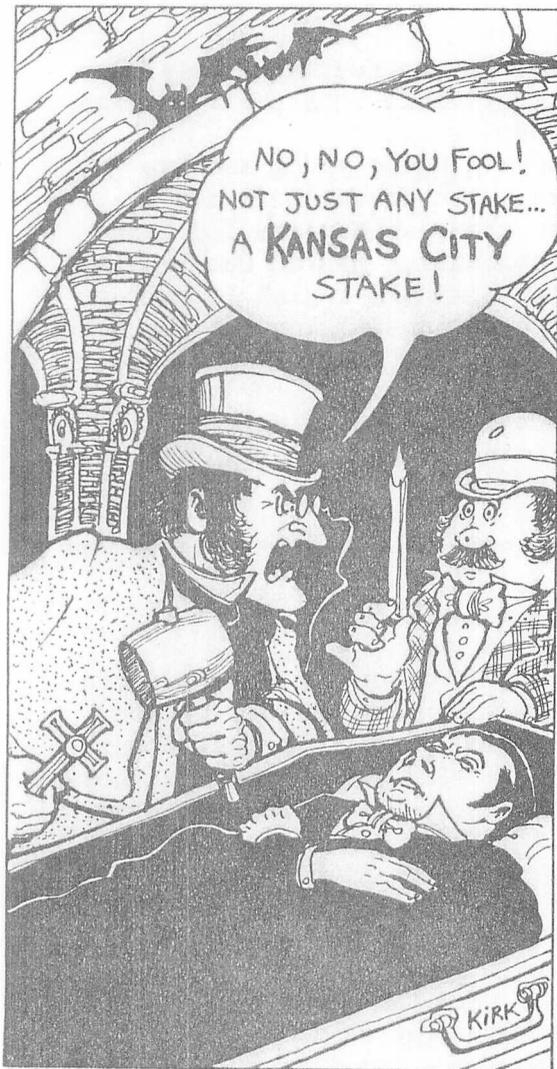
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Donn Brazier:

SIRRUIISH #11, June, 1973! For the love of splrfsk... do you realize how long ago that is! Why, in that time my daughter-in-law (with the help of my son) conceived and gave birth to a baby boy. Do we conclude from this that population expansion is easier than publishing SIRRUIISH #12? yes... 'course those kids are young, and this ol' bone is grandfatherly old. Do you accept my excuse? For your information, really, if I were to be seen hanging out at the Ishtar gate, you might barely notice, for the phrase "let it all hang out" refers, in my case, to the most prominent organ of my tired old body -- that region just above the belt buckle familiarly named the gut. By admitting all this no one dares call me gutless. And now you say, "What has this got to do with SIRRUIISH?" Only this: it's damn difficult to type the master for SIRRUIISH with a breadbasket draped over the keyboard. It might be added that Ral-lee insists on pouring me goblet and goblet after wine, and I give thanks to splrfsk that Jon Yaffe is at hand around the table to help drain the bottle.

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# KANSAS CITY: the PRIME CHOICE in 1976!



Celia Tiffany:

As you may deduce from some of the feature articles, this was supposed to be our winter issue. We're only six months late.... Still, it's not too late to put in a plug for the Kansas City '76 Worldcon bid. Not only is K.C. handily near to St. Louis (and reasonably equidistant from the rest of the U.S.A.), but I can personally vouch for the high quality of the conventions thrown by Ken Keller and company. These people are veterans of three BYOB Cons and "Big MAC" (see SIRRUIISH 10); being fans themselves, they know what fans want -- and even more important, they work their tails off getting it! I wish every fan could have a behind-the-scenes look at all the blood, sweat, and grief that goes into putting out a convention. My "Big MAC" memories include a great banquet, two displays from private art collections, a film program that just didn't quit, and a beautifully printed program book with whole sections of fan art and cartoon quips. (You knew I'd get around to mentioning art sooner or later, didn't you?)... The St. Louis canton of the Society for Creative Anachronism is alive, reorganizing, and soon to be meeting regularly again. Three Rivers was demoted from a barony to a canton, so we're reorganizing as a free city. If you live in driving distance and are interested, contact the Seneschal: Alexander Jacobs, 740 Interdrive #1S, University City, Mo. 63130... I haven't had much time to read books lately, so I'm rediscovering comics. Especially Dracula Lives, a treat for all art and vampire lovers... Just heard that the motel is all booked up for Midwestcon. Cons keep getting bigger every year. Get those reservations in early, if you mean to attend any cons this year! It will be interesting to see how many thousand people (and other beings) turn up at the worldcon this summer. See you in the nation's capital.

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF TIME-BINDING IN THE INTER-PLANETARY NOVELS OF RAY KING  
-----BOB TUCKER

I regret having to open this study on a sad and sorry note, but I must take a few minutes to refute several low insinuations, despicable slurs, and some bald lies now circulating in the fan press about my current activities in the science-fiction world--- and in particular, my activities at this Minicon. I take this posture not so much to defend myself, because my character is above reproach, but to defend and protect the great institution of fandom from future onslaught. I am convinced that there are some fan journalists of low repute who are in league against me and who are determined to mortally wound me. It is, of course, a political attack. Let me make that perfectly clear.

The first slur called to my attention was the rumor being circulated down in the bar, that I was living in a free room furnished by the Minicon committee-- and by extension, a room actually paid for by you because your registration fees are helping to defray the expenses of this con. The rumor said that I was given the free room because I was one of the guests of the Minicon, and that shortly the con committee would come with their hands out and expecting favors in return. Of course, I was outraged. However, Bob Bloch told me to do it. I was surprised to learn that Bloch accepted a free room last year, as Toronto's guest of honor. He said that it was the custom of convention guests to accept rooms, and that it would save me a tidy sum of money as well.

However, because there is controversy about the matter, I have referred the whole question to the N3F Hospitality Committee for study. If, after a thorough and careful study, they advise me that it is wrong to accept a free room--- even though Robert Bloch did last year--- I will immediately surrender my key to the desk clerk and move out by Tuesday noon.

Now we come to a matter the fan press is pleased to call the Jim Beam Fund. I did not and have never solicited funds for booze. Sometimes when among close friends I have cadged a drink or two but that is not the question here. I did not ask, or hint, nor suggest to the Minicon Committee that my free room should be supplied with refreshments packaged in bottles. Now mark this: it is a matter of record that not until two o'clock this afternoon did I discover that five bottles of Beam's Choice had been delivered to my room last Thursday evening. When I made this startling discovery, at two o'clock in the afternoon, I immediately asked Mr. Blyly to make a thorough investigation of the matter and report to me personally. He did. At two-fifteen o'clock, Mr. Blyly reported back that the five bottles had been delivered to my room by mistake -- they had been intended for the Minicon party room and were supposed to be delivered there. Mr. Blyly further said that it would be useless to remove them now, to make the change to the party room now, because all the seals had been broken and three of the bottles were empty.

My attorney, Mr. Propp, has advanced the plausible theory that a secretary in the manager's office downstairs accidentally broke those seals and emptied three bottles while she was reaching backward to turn a mimeograph crank.

One of the nastier barbs directed at me by irresponsible fan journalists is the charge that I have a room-mate upstairs in that free room--- a room-mate who is not my wife. I will not dignify that charge with an answer---however, I can report to you in all sincerity, in all honesty, that I did not drive nor transport a person up here for room-mate purposes. Many of you know that I didn't drive here. My transportation was provided by a kind and friendly soul who happened to be going by Heyworth on the same day I was ready to leave. It was only natural for a person of character and integrity, such as myself, to offer that kind soul a place to sleep.

Again, Mr. Blyly approached me on the matter after the rumors began circulating, and we took counsel. He informed me in strictest confidence that some people we shall not name, demanded of him that I be supplied with female companionship throughout the weekend and those people had volunteered their services. I reflected on that, and asked him how much it would cost. He said, about three meals a day. I told him there would be no problem in raising the cash for three meals a day, but it would be wrong.

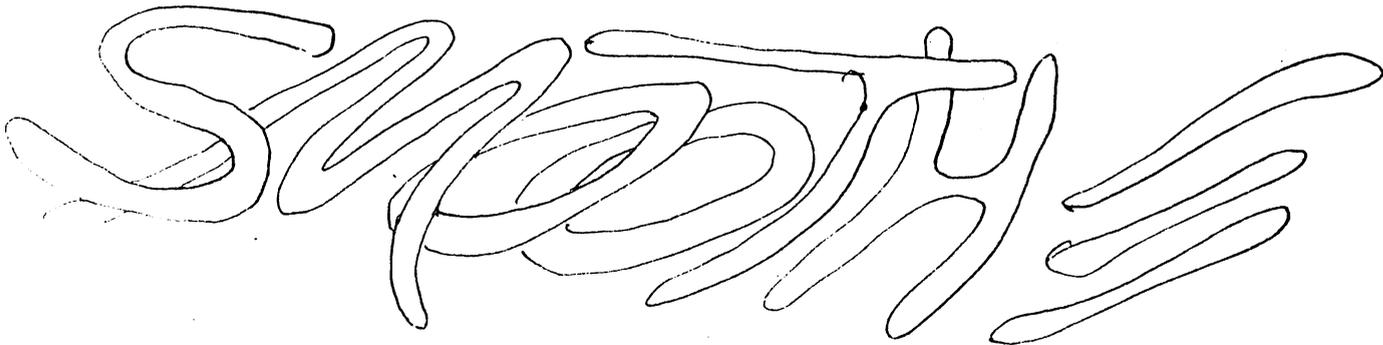
Now, I want to take a few minutes to discuss the matter of donating the Pong Papers to the Apa-45 Archives. Let me make one thing perfectly clear: I am a bonified member of Apa-45. Lesleigh Luttrell initiated me several years ago, in the Seasick Room of the old North Plaza Motel in Cincinnati. Accordingly, last February 29th, I executed a deed donating the Pong papers to the Apa-45 Archives..which as you know is a scientific foundation. My attorney, the same Mr. Propp, made a detailed inventory and a fair appraisal of these documents before they were delivered. He found there were 70 significant documents of proven historical value, and he appraised them at \$1000 apiece. Accordingly, my tax accountant, Mr. Propp, claimed a legitimate \$70,000 exemption on my income tax forms. To date, the Internal Revenue people have not questioned this, and I do not anticipate a question when I get around to mailing those forms.

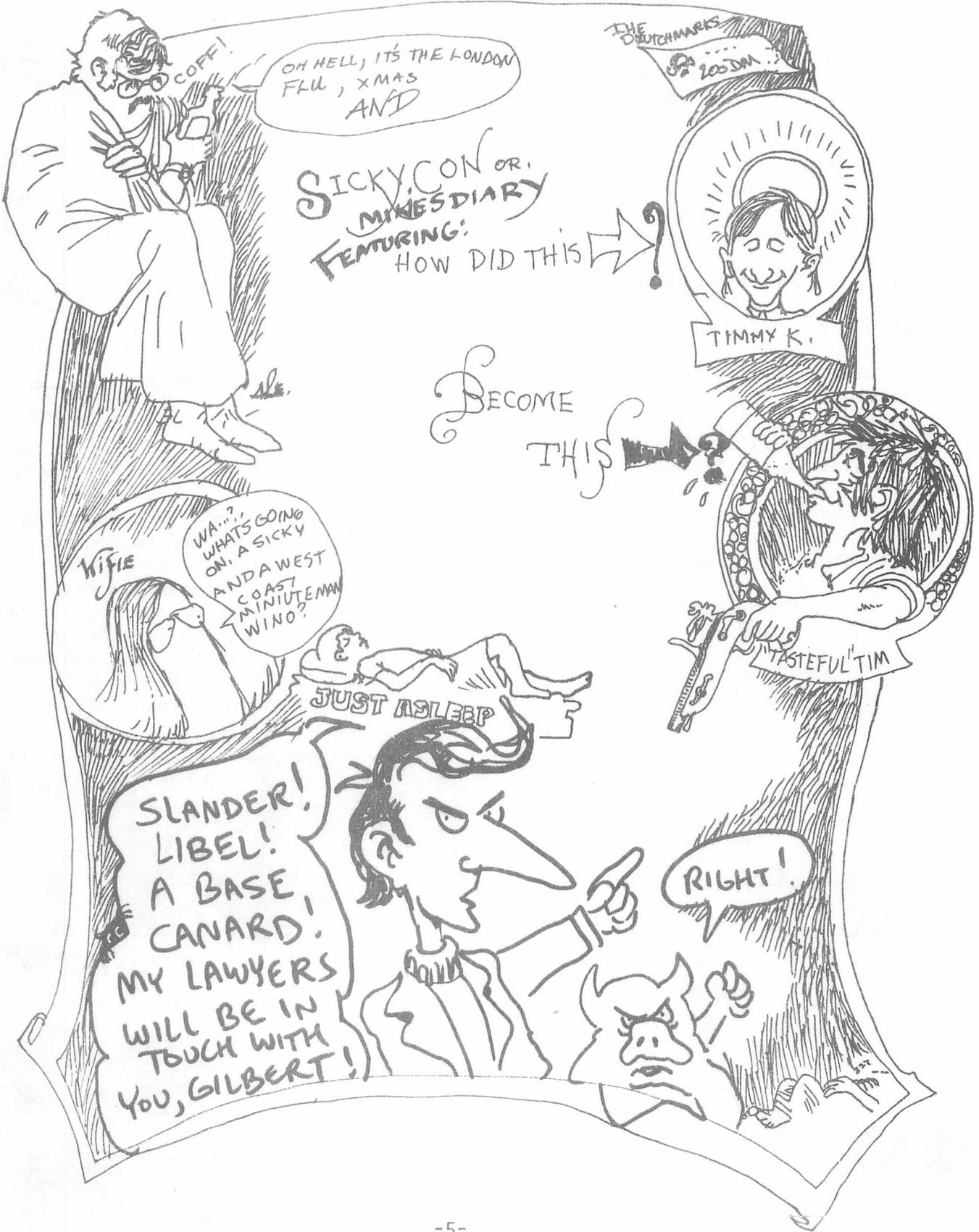
Finally, there is the problem of free banquet tickets given to the convention guests. Several unprincipled journalists have printed innuendoes between the lines of their columns. I did not ask for free banquet tickets-- they were thrust upon me while I was attending to some pressing matters in the bathroom. I had left my jacket hanging on a chair outside the room, and when I returned I discovered that someone unknown to me had slipped the tickets in my pocket. I used them, because I didn't know who to return them to.

It is absolutely nonsense to claim, as some fickle fan editors do, that my acceptance of free rooms and free booze and free meals increases the cost of this convention to you! I have done nothing to increase your costs in any way. I have taken nothing from you..I am not a crook!

Now, with that preamble out of the way, let us get back to the subject matter of my dissertation. My title is An Analytical Study of the Time-Binding in the Inter-Planetary Novels of Ray King.

Ray King was a writer who appeared in Marvel Science Stories for December, 1939. He published a short story, not a novel. It was an earthbound story, not an inter-planetary epic. The name of the story was "Lust Rides the Roller-Coaster". I don't think Mr. King really knows what timebinding is (the plot described a most peculiar form of time-binding.)  
-----Bob Tucker





OH HELL, IT'S THE LONDON FLU, XMAS AND

SICKY CON OR, MIKE'S DIARY FEATURING: HOW DID THIS

THE DUTCHMARKS 205 DM...

TIMMY K.

BECOME THIS

WIFIE

WA...? WHAT'S GOING ON, A SICKY AND A WEST COAST MINIUTEMAN WINO?

JUST ASLEEP

SLANDER! LIBEL! A BASE CANARD! MY LAWYERS WILL BE IN TOUCH WITH YOU, GILBERT!

RIGHT!

TASTEFUL TIM





AND SO...  
WE BROUGHT  
TIM BACK TO EDISON  
ON TUESDAY.....

ON WEDNESDAY  
TIM MET ZAPPLE / MALT DUCK



SO BEGAN  
A NEW FRIENDSHIP.

THURSDAY  
MIKIE HAD TO  
WALK BACK FROM LE CAR



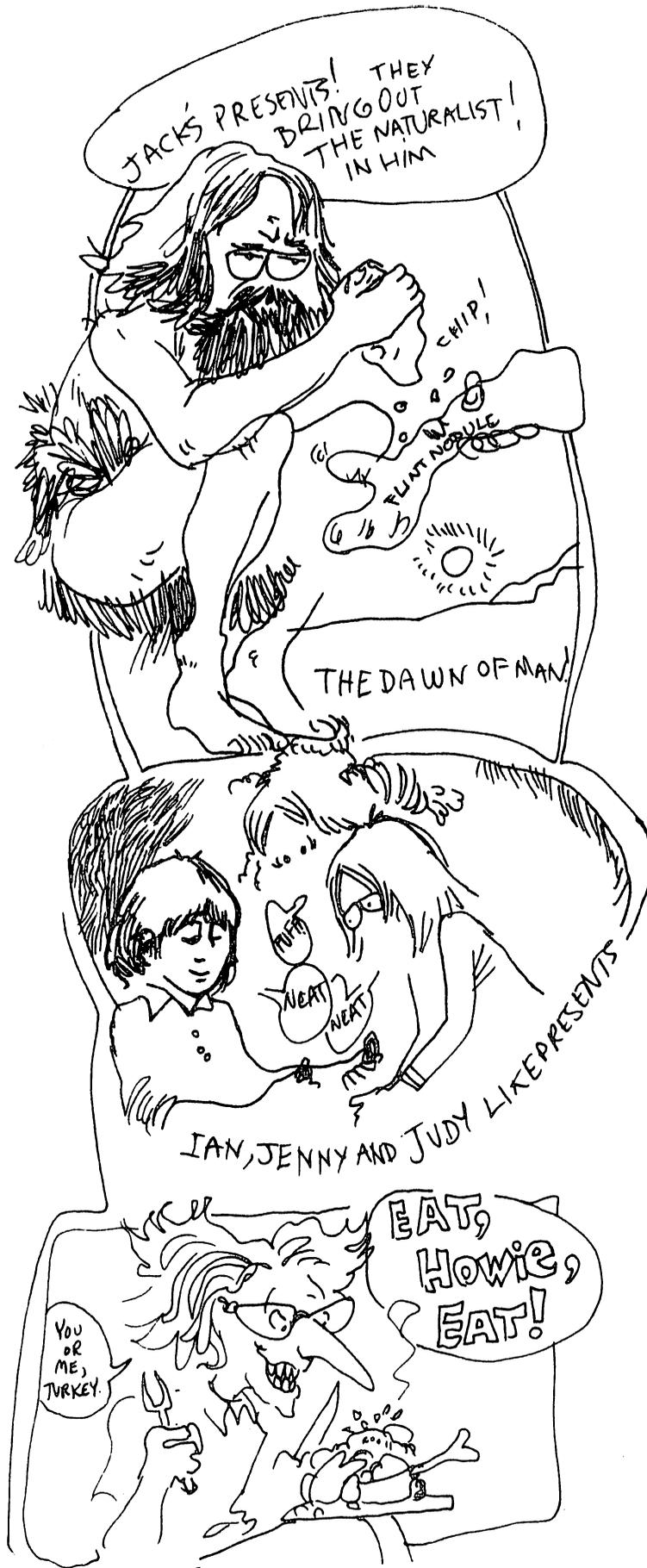
REPAIR, HE HAS COLD! TIM STILL SLEEPS!

Wednesday: Tim rested, I rested, Sheila worked. Ha! Ha!

Thursday: Hmmm. I've got a cold. I take Sheila to the bus stop at 8:00 then I zoom to the MG repair service 8 miles away. I find out that I can't get my car back for some time, so I walk back home to save the 4.00 or 5.00 taxi fare - cough cough! I do finally get my car back - cough- and I drink to frighten away my cold and Timmy Applesed slugs away at his Zapple. \*

\*Zapple: Cinnamon apple hippie wine



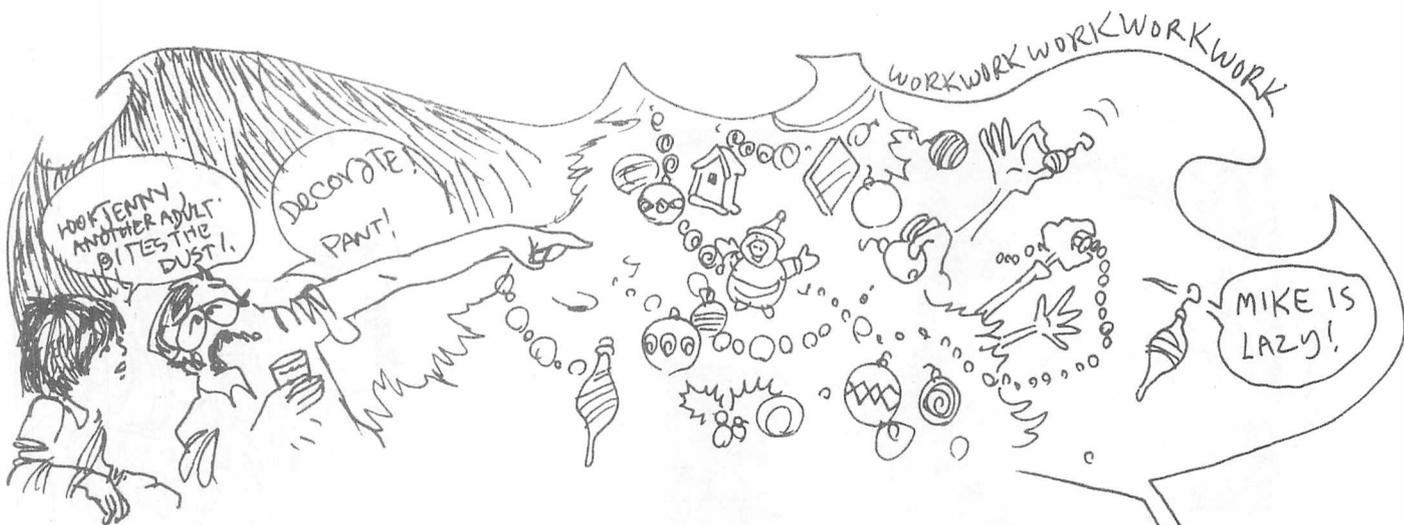


Friday: Tomorrow is party and tree-trim time so we have to shop our rumps off. First, Woodbridge -- at this time the largest covered shopping mall in the U.S., a sprawling two story cross shaped jungle. Tim tries with little success to locate the new N. C. Wyeth book. Then we take him to "Plant City" otherwise known as Arcadia Gardens, a nice exotic garden shop chain. Oh, we bought a turkey, booze, food, and prepared for the onslaught.

Saturday: Howie appears. I went to art school with Howie -- and wonder of wonders -- he wants to be the first honest Art Director. He rips in from Boston by nine; soon Judy Schoenherr pulls in about noon, plus kids. Big Jack is attending a lecture and will be late.

We fuel and rest. Judy and set off in her station wagon to find our mysterious Xmas tree. We picked up a tree at "Tree Botique" and fainted when we found out the tree was \$2 a foot, gaaaaah. Judy bought a bunch of ornaments and we put our 14 feet of tree into her station wagon and headed back to the apartment. Massing our powers, we shoved the tree in -- Iwo Jima all over again. I lurched to the evil smelling eggnog and began to direct decoration as the tree spread joyously into the room.

Soon Sheila's chickyhood friend and her husband rallied in, and were followed by Jack, who was terribly thirsty. Oh, it was terrible. I fought them off, they drank and ate and decorated. Then my turkey was done and they charged -- an orgy of food, eating -- the kids opened presents and the Dickensque Xmas reeled into the night.



AND NOW.....  
HEREEE'S **JACK!**



**FINALLY!**



DINNER IS SERVED  
HOT AND YUMMY



THE FREE LANCER





Tuesday: This, folks, is really bad. First, freezing rain, and we're going to the Big Apple. Tim puts all his money in his shoes.

NO NO -- A Flat! So we just miss the bus at the local stop but catch it at the next one 2 miles away. Finally in the Big Apple. Tim and Mike both have bad cases of N.Y.C. paranoia: money in shoes and the shakes. We ride the subs and throw Sheila off at NAL on 52nd and zip to Rockeyfeller Center to try to exchange my 200 DM check from my German agent. (Cough, cough.) Ha ha ha... "oh, it takes a month to process, sir"...ha ha ha. I'm dying. Tim and I lurch (cough) to Brentano's (a

huge book store) for Tim to try to find the Wyeth book. He does and he's broke. So we take Sheila to lunch and leave for N.J. on the old one o'clock bus. We finally get to the bus stop and (cough) we discover Sheila has keys to car, security locks, apartment, everything. Ha ha ha ha and the rain has a frozen sheet of ice all over. IT'S FIVE HOURS TIL SHEILA GETS HOME. So we call Sheila (it's 2:00) -- the earliest she can get here is 4:00. We cough over to the A&P, blow 20 minutes; the drug store (30 minutes); and Tim suggests going to the liquor store and drinking Zapple in back of the A&P; me, I scream. Finally, I figure out how to break into my MG. We can't start it but we can sit.

In the city, Tim bought a book (one of many) on Victorian graveyard art -- some of which decorates this manuscript-- mostly Jersey and Massachusetts stones. The book had a ghastly section on children's markers, but they seemed so fitting here.

Sheila finally arrived and we went home and thawed. Cough.



WAITING FOR SHEILA IN LOCKED CAR!  
2.5 HOURS



Wednesday: Tim's last full day. Very early we go to the local Two Goys discount store where they sell flintlock and percussion gun kits. Tim buys his kit and plays with it all day.

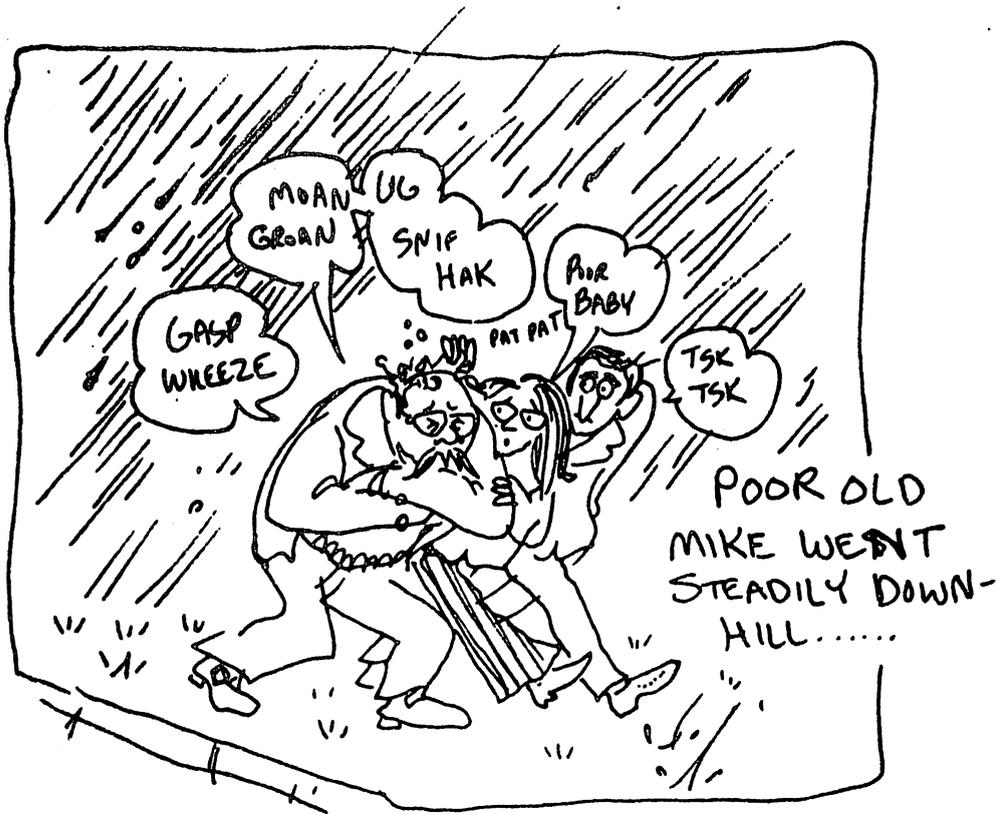
Thursday: Tim goes home. Sheila goes to work. Tim puts the parts of his gun kit all over the inside of his suitcase in a successful attempt to elude metal detector devices. Soon Tim is off, vowing to return and desert the L.A. area forever.

Friday: Tim's gone, Sheila's at work, I'm dead. Yes, it's the Flu, and vast white Niven-like bandersnatch roam across my throat -- ghastly lesions on my pink flesh. I'll get well, but Tim carried the flu to California.

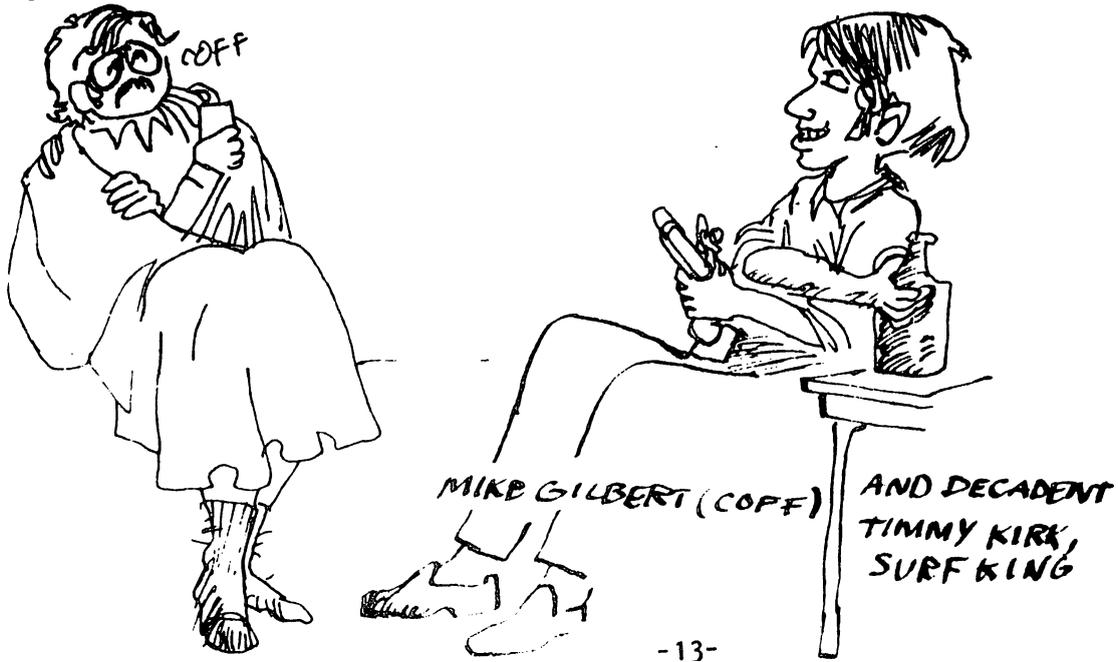
Sheila will make some strange postscript.

#### SHEILA'S TURN

Lies! Lies! It's all lies! Now if you want the true story of how Edison, N.J. was blockaded and condemned as the number one plague area in the nation...you'll just have to wonder about it. Actually



Mike pretty well covered everything except (1) Tim didn't even get to see one little snowflake before winging back to earthquake central, (2) Our beautiful, over-priced Christmas tree had to have two expensive feet hacked off before we could stand it up, at which point it successfully kept everyone at bay in one small corner of the living room, while its branches expanded to fill all available space. And the ultimate humiliation -- two days before Christmas, Mike and I had to sneak out of the house at midnight, nonchalantly toting the painfully sticking tree to the garbage dump, and hoping that no one would know who the fools were who had gotten rid of their tree before Christmas. But between coughs, sneezes, and wheezes, a fun time was managed by all; and especially by the electric company, which counted up each twinkling Christmas light into a big fat kilowatt bonus and a happy new year.





Sunday: Sheila and I stole past the dead on our way to get the Times. Later, with an armful of turkey sandwiches, Howie returned to Boston.

(Editor's Note: Mike did not include a diary entry for Monday, but some otherwise unaccounted-for drawings on the next page provide a few clues.)



## WORLDCON AT TORCON by Celia Tiffany

Wordcons seldom fail to get bigger, but not all manage to get better. I am delighted to report that TORCON 2 was one of the best. Take a bow, John Millard and company, you really did your country proud.

First there was that beautiful city. I liked Toronto... the castle Casa Loma, the clean subways, the streets you can walk in without fear at night... then there was the Royal York. I thought hotels like that existed only on movie sets. I love the way the staff took everything in its stride. The little things are what count: elevators that work, the sandwich stand that stayed open all night. the bright lights in the main convention room (we amateur existing-light photographers appreciated that), the shuttle bus to the airport. And for doing the tourist bit, subways, buses and ferries in easy reach. To say nothing of all the eateries! Food of all nations, in all price ranges. And finally, that balm to the neglected egos of fandom-publicity. Toronto noticed us. There were TV crews (filming in French and English), radio broadcasts, and journalists all over the place.

But where the con committee really rakes in the credit is in programming and new touches. There was a conscious effort to avoid scheduling major events at the same time. There were open spaces in the day for shopping in the huckster's room, talking with other fans, eating, drinking, partying, without missing some terrific speaker. This does not mean that there was any shortage of terrific speakers. The membership read like a who's-who. Robert Bloch, Isaac Asimov, Judith Merrill, Fred Pohl, Ben Bova, Harry Harrison... I haven't room to list them all, but you can get an idea.

New this year (new to me, anyhow): tape recordings of all podium speeches and panel discussions; available for a nominal fee to anyone wishing to order them for later mail delivery; a whole science fiction book store, moved into the hotel for the duration of the con (Bakka Books - their room at the con was as big as their regular store, and always crowded); computer games rooms; "All Our Yesterdays" room of fan history, with SIRRUIISH's Donn Brazier touted as one of the earliest active fans still publishing; free coffee for early risers; sneak previews of the fourth season Star Trek; a photography contest for fans.

There were few problems, but the Art Show had more than its fair share.. The hanging racks arrived late, due to a broken down truck. The room-lighting wasn't quite good enough for existing-light photos. And worst of all, a lousy lowdown sneaking 23457819 surely not a fan!) ripped off a Frank Kelly Freas painting. I missed many familiar artists, though I can't blame them if they were scared off by customs, duties, and other possible hassles involved in peddling in a foreign land. There were lots of works by Freas and Alicia Austin. I attended one art auction, probably for the last time. The rich and reckless snapped up every thing in sight, at prices ranging from \$75 to \$330. Don't ask me if that was U.S. or Canadian dollars-- I didn't have that many of either. \*sigh\* I'm glad for the artists' sake that collectors are paying well, but it does seem a pity that the ordinary fan is being shouldered out.

The Meet the Authors party boggled the mind. It was held in the main room, jam packed but well lighted. Isaac Asimov handed out distinctive hats to all the authors present, making it easy to pick them out of the crowd. The general mood was raucous conviviality. Most of the nearly 3000 con members were present.

The hucksters company was a little thin. Many familiar faces were absent, due perhaps to the aforementioned customs fears. Some were merely taking orders instead of selling off the table. Comics were almost entirely absent, though I did have the

chance to buy Star Trek in French. The most striking exhibit was that of the Enzenbachers: metal-sculptured dragons, heroes, demons, sorcerers. and a Barsoomian chess set. Apparently Canada has few native hucksters able to make the trek to a con.

For many of us, the joy was touched by grief as news of the death of J.R.R. Tolkien came. The Monday morning meeting of the Mythopoeic Society became a quiet, dignified wake. One of the last official announcements was of the Gandalf awards, to take their long over-due place beside the Hugo of science fiction. You'd never guess I'm a fantasy fan, would you?

One grumble: there were too few prizes given at the costume contest. For example, there should have been more than one for Most Beautiful (how about M.B. couple, male and female?). My personal favorites were Chun the Unavoidable and Lith the Golden Witch, the USS Enterprise and the Klingon cruiser, the Abominable Dr. Phibes, the Ice King, the Fairy Queen, the Queen of Air and Darkness, and Yang the Nauseating with his troop of slave girls, and the Sirian Commander (another Star Trek character), and Dragons' Local #1402. For the most part, the judges agreed.

Hugo award lists you have undoubtedly read elsewhere. This one bit I most remember was overheard after the crowd had started to leave. Jerry Pournelle, winner of the John W. Campbell award for best new writer: "Now I have the one thing Larry Niven will never get." Oh, yes, the gremlins struck here, also; the manufacturer failed to deliver the rocket ships for the Hugos in time, thereby losing the good will and future business of the Worldcons (I HOPE) Other awards included the First Fandom Award to Clifford Simak for writing about "People who care", and the Big Heart Award to Dave Kyle. A special award was given to Joseph and Juanita Green for their hospitality to fans attending launches at Cape Kennedy.

Monday night almost everyone was gone. A few of us gathered in the registration area for filksinging and paper airplane flights, or wandered disconsolately about. That's the only bad thing about any Worldcon--it has to end.



## HOW TO GET YOUR HUSBAND TO FIX THE CAR by Genie Yaffe

Thursday night at 8 o'clock, seven of the passengers for Minneapolis/St. Paul were watching KUNG FU and packing the bus, waiting for the eighth passenger, second fan, to arrive. Six people - three grownups, one eight-year-old, one four-year-old, one eight-month-old, were going to St. Paul to visit the grandparents for Easter, taking advantage of the two fen heading for the Minicon.

The old VW bus is designed for seven people plus some luggage. We were also bringing a baby plus all his baby equipment, a cooler, Railee's enormous suitcase and all kinds of goodies to eat and drink. The bus was not in good condition, but my husband Jon never believes me until he drives the clunker for a while. He learned!

We started off, packed in like fen should be, and Railee fell asleep. One headlight promptly expired. One hundred miles, change drivers, the heater goes. Railee wakes up, falls asleep again. Picked up in Wisconsin for having only one headlight. Driver checked for AWOL, stolen car, past record. Must have been the most excitement those cops had all night. Change drivers. Small explosion - vacuum bottle filled with powdered formula and cistern water filled the bus with yogurt while Railee and Genie slept on. Change drivers - noticed small problem with bus, it tended to buck and leap down the road if not driven at full acceleration a full gear down from usual at that speed. Only 150 miles to St. Paul. Made it. Kiss parents, and leave for Minicon! Sleep.

Railee and I went out to McDonald's for dinner, came back to the motel, and took Bob Tucker out to a Chinese restaurant, along with about seventeen others, including the maker and inventor of blinkies, the wondrous new jewelry that monitors one's heartbeat. Back to the hotel for the parties. I put on my costume for five minutes and attracted a party to Railee's room. Finally everyone cleared out (Smoooooooooooooth!) and we rested for a short while before getting up and visiting various huckster rooms and taking a long afternoon nap, waking up just in time for the banquet. We waited and waited and waited, the banquet room had no running water and the vegetables ran out. They weren't much when they arrived. Oh well. We adjourned to the speechmaking hall. Ben Bova was toastmaster, Kelly Freas described how he faked out John Campbell with a classy portfolio and Bob Tucker gave a speech (see B.c.#5) which left people aghast. Somebody had a birthday party, Kelly Freas sketched all the Mini minstrels, K. C. bidders had a wine tasting party, everybody had a party, a streaker struck (only one?) (old hat), and I went to bed early, anticipating driving all the next day, starting at 8 a.m., by order of my husband.

Next morning, appalled at the thought of driving another fourteen hours on Easter Sunday - gas??? - , at the thought of the two tests and half finished paper due at 8 a.m. Monday, we walked/stumbled out of the hotel. Railee slept through the ride to St. Paul, the abbreviated Easter egg hunt, the breakfast, the car packing and about the first two hours of driving. The bus was in the same condition as before (mechanics' strike) and all the inmates were tired. The heater was still non-functioning, also the headlight, also, nearly, the engine of the ol' VW. We crawled back to St. Louis, sounding more and more like a low-flying, slow-moving helicopter all the time. Railee was deposited, still asleep, in Kirkwood, and the rest of the clan, tired grumpy, and vowing once again never to drive to Minnesota, never, never, limped and loudly chugged into U. City at about 11:30 at night.

Was it worth it? Certainly! We got up at 5 o'clock the next morning, Jon finished typing my paper while I studied (the only studying I did) for the test at 8 o'clock, and planned to study for the 2:00 test at lunch time. I got A's on both tests, an A on the paper, and my husband got the bus fixed. And he even admitted he had a good time on the trip.

----Genie Yaffe

# what the postman came dragon in....

Roger Waddington, 4 Commercial Street, Norton, Malton, Yorkshire  
England

So many thanks for sending me a copy! And it's nice to see such a manifestation again. It's especially gratifying when a club comes out of its own personal shadow with a zine that it's prepared to show to the world, for then we know that its got something to be proud of.

Nostradamus, well, can I trade you Yorkshire's own Mother Shipton? She lived around the end of the fifteenth century, her mother was a witch, and she herself was chiefly remembered for the following prophecy though I have been trying to trace more; but not alas in time for this letter!

Carriages without horses shall go  
And accidents fill the world with woe.  
Iron in the water shall float  
As easily as does a wooden boat.  
A house of glass shall come to pass  
In England, but also!  
War will follow with the work  
In the land of the pagan and the Turk.  
Gold shall be found, and found  
In a land that's not now known.

From this brief stanza, I'd say she had more in common, extrapolating from her sources, with the sf writers of today; consider those first two sentences...and I think the 'house of glass' has usually been interpreted as being the Crystal Palace for the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the 'gold' as referring to the Klondyke discoveries...but as this book I've got at present was published in 1903, I think there may have been more scholarship done!

Donn Brazier take heart; over here, thanks to an early morning radio show, there's something called the Black Spot which has listeners writing in with accounts of all their catastrophes; and some of them are really excruciating. Makes me wish I'd stayed in bed some mornings, if this is what happens to other people...But consider the thought that there may be a race of gremlins, more potent than the deros Ray Palmer used to go on about; we've had our hobgoblins that would sour the cream unless some was left out for them; can you see a little gremlin perched on the bonnet of your car and two of them pushing behind, urging it on? And that bag didn't get filled with egg shells and bread crusts on its own; did you ever find your lunch? Chalk up another for the gremlins! Maybe not all of them are thirsty for blood sacrifices, though the freeways are littered with their victims; but it pays to be careful....

I've seen two views on fanfiction; one being that if it's not good enough to be submitted to one of the prozines, it shouldn't be printed at all. For if prozine editors have to make a living from their choice, and therefore should be the best judges; and it's no good printing in a fanzine if it's less than the very best; they've got to keep their standards up, at least...And then there's the other, that a lot of sf writers had to start somewhere in a small way, and they did this in the fanzines.

Bruce D. Arthurs 527-98-1303 57th Trans. Co. Fort Lee, VA 23801

Ah, so that's what the survivors of a Bothman Bagelbash look like. Gee, I didn't really expect such a mundane looking group. Though I should talk. I am rumored to actually look like a Decent Young Man, of all things! But on close examination, I believe that the wine bottle in the picture is still almost full. Obviously, the picture was taken early in the evening. Pity you didn't have the courage to print the 'after' photo, also.

Donn, you look younger than I expected. You certainly don't look 55 (or is it 56 now?) I would judge you as somewhere in your forties. But it's a known fact that a ~~second childhood~~ youthful appearance is caused by intense fanaticism. (Don't let Jon and Genie fool you, they've both been getting Social Security checks for over thirty years!)

Paul walker; Yes, indeed, I like it when my name is mentioned. Even more when it's mentioned in good context. Egoboo is a damn good reason to be in fandom, if you can get it. This is one reason why fans usually tend to get along with each other well; they don't want to say nasty things about other fans and maybe end up with a reputation as a Bad Name Fan. Of course, there is the one extreme of the neo who thinks any mention of his name, in any context, good or bad, is egoboo, and goes around holding extreme positions and trying to start feuds with other fans. A lot of new fans do this for a while; fortunately, most eventually learn it's a lousy trick and that it's better to be in fandom for its own sake, not for how much of a Name you can make for yourself.

I read Five Fates, too, but I consider that there was only one real failure in it. Despite reading the book, and reading a number of the reviews that followed, I am still unable to remember the slightest bit of Dickson's story. I draw a total blank whenever I try to remember it. Not the slightest idea of what the plot may have been. All the others, I have at least a vague idea of the plot, but not Dickson's. I've never been one of those fans who "appreciates" Dickson, but, if I could remember it, I doubt if "Maverick" would be worth remembering.

It arouses my sense of wonder to realize that SIRRUIISH is printed on the same camera that put out the famous ODD. At the last Balticon, I was fortunate enough to buy from Fred L Lerner ODD#14-20, along with other old fanzines. Just looking thru #14 a moment ago, what did I find but the following; written by SIRR founder Dave Hall: "Sirruish, often wrongly attributed as the name of a Babylonian beast from the lost city of Ishtar, is actually the sound made by a flushing water closet. Very appropriate, too. Siiiiirrrrruuuuush!" Now that really rouses my sense of wonder! Time/space does curve back on itself!

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Railee: I will have you know that Donn is still in his forties - his coat is definitely a 42!

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Jim Kennedy 1859 E. Fairfield Mesa, AZ 85203

I must thank you for publishing W.G. Bliss's "Gismok"; it's solved one of my greatest problems for me. My archfoe, Captain Youngdaughter (a servant of the evil Barbek, I'm told) had planted a model 17-Q gismok beneath the roller of my mammoth Anknaton Mimeograph machine (on which FANTASY REVOLUTION, HYENA, and

soon JAP are printed). The model 7-Q is a variation on the basic design described by WG, designed to work on mimeo machines rather than computers. The physical difference between the two models is quite small, but the effects are very noticeable... Mainly, it caused my drum to leak profusely at every other turn (Ankhaton is a Model B2 Sears open-drum Inkslinger), and the paper to go in at the wrong times... all very confusing when I try to describe it, but the result was about half the pages I ran through being destroyed, the other half largely illegible, anyway, and the necessity of spending up to an hour on a single page. Anyway, once I realized what was happening, I quickly rectified the problem. Now, at least when I left, I was printing four or five pages an hour!

The "Short History of the Stellar Strongmen" sounded very familiar, and now I realize why: I went through almost exactly the same thing N years ago when I attempted to organize a high-school "film-making" club, called, I believe "The Royal Society of Filmmakers". Like the Strongmen we had fantastic plans, except at its peak, the Royal Society had about 30 members. Like the Strongmen, I lost me girl... though I don't believe she's actually married him yet. We never officially broke up; at the last pathetic meeting, with about three of us in attendance, the others unanimously rejected my motion to disband, so I just stopped calling meetings.

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David Hall 202 Taylor Avenue Crystal City, MO 63019

Flattered as I am at seeing my name in connection with the origin of SIRRUSH, I feel impelled to point out some errors in the article, which I managed to peruse for a good ten minutes at Ron and Pam Whittington's house the other night. The whole looked interesting and very funny.

However,

1) SIRRUSH was not a fanzine that Jim Turner and I put out. I think Celia calls it a "serious science fiction fanzine", but Turner and I never put out one of those. The closest we ever came to something "serious", which wasn't very, was GRIMOIRE, and that was a sword and sorcery fanzine. It only lasted two issues.

SIRRUSH was in fact the original name of the OSFA newsletter. This of course very soon became OSFAN, but but this was not the original title for the simple reason that the newsletter predated the official founding of the club. When the club obtained a name, of course, the newsletter simply became OSFAN and the spare title was attached to the club genzine. It went through a variety of editors, and I don't believe I was ever officially one, and, as can be seen, survived OSFA itself. It is not easy to kill a sirrush.

2) Celia is not quite correct in her assumption that the title comes from deCamp's THE DRAGON of the ISHTAR GATE, which did not appear in paperback and which I therefore did not read, until sometime after all this. The title came instead, I believe, from Willy Ley's DRAGONS IN AMBER--- or one of his books at any rate, in which he devotes a chapter to the thesis that the sirrush, looking about as described, actually lurketh somewhere in the African brush. The problem is handled in even more detail by Bernard Heuvelmans in ON THE TRACK OF UNKNOWN ANIMALS. I was a trifle disappointed that deCamp's book was not a true fantasy; he has always been too scrupulous in separating fantasy from reality, a mistake I assure you I'd never make.

The cartoon on the last page struck me with such unexpected hilarity that I banged my foot on the floor in laughter- which was unfortunate as I'd already sprained it jumping over Frank Weyerich and now can not walk on it at all. Nevertheless, thank you.

Joe L. Hensley (signed 'Honest Joe') 2315 Blackmore, Madison, Indiana 47250

Paul Walker's comment on Praise was quite perceptive. All of my major writing, so far, has been outside the sf field (and by major I mean the longer stuff, novels, if you will). I've read a lot of my own reviews and I've had a number of letters and I still get a big kick out of every new thing that drops through the door. Science fiction short stories, with some rare exceptions, just don't bring the volume that the longer things bring and therefore are not as ego rewarding. "Lord Randy" did bring a lot of mail and still brings an occasional letter. "Shut the Last Door", from McCaffrey's ALCHEMY AND ACADEME and later in Elwood's YOUNG DEMONS brought a small avalanche. But because I don't do this for a living (although I keep count of the money, every dime of it) I want to hear about what I've done.

Thing is that I've always basically been a fan anyhow and so I stay with the sf even when the suspense stuff pays at a much higher rate in money and egoboo. And I find myself, sometimes aching a little, but praising the things I see by others, spending too much time reading and too little writing. Sigh.

Leigh Couch: I suspect that there are many more readers of SF than sales figures show. Poverty-stricken students frequently pass around their paper-back books and magazines. I've mentioned to mundanes from time to time that I have written letters to authors. They are always surprised. It somehow never occurs to them.

Raillee Bothman: I wish that busy busy authors would have some printed postcards that would say, "Letter received". Then people who write to them would at least know their message had gotten through.

(continued from 'Hanging Out')

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Raillee Bothman:

Lately I have been reading a large quantity of collections of short stories and novellas. After the horribleness of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, when people were frantically furnishing fallout shelters, and authors were publishing gruesome tales of post atomic life-we are now being inundated by a wave of stories about how awful life will be in the times to come. Well, I don't think I want to hear about it, thank you. And I don't want to spend my money on reading about people wallowing in their misery, instead of trying to do something about it. I shall soon be forced back to mysteries where the only mess is gallons of blood.

While we were in Minneapolis we were treated to the most superb example of a smooth brush-off by some people whom one would expect to have better manners to their fans. I can only admire the deft way it was done, like chopping off someone's legs so they don't realize what has happened until they fall down. I was left with my mouth hanging open and later a sense of admiration for the way I was politely set aside. Later, tho, this canker has developed into a running sore, and I am mad! Any comments?

WAHF: Don Ayers, Frank L. Balazs, D.Gary Grady, Alexei Panshin,  
Jeffrey May, Norman Hochberg, Tim Kirk

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Ben P. Indick 428 Sagamore Avenue Teaneck, NJ 07666

I loved that photograph of the Editors-in Chief. (In this tribe, EVERYONE is chief, as your engaging replies to LOC's proves.) I loved it because some of you look nearly as old as I am, although none of you look as tired. How come the men are getting the booze while the women work? Male chauvinism again, drat it. If you all clatter away simultaneously on your typewriters, either a) you'll write ALL of Shakespeare's plays eventually, or b) you'll get awful headaches..

I really liked Armagnac, which caught that style very well; however, the author could well have made a punchier ending by incorporating some of those questions, instead of listing them, a cutesy-pie dessert after a promising meal. Anyway, Finney did it in DR. LHO and what's the use, after that? Keep in mind, too, that Finney's novel was complete, so that the questions amplified the book, stirred up thoughts we might have been unaware of..

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Railee: All the male editors are drinking to drown the thought of having to publish with us females!  
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Jackie Franke Box 51A RR2 Beecher, IL 60401

Haven't done another miniature since last year. Still have a few canvases left...but the urge hasn't been exactly overwhelming. Woodcarvings have been "it" this season - we so-called creative types can't let ourselves get in a rut, now can we?

The "niggers" are still the menace that they were in the town I grew up in--it was as if 20 some-odd years simply hadn't passed at all. At a car party I went to, they were all aghast at the possibility that a family would move into the development north of town. Believe me, any person who can afford to buy a \$40-50,000 home in these days of high downpayments and outrageous interest rates can't possibly downgrade a neighborhood, even if he's purple!

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Rick Sneary 2962 Santa Ana St. Southgate, CA 90280

First, I very much like photos of fan groups...especially ones I don't know. In fact, I was not much impressed with any of your art work. The Gilbert took time to follow, and the effect was a little confused...Maybe I just want things too easy...Speaking of art, while I don't remember (didn't read?!) the Tiffany article about buying art, I will pick up on the letter response.. (Anything to disagree with Offut.) I would agree with him in theory that it would show greater confidence in one's own opinion to buy art that one liked, rather than that of someone that is known, I could point out that it is done all the time. People who buy original art are at least part collector, as well as art lovers. Also, beside looking at the printing as a thing of beauty

it is also a collectable item, in the same sense as old coins, rare stamps, and vintage cars. Thus those things that go to make a value as a collectable item are also considered. A painting by an old master, and an exact copy, maybe so similar that only an expert can tell the difference. A new Mickey Mouse watch might look just like the one made 35 years ago. Yet, people who collect find the original more desirable, and pay more. And, buying unknown artists and hoping they will become famous, is real collecting....more than real art-loving.

But then, I'm an art grouch. I'm moved more by classical music than art. I've long thought too much space was spent in fanzines with art, which has a very low time/ cost/ enjoyment factor. I also have never collected art. To be "art" the picture has to be something that if it was hung on my wall, I would enjoy looking at it, and get a "feeling" from it, for a long time. In my Grump opinion at least 90% of professional work is mere illustration (which is what the publishers bought, after all). A slightly higher percentage of fan/non-professional-intended, work is meant as art though with a much lower standard of technical quality (outstanding exceptions, such as Barr, noted). Thus, while glad to see artists getting money, I think everything I've seen is highly over-priced. (It is, after all, the Collector who enjoys having the original Barr, rather than a lithographed reproduction.) For myself, I have half a dozen paintings, of which three are good enough to hang, but only two are up. One old B&W hangs in the rumpus room.

But what happens to the art that is gobbled up by the avid collector? There are those people who have attended art sales for years, and buy more each year...more than anyone should hang with taste. A little is re-cycled through later auctions, but not enough to equal what is being bought by the same people. It would seem that those few money go to cons and buy a couple new pictures they take a fancy to. Something better than what they already have, and hang it in its place. (would anyone except Ackerman plaster their walls solid with art work?) The odd items go into storage, one assumes, until sold, given away, or a foot is put through them. The end effect is that no one really is enjoying them as art... only as collected possessions. An attitude most of us hold to our books and magazines, but rather unfortunate when it comes to a one-of-a-kind item. While 99% of all pro and fan art may be no more than pretty pictures, there is a small number that are either really fine art, or have significant meaning to the field, and it is a shame that they are locked away in private collections. Fred Patten once tried to start a project to catalog the art in different collections, but as far as I know he never got enough co-operations to go very far. While not an active art lover, I have the turn of mind that likes to make lists and hate to see anything lost or destroyed that might be useful to others, some time. That is why I had such high hopes of the Institute for Specialized Literature, Inc. But, I don't imagine anyone will ever assemble an important collection of SF art, made up of real masterpieces. They will have been lost into the collections of well-heeled but little known fringe-fans. I guess some kind of a photo-record is being kept, but I'll bet there isn't an artist who has kept a record of his works, much less copies. This seems unfortunate, somehow.

Harlan Ellison

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Delighted to read Cy Chauvin's intelligent, witty and perceptive analysis of my novella "The Region Between" in SIRRUISH11. He is the only critic I wasn't able to fool with my trashy work. All the others thought the story was a thematic and stylistic triumph, thereby proving what gullible clods they all are; thereby proving what a keen literary observer Chauvin is. Plaudits to Chauvin, who pierced through my auctorial trickery to the soft, redolent core of the story, revealing its worthlessness for the first time since it was nominated by all those stupid fans and professionals for Nebula and Hugo. What this genre needs more of, is Cy Chauvin and his Keen, penetrating intellect. I can't wait for him to reveal the fraudulence of the full novel version of the story, to be published by Ballantine as THE PRINCE OF SLEEP.

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WR:lee: Why don't you send Cy a copy of your book? I'm sure he'd be happy to review it!

\*\*\*\*\*

Robert Bloch 2111 Sunset Crest Dr. Los Angeles, CA 90046

Missouri seems to be making a bid for fan pub capital of the country, if not the world, and S11 is doing its part very nicely. I did enjoy the issue and it's good to see Donn Brazier again: he manages to retain a youthful appearance and has ever since I first met him in 1902.

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Donn: It wasn't until 1898 I got hooked on wild pickle elixir!

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Ray Nelson 333 Ramona Ave. El Cerrito, CA 94530

Paul Walker left out the sincerest form of praise-i.e. imitation. There's nothing quite so delightful as to have some idea or phrase of one's own picked up by others and used and reused until people are playing with it that never heard of you. That may not be meant as praise but it beats even being asked for one's autograph. (But I doubt if "Godzilla vs. The Planet of the Apes" is going to inspire any imitations.) "The Saragon Armagnac" could have appeared in a prozine, though. zChaplain Link will peek at the body, see that it is Number One (who is a young girl). He delays telling Number One until after the execution while he tries to solve the mystery. He is hampered by the need to keep the slave peoples from the fact that Number One is a teenybopper. Too late Link learns that Number One is experimenting with time-travel. She goes back in time and lands in the original cask and drowns. From the duchess Sforza Link learns the duke knew who the body was all along.

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DENIS QUANE Box CC, East Texas Station, Commerce, Texas 75428

In a letter to Donn, sent a couple of weeks before I received Sirruish, I had commented on the tendency of fanwriters to make slighting references to Analog. While paging through Sirruish just after receiving it, there caught my eye ... "a writer I had previously considered an ANALOG hack." Just precisely the sort of Analog put-down I had in mind. And about Poul Anderson of all people. How many "Analog-hacks" manage to get a special issue of F&SF devoted to them?

That aside, Cy Chauvin's review of Five Fates was well written and perceptive (definition - it agrees with my impressions of the book.) I read the book some time back, and Anderson's story is the only one I remember clearly. As to the book's "gimmick", Chauvin's complaint rings a little false. Comparisons of how different writers treat the same theme is one of the pleasures of reading (and writing about) science fiction. Why complain if a publisher gives one the chance to do it without having to look at more than one book at a time?

I appreciate the picture of the Bagel-Bash. Never having been to a con, nor a member of a club, too many of the fans are just names to me, and with my limited imagination, I find it difficult to imagine faces to go with their written personalities. Your get-togethers sound like the sort I would enjoy - and not just because I like Bagels.

DeCamp's Dragon of the Ishtar Gate - a really good book, and well worth having a fanzine named in its honor. DeCamp's historical novels are so well done - and set in periods I've always wanted to know more about - that it's possible to forgive him for abandoning Science Fiction. Now the Conan stuff - that's another matter.

Celia Tiffany: Opinions run in fads, and people don't always live what they say. Analog enjoys a large circulation, despite its critics, just as marriage licence bureaus do a booming business, despite all the talk about "free love" and other exotic arrangements....Remarkably few fans have faces that go with their written personalities, but Buck Coulson (Yandro) does carry a riding whip....I won't try to defend the Conan tales of Howard, de Camp, et al. as great literature, but I do enjoy 'em.

Leigh Couch: The cuts at Analog have appeared in about the last 10 years. It's probably the price of success. I've read it since practically the year one, and I thought J.W.C. put out a pretty boring mag (to me) in the last years. Ben Bova, however, is putting out a dam fine magazine.

Donn Brazier: Speaking generally, calling any selling writer a hack is in the same league as calling any fanzine a crudzine. Try a fanzine; try a story for any prozine. After you succeed, the desire to call out CRUD or Hack will have passed.

Tom Collins 335 W. Washington, Ft. Wayne, Indiana 46804

Ishtar Gate was interestin' as a chance to meet people. That photo reminds me of meeting you Railee and Donn and Leigh at Midwestcon.

Tree Frog Beer is a staple with some underground comic artists, like Clay Wilson, and perhaps is a class symbol apart from that. Any idea on where the name came from?

Witchcraft is not an old religion at all. The belief all those people in the middle ages were being prosecuted for a vast cult is preposterous. In fact, they were mostly isolated, there was no witch cult or conspiracy stretching across Europe, and no ancient wisdom was being preserved intact for use in those days or from those days to ours. It's all so much rip-off bull shit from commercial interests who profit from encouraging such fatuous nonsense and foisting it off upon a godless and weakminded public.

Seems like I just saw a Sirruish picture in one of the silly Von Daniken books recently. You might thumb through and see. Don't swallow his views, though, they're pretty well exploded in Crash Go the Chariots, and in Heyerdahl's Aku-Aku and the like.

Leigh- You sound like an old time preacher inveighing against sin. But I agree with you about the commercial rip-off of witchcraft. Have you heard that there are spells which will cause you to lose weight? That sounds like a real money-maker given everyones present preoccupation with looking as much like a famine victim as possible. We enjoyed meeting you too Tom. We hope you haven't gafiated.

railee- I think there were witches a long way back and wish there were still some around, but still haven't been a ble to meet any, darn it!

#### MEET CHESTER CUTHBERT

My 61st birthday will be October 16th, my wife is a lovely blonde named Muriel, and we have five children : Ellen ( Mrs. Robert C. Kruger ) 28, with Timothy 12 and Lia 1; Gordon 26 with the Canadian Forces at Cold Lake, Alberta, his wife Sharon, with Jennifer nearly 4 and Alicia 2; Raymond nearly 18 and expecting to enter the University of Winnipeg this fall, taking an arts course leading to the Ministry; Donald, long-haired, guitar-playing, 16, interested in electronics and science, and starting grade XI this fall; Marion 11 due to enter grade VI. Rather than move my family and books to Toronto, I accepted the alternative of early retirement from my position as Claims Supervisor with the St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company, and am now living on pension reduced for early retirement plus small income from the sale of books and magazines from my collection. I read mainly fantasy fiction and psychical research (ESP); and am presently compiling a checklist of fantasy and science fiction books by Canadian authors. I am a former President of the Canadian Science Fiction Association, and am still unofficial Librarian-Treasurer of the moribund Winnipeg Science Fiction Society, my function in the latter capacity being mainly to purchase books and magazines as economically as possible for myself and other members by taking advantage of bulk buying discounts and to keep available a reasonable assortment of reading matter. The WSFS was organized in 1950 and meetings were held for many years Friday evenings in my home, but are now only occasional. My writing, apart from two professionally published stories, has appeared mainly in fanzines. A local fan invited me to see A Clockwork Orange A YEAR AGO, A SHOCKING experience for me as I had not attended a theater for seventeen years previously. Aside from my family and my books, I like favorite old songs, and instrumental rather than vocal music, piano especially.

Ben Indick 428 Sagamore Ave. Teaneck, N.J. 07666

I loved that photograph of the Editors-in-Chief. I loved it because some of you look nearly as old as I am, although none of you looks as tired. How come the men are getting the booze, while the women work? Male chauvinism again, drat it. If you all clatter away simultaneously on your typewriters, either a. you'll write ALL of Shakespeare's plays eventually, or b. you'll get awful headaches.

I really liked ARMAGNAC, which caught that style very well; however, the author could well have made a punchier ending by incorporating some of those questions, instead of listing them, a cutesy-pie desert after a promising meal. Anyway, Finney did it in DR LAO, and what's the use, after that? Keep in mind, too, that Finney's novel was complete, so that the questions amplified the book, stirred up thoughts we might have been unaware of.

Donn Brazier: I was drinking booze because I had just completed Will's AS YOU LIKE IT; Jon is simply a drunk. And you old redhead, I hope you noticed that in my dotage I do have some hair on my head as I rest one arm over Leigh's shoulder to keep myself from falling off the chair arm.1

Leigh-We take care of our men and see that they have liquid refreshment at all times. Fanzine publishing is hard, hard work. Don't let Brzier kid you, he knows that he's a handsome devil!

Tom Collins 835 W. Washington Ft. Wayne, Ind. 46804

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Michael T. Shoemaker 2123 North Early St. Alexandria, VA 22302

It seems a little incongruous having offset reproduction for a friendly, modest, low-key zine like SIRRUIISH, but I'm not complaining. and I would be very receptive to anything as good that might be sent my way for OXYTOCIC(hint, hint, Jon) The rest of the art is a waste. I used to like Mike Gilbert's work, but items such as Tickycon 1 are so sloppy and hopelessly cluttered that they are not worth wading through.

The group photo was of great interest to me, but at the same time annoying. You see, you have destroyed my own conception of what the great Mr. TITLE, Donn Brazier, himself looks like. It's like when they make a movie out of a book (as in the case of Frankenstein), the visual product is never as one imagined it to be. I had hoped to be kept in suspense until meeting Donn personally, but now the game is spoiled.

Poul Anderson is a writer Chauvin considers an Analog hack? Chauvin must have written this review when he was still green.

I have noticed that con reports are not being published as often anymore. Frankly, I like con reports a lot, and contrary to most fans, I'm interested in knowing what the panels were about. For my money, the best writer of con reports is Jay K. Klein.

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Sheryl Birkhead 23629 Woodfield Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20760

That picture of the motley crew - aw cummon now - not a single double or triple head in the lot? Not even a single single eyed BEM, no ichor? What kind of an SF group do you think you are? Sounds as if you've hit a happy medium (right below the belt!) - in your group activities and they sound mighty enjoyable. I give my many thanks for seeing the group at work (?):!

The comic strip - um, is that really how one of your sessions goes? I mean you surely have a bigger slush pile than that - or was that merely spilled beer?

Leigh Couch: No, we don't have a big slush pile, more's the pity!

Donn Brazier: None, I repeat, none of our strips are comic.

Railee Bothman: All contributions to a bigger and better slush pile will be gratefully accepted.

