

The National Fantasy Fan

Cras ad Stellas— Tomorrow to the Stars

Volume 79 Number 5

May 2020

To Join or Renew

There have been recent technical difficulties with coordinating the mailing list and the membership list. As computers are involved, the presence of difficulties should not be unexpected. Having said that:

If you join or renew, you need to go to <http://n3f.org/join/membership-form/> and give us your name, your email address (or you will not receive most of our zines), and (if you are paying to join as a “Regular Member”) your paper-mail address.

It is IMPERATIVE that you give us at least that much information, or your membership may well get lost in a crack and eaten by the gnolls.

Neffies

We had three new nominations. The full list is inside. The new nominations were Best Comic: Books of Magic. Best Fanzine: Fadeaway. Best Fan Writer: Lloyd Penney.

Presidential Tirade

To repeat what I have said before, we desperately need a new Treasurer. David Speakman has said several times that he is unable to continue.

On a different note, we could really use a member who reads fanzines to start writing fanzine reviews.

Welcome to new N3F members! Please do bring your fannish activities to the N3F. Whatever you do as a fan, waving the flag here can serve as an inspiration to our other members.

Bureau Reports

Birthday Card Bureau

Birthday cards sent in April: 8
— R-Laurraine Tutihasi

Correspondence Bureau

Are you seeking Intellectual Adventure into the Unknown? Would you like to find an Intellectual Companion? The Correspondence Bureau can help you with your quest.

You have two choices for seeking a pairing:

Choice #1 -You want to be paired with someone of like interest. Send an email or postal letter to the bureau head with your name and a list of your interests. When someone with similar interest requests a pairing both of you will be notified and given the email or postal address of the other member. Contact the other member and the rest is up to you.

Continued on Page 2, Top



Art!
Khan Cartoon by Jose Sanchez ...3
E. T. Phones Home by Jose Sanchez...5
Fairy in a Bottle by Angela K. Walker...7
Dragon Flow by Angela K. Walker...9



Your Volunteer Team

Directors:

Heath Row— kalel@well.com (Chair)
 Judy Carroll - BlueShadows2012@gmail.com
 Jefferson Swycaffer - aboutides@gmail.com
 John Thiel - kinethiel@mymetronet.net
 R-Laurraine Tutihasi - lauraine@mac.com

Officers

President George Phillies - phillies@4liberty.net
 Treasurer David Speakman - davodd@gmail.com

Editorial Cabal

Editor, TNFF George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net
 Art Editor, TNFF Cedar Sanderson cedarlila@yahoo.com
 N'APA Collator Jefferson Swycaffer aboutides@gmail.com
 Editors, Tightbeam George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net,
 Jon Swartz jon_swartz@hotmail.com
 Editor, Ionisphere John Thiel kinethiel@mymetronet.net
 Editor, Eldritch Science George Phillies
 Editor, Mangaverse Jessi Silver jessi@s1e1.com
 Editor, Films Fantastic Eric Jamborsky mrsolo1@comcast.net
 Editor, Origin John Thiel kinethiel@mymetronet.net
 Editor, The N3F Review of Books: George Phillies
 Keeper of the URLs David Speakman davodd@gmail.com
 Host of the Web Site David Speakman davodd@gmail.com

Bureau Heads

Anime/Comics Kevin Trainor wombat.soho@gmail.com
 Artists Bureau Cedar Sanderson cedarlila@gmail.com
 Birthday Cards R-Laurraine Tutihasi lauraine@mac.com;
 Judy Carroll autumnseas8012@gmail.com
 Book Review Bureau G. Phillies phillies@4liberty.net
 Convention Calendar: Heath Row kalel@well.com
 Club Directory Heath Row kalel@well.com
 Correspondence Bureau Judy Carroll
 BlueShadows2012@gmail.com
 Election Teller Jon Swartz. jon_swartz@hotmail.com
 Fandom History/Research Bureau John Thiel kinethiel@
 mymetronet.net; Jon Swartz jon_swartz@hotmail.com
 Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau John Thiel
 kinethiel@mymetronet.net
 Film Bureau Eric Jamborsky mrsolo1@comcast.net
 Forwarder Jeffrey Redmond
 Franking Service George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net
 Games Bureau George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net
 Gourmet Bureau Cedar Sanderson cedarlila@gmail.com
 Historian Jon Swartz jon_swartz@hotmail.com
 History and Research Bureau John Thiel kinethiel@
 mymetronet.net; Jon Swartz jon_swartz@hotmail.com
 Information Technology David Speakman davodd@gmail
 Lord High Proofreader Jon Swartz jon_swartz@hotmail.com
 Lady High Proofreader Jean Lamb
 Membership Recruitment Kevin Trainor wombat.soho
 @gmail.com, John Thiel kinethiel@mymetronet.net,
 Jeffrey Redmond redmondjeff@hotmail.com
 Neffy Awards Bureau George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net
 Pro Bureau George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net

Continued Next Column

Choice #2 - You want to be paired with the next person whose interests are unknown. Send an email or postal letter to the bureau head telling of your choice. Include your name, and email or postal address. You will be paired with the next person with unknown interests and both of you will be notified and given the email or postal mail address of the other member. The rest is up to you. Whichever way you choose will be an adventure.

The Correspondence Bureau is open to all members of the club whether they are paying or non-paying members or have an email or postal mail address. Members seeking to correspond through the Correspondence Bureau will be asked for permission to publish their name in the monthly article. If they do not wish to have their name published only their Choice #1 or #2 will be published. No email or post-

Your Volunteer Team

Pro Bureau George Phillies phillies@4liberty.net
 Round Robins Patricia Williams-King , 335 Forrest Park
 Road, Apt # 75 Madison, TN 37115.
 Short Story Contest J. Swycaffer aboutides@gmail.com
 Social Media David Speakman, George Phillies
 Video Schedule David Speakman davodd@gmail.com
 Welcommittee Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com
 Writers Exchange Judy Carroll BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

WANTED! Fanzine Review Editor

Join or Renew

We offer four different memberships. Memberships with TNFF via paper mail are \$18; memberships with TNFF via email are \$6. All other zines are email only. Additional memberships at the address of a current member are \$4. Public memberships are free. Send payments to N3F, POB 1925, Mountain View CA 94042. Pay online at N3F.org. Our PayPal contact is treasurer@n3f.org Send phillies@4liberty.net your email address for a public membership.

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Khan Cartoon by Jose Sanchez

al mail addresses will be published in the monthly article nor given to another member without that members permission.

To join the Correspondence Bureau or if you have questions, please contact: Judy Carroll - BlueShadows@gmail.com or 975 E 120 S, Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau

We are taking a pause this month to look over our bureau and what we have accomplished and discuss further improvements in the bureau itself. We may be starting a more dynamic effort in the near future.—John Thiel

Fanzines

The N3F.org web pages were recently updated with back issues of all of our zines.

History and Research Bureau

We are getting the bureau and its objectives more formulated and have, I think, pretty much defined the bureau in ORIGIN.—John Thiel

Pro Bureau

The N3F Pro Bureau, in collaboration with the N3F Book Review Bureau and the Writers Exchange Bureau, continues to publish The N3F Review of Books, Incorporating Prose Bono. More book reviewers will be most appreciated!

Recruiting Bureau

A bureau bulletin is being created in order to discuss recruitments among the three recruiters.—John Thiel

Welcommittee

The purpose of the Welcommittee is to welcome new members to the club. A letter is sent, by email or postal mail, to new members informing them of club activities they may be interested in joining. Those members with email addresses are also sent attachments to the current TNFF and other publications the N3F has to offer.

This month we have two new members to welcome into the N3F, Roger Caldwell and Samuel Lubell. We hope your stay with us will be long and pleasant, full of interesting conversations and activities. Samuel has already sent us some book reviews for The N3F Review.

If you have questions about the club or are interested in helping, please contact Judy Carroll at BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Writers Exchange

Welcome to the Writers Exchange!

I think it would be fun, exciting, and informative if our writers would actively participate in the monthly Writers Exchange article. We could get to know one another and help with writing questions and problems. I am happy to report that Jefferson Swycaffer, has responded to last month's query and poses a question to other writers.

In the April TNFF I asked our N3F writers to, "Tell me what you do when the piece you are writing runs into a wall, hits a bump, cries for understanding,

hops a train going in a direction opposite of where you are planning, or you're stymied..."

Jefferson Swycaffer has kindly responded.

"Writing can be mighty tough some days, and dead ends, contradictions, and mere uncertainty -- what the heck is supposed to happen next? -- can really derail a writing project. What I find highly liberating is the fact that *re-writing* is much, much easier than *writing.* This is wonderful! It means it's *okay* when a first draft is full of errors and contradictions, or when it simply isn't very good, gosh darn it. First drafts are *permitted* to be a bit stinko. That's actually a good thing! It means, damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead! Just write the darn thing, no matter how it goes. Everything can be fixed when it comes to the second draft! (Or the third! Or the fifteenth!) Re-writing is *easy*!"

Jefferson has a writing question he would to ask our N3F writers.

"I just read a book where the protagonist is followed by a shadowy figure, and he can't tell if it is a man or a woman. So the author uses "they" for the indeterminate pronoun. Now to my mind this is ugly and awkward and clunky. "They followed him down the alley." Oh, did they? All of them at once or one at a time? The word "they" too strongly implies the plural. Plus, it's just awkward. It is distracting to the reader and disrupts the "reading trance." If it were up to me, I'd either use "he" or "he or she." Or even restructure the sentences to avoid the pronoun entirely. How do you feel?"

Thank you so much, Jefferson, for participating in this month's Writers Exchange.

Please feel free to respond to the query from the April TNFF or answering Jefferson's writing question from this month..

With your permission, I would like to share your comments in the June, TNFF.

Email me at the address below. I really would love to hear from you.
If you are a new writer, a professional writer, or

someone who dreams of being a writer - this is the place for you. If you love reading unpublished work and find it exciting to do so, this place is also for you

The Writers Exchange is for anyone interested in writing. If you have a story you would like read and commented on, or if you just want the excitement of reading unpublished work, then the Writers Exchange is here for you. Published or unpublished - all are welcome. You may join as a writer, a reader or both.

If interested, please contact: Judy Carroll.
BlueShadows2012@gmail.com

Neffys

We have Neffy nominations. Please discuss. Send your comments to Tightbeam, phillies@4liberty.net We will vote next month on these fine nominees. As last time, votes will be 5-4-3-2-1, a total for each nominee will be computed, and the winner will be announced. Recalling strange events of days gone by with other awards, neither the point totals nor the order of finish beyond first place will be revealed.

Best Novel:

What the Wind Brings by Matthew Hughes
The Family Pride by Chris Nuttall
Monster Hunter Guardian by Larry Correia and Sarah A. Hoyt
Endgames by L. E. Modesitt, Jr.

Best Shorter Work:

Waterlines by Suzanne Palmer -- Asimov's SF
By the Warmth of their Calculus by T. S. Buckell
-- Mission Critical
A Place to Stand On by Marie Vibbert -- Analog
The Menace from Farside by Ian McDonald -- Tor

Best book editor:

Toni Weisskopf

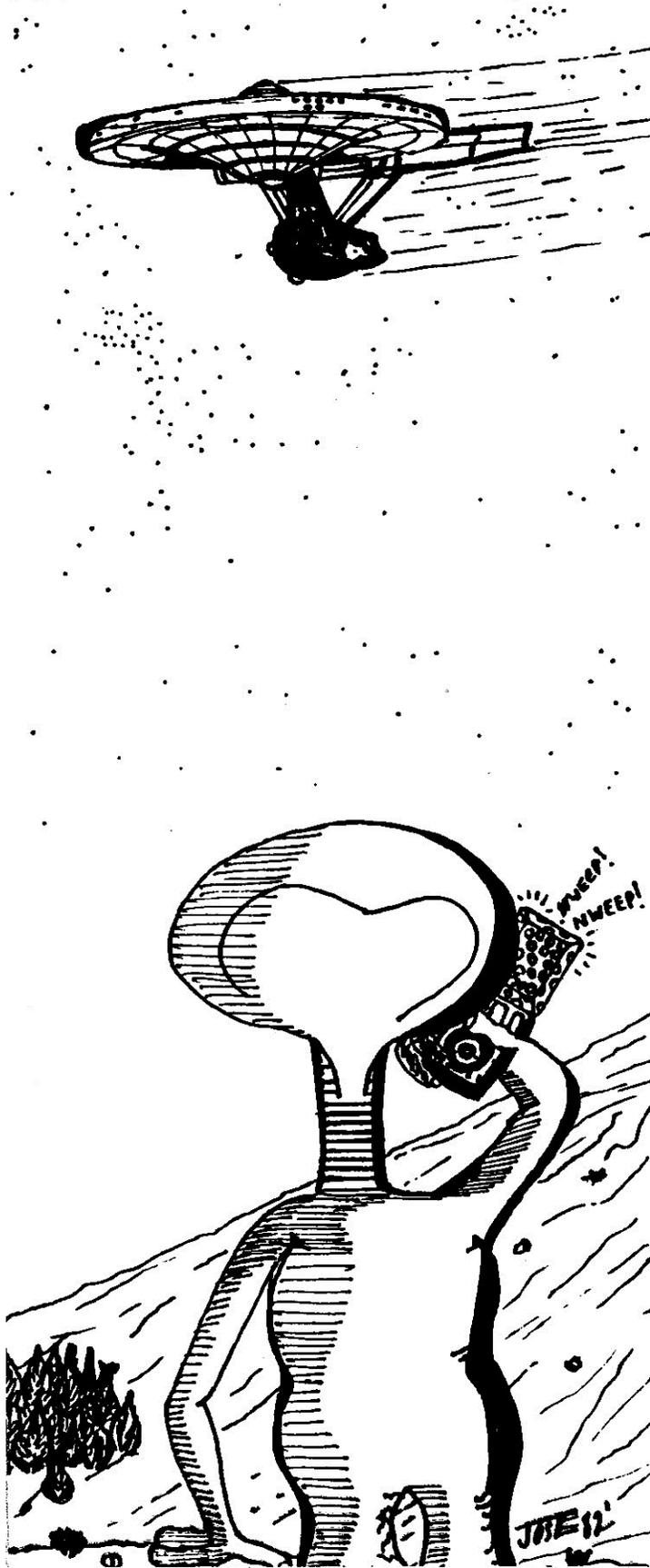
Best TV Show:

Supergirl
Batwoman

Best Cover Artist:

David Hardy

E.T. PHONES HOME!



E. T. Phones Home by Jose Sanchez

Brad Fraunfelter

Best Anime:

- The Promised Neverland
- Sarazanmai
- Astra: Lost in Space

Best Manga, Comic, or Graphic Novel:

- Monstress
- Lady Mechanika
- Hit-Girl in Hollywood
- Books of Magic

Best Non-N3F Fanzine:

- Opuntia
- My Back Pages
- Fadeaway
- Event Horizon
- Chunga

Best N3F Fanzine:

- Ionisphere
- The N3F Review of Books
- Tightbeam

Best Fan Artist:

- Jose Sanchez
- Angela K. Walker

Best Fan Writer:

- Will Mayo
- Lloyd Penney

Letters of Comment

FANAC Fan History Project

April 17, 2020

Editor:

Greetings and felicitations. I hope this update finds you all well – we are living in surreal and frightening times. For us, wallowing in fan history is not only a passion but a good way to focus on something other than the pandemic news. Apparently, others feel the same way. We’ve had a number of scans from new contributors, as well as our stalwarts. In particular, new material has been provided by Rich Lynch, Sheryl Birkhead, Joe Patrizio, Mike Saler, Syd Weinstein and Tom Whitmore.

CoNZealand Retro Hugo Awards nominations:

We've completed our work on the Retro Hugos for 2020. Final nominees were announced recently by CoNZeland, and we've assembled a page of links for the fannish material nominated in the categories of Best Related Work, Best Fanzine and Best Fan Writer. Our webmaster, Edie Stern, combed through all the 1944 fan publications available on the net to make the list as complete as possible. We want to thank CoNZeland, Steve Davidson (Amazing Stories), Mike Glycer (File 770), Dave Langford (Ansible), Andrew Porter (news lists) and Locus for promoting and linking to our effort. You can access the material at http://fanac.org/fanzines/Retro_Hugos.html.

FANAC by the Numbers. We have passed what feel to us like some significant milestones in our archiving -over 10,000 fanzine issues and over 150,000 pages scanned. That's not counting pages in some of our largest runs like Opuntia, MT Void and TNFF. It does include over 3,000 newszines. Our YouTube channel has over 500 subscribers, and more than 75,000 views. Fancyclopedia 3 has over 30,000 pages. It feels like we're getting somewhere.

Recent Highlights: FANAC was there, at the last convention before the lockdown....

Mark Olson ran a FANAC.org scanning station at Corflu 37 Heatwave (March, 2020) in College Station, Texas. The table was in a great location, inside the program room with a handy electrical outlet. Many thanks to Chairman John Purcell for making it all easy. Thanks to John and Valerie Purcell, and Pat Virzi - the Corflu 2020 committee -- for help throughout the weekend. Murray & Mary Ellen Moore, Pat Virzi, and Sandra Bond brought fanzines to scan, and Murray and Tom Becker provided help along the way. Mark scanned almost 1,000 pages. FANAC.org also received the FAAN award for Best On-Line Activity for the second time. We also acknowledge Bill Burns who withdrew his website, eFanzines.com, after winning the award many times. Best of all, no one who attended the convention came home sick! Bristol, England will be the site of Corflu 38 Concorde, March 26-28, 2021, chaired by Rob Jackson - <https://corflu.org/index38.html>

FANAC Fan History Project website: <http://fanac.org>

It's always a balancing act to juggle adding new titles with completing the runs of fanzine titles already being scanned. Since our last report, we've completed the runs of Dan Steffan's Boonfark, Dick Wilson's Science Fiction News Letter, Algis Budrys' dubious, Geri Sullivan's Idea. Bill Donaho's Habakkuk, Ginjer Buchanan and Suzle Tompkins fanzine Imryrr, Jeff Smith's Khatru, Richard Harter's Personal Notes, John Douglas & Gordon van Toen's OSFIC Quarterly, Stu Shiffman's & Larry Carmody's Raffles, Tucker & Bloch's Science Fiction Fifty-Yearly, John Magnus' SF, Lora Crozetti's Venus and Jeanne Gomoll's Whimsey. After a strong focus in the past on the 1950s and earlier, this run of now-complete zines is dominated by 1970s faneds.

We didn't do this alone, but with the help of many others (as you will see below). If we're close to a complete run of an important fanzine, we will implore you all for scans or copies to scan. Fanzine runs for which we lack only a couple of issues are on our begging page. Please check the date on the page, and drop us a line before you scan to make sure we still need the issue. http://fanac.org/fanzines/desired_fanzine_list_to_scan.html.

Of course, we've also started adding some new titles. You might be interested in Don Wilson's Dream Quest (40s), or Lars Bourne's Brillig (50s). Brillig's primary columnist was Dick Geis. Dave Ish's Sol (50s) contributors included Bob Silverberg, Walt Willis and Lee Hoffman. Ron Clarke's The Mentor (60s) is where Vol Molesworth's serial history of Australian fandom appeared. From the 70s we've added Moshe Feder & Barry Smotroff's Placebo, and Janice Bogstad & Jeanne Gomoll's Janus/Aurora (known for its serious and constructive articles on women in science fiction). There's also Hansen & White's Crank (80s), Ken Cheslin's Bleary Eyes (00s) Goon reprints, and we've started uploading Rich & Nicki Lynch's Mimosa (90s) and Robert Lichtman's Trap Door (80s), both nominated for awards many times. There was/is much more; just look at http://www.fanac.org/fanzines/Classic_Fanzines.html

Special thanks to Andy Porter for his efforts to get the word out as new material is added to the site.

Other Organizations: FANAC is working with other like-minded organizations to preserve our S-F and fannish history. Among these are the Association of Science Fiction and Fantasy Artists (ASFA), British Science Fiction Association (BSFA), the Birmingham Science Fiction Group (BSFG), Fandom Association of Central Texas (FACT), Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society (LASFS), Minnesota Science Fiction Society (Minn-StF), New England Science Fiction Association (NESFA), the National Fantasy Fan Federation (NFFF), South Florida Science Fiction Society (SFSFS), and the Washington Science Fiction Association (WSFA). All of these groups have provided materials for the archive, and we're putting up more of their materials on a regular basis. Watch this space – we're talking to additional organizations as well.

FANAC Fan History YouTube Channel: <https://youtube.com/c/FANACFanHistory>
 Today's stats are actually 77,178 views and 540 subscribers. We're at 79 recordings, with one more imminent. If we had been at 80 already, you would have read that above in "FANAC by the Numbers".

Our recent recordings include videos of two legendary First Fandomites, David Kyle and Bob Madle. These were recorded when each was the Guest of Honor at Philcon in 2012 and 2013 respectively. Joe Siclari did the interviews, and the videographer for both was Syd Weinstein, who has kindly helped us get them ready for YouTube.

The earliest NESFA recordings we received last year were from Boskone 5 (1968). From that convention, we most happily digitized a talk by Isaac Asimov, in which he holds forth on everything from *Fantastic Voyage* to Lester del Rey. As always, Edie enhanced the audio with photos and illustrations to complement the talk (links at end). We've been told by one of Isaac's friends that this was Isaac at his peak.

Since the last newsletter, we've put up our oldest recording thus far. The Blish family appreciated our posting of James Blish's 1970 Eastercon Guest of Honor speech, and offered their personal recording of Blish's Guest of Honor Speech at the

1960 Worldcon (Pittcon). It's short but very much to the point, and has a real William Atheling, Jr., feel. Photos and illos have been added.

We've created a playlist for each decade from 1960s to now. Click on the playlist tab (on our YouTube channel) and you can choose which decade you want to explore. Click on "View Full List" and while the first one is playing, you can scroll the list for that decade on the right of the screen. Subscribe to our channel and you'll receive notification when we add a new recording.

Fancylopedia.org:

Mark Olson, chief editor for Fancylopedia, has been writing software again. This time he's created a list of all the conventions we know about, chronologically by date. Last year, he did the same for fanzines and newszines, and now you can begin your researches at any point in the fannish universe and start to follow the thread. Or you could just look at the convention list and see what you've missed. You'll find the list at http://fancylopedia.org/Convention_timeline.

You may have guessed that the focus at Fancylopedia is on conventions this quarter. Mark is particular-



Fairy in a Bottle by Angela K. Walker

ly looking for convention history articles. We've added a very short wishlist to our begging list online. If you have info about a convention, please check the Fancyclopedia article and edit, or supply corrections and additions by emailing us at fancyclopedia@fanac.org. That also works if we inadvertently left your convention out of our list.

Coming Attractions: Looking ahead, we'll have more recordings on our YouTube channel with Harlan Ellison, Susan Wood, Ursula K. LeGuin and others. We'll have more classic fanzines from the 1930s and 40s as well as more from Mimosa, Trap Door and zines from Australia and the United Kingdom.

Please pass this update on to any fan or list where you think it might be of interest. Those interested in subscribing can sign up on the FANAC.org home page.

We usually close with a funny line about Fan History. This time, we're all hunkered down and some of us are ill. So, we just want to leave you with this – stay safe and we'll see you next time.

Fanhistorically yours...Joe Siclari, Edie Stern and Mark Olson

Recent Contributors (since the last newsletter):

Australia: Irwin Hirsh, Kim Huett

Canada: Bob Hurter, Murray & Mary Ellen Moore, Dale Speirs,

Israel: Leybl Botwinik

UK: Sandra Bond, John Bray, BSFA (Allen Stroud and others), BSFG, Alistair Durie, Rob Hansen, Rob Jackson. Dave Langford

US:

Northeast: Sheryl Birkhead, Eli Cohen, John Godin, Mark & Evelyn Leeper, Richard Lynch, Sam McDonald, Andy Porter, T.R. Renner, David Ritter, Geri Sullivan, Syd Weinstein

Midwest: Janice Bogstad, Jeanne Gomoll, Jeff Smith

Southwest: John Purcell, Pat Virzi

West: Tom Becker, Mike Glycer, Jim Harris, Andy Hooper, Steve Johnson, Robert Lichtman, Mike Saler, Tom Whitmore

Selected links:

FANAC.org: <http://www.fanac.org>

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/fanacproject/>

Fancyclopedia 3: <http://fancyclopedia.org>

Chronological Convention list: http://fancyclopedia.org/Convention_timeline

Fanzines: <http://fanac.org/fanzines/>

Classic_Fanzines.html (FIND ALL FANZINES HERE)

Core List: to Scan: http://fanac.org/fanzines/desired_fanzine_list_to_scan.html

Chronological Listing: http://fanac.org/fanzines/chronological_listing_of_fanzines.html

Newszine Project: <http://fanac.org/fanzines/newszines.html>

FANAC Fanhistory YouTube channel: <https://youtube.com/c/FANACFanHistory>

Interview with Bob Madle: <https://youtu.be/VP46MzqT67M>

Isaac Asimov (Boskone 5, 1968): <https://youtu.be/OAxlrkY1oQ>

James Blish (Pittcon, 1960): <https://youtu.be/zKFowEqJ6QM>

Editor:

I feel the same way Justin E. A. Busch said he felt as a kid: disliking the comic strip "The Phantom." For me, the gripe is that the Phantom is too powerful, in comparison to the people he fights. He has too many advantages. It isn't quite as bad as Superman beating up bank robbers, but it partakes of the same mismatch of scale.

The same is sometimes true of Tarzan. When Tarzan is just an ordinary guy, jungle-wise and honed to the apex of physical strength, then, great: it's a fair fight. Even an uphill fight, because he only has a knife but the bad guys have guns. Winning against unfavorable odds is at the heart of heroism. But when Tarzan is some kind of mutant who has micro-second reflexes and is as strong as twelve ordinary men, the heroism starts to pall. This is also a problem with John Carter of Mars: he's got "earth strength" and his foes only have "Mars strength," about one fifteenth of his. It isn't admirable, but actually partakes a little of cowardice.

And...Mandrake the Magician! Often the same problem. He simply outclasses the schlubs and bozos he runs up against. It seems a little like bullying. Also, what exactly are Mandrake's powers? Is it just hypnotic mind-control, or can he actually conjure objects and effects? I remember the *lovely* MAD Magazine spoof, where he stares helplessly at a flat tire on his jalopy. He can't hypnotize a tire into thinking it's fixed!

The Shadow? Unfair advantage. Doc Savage? Unfair advantage. Batman.... Hm.... Batman is closest, of them all, to just an ordinary fellow. He derives much benefit from his utility belt...but that's foresight and preparedness, not a "super power."

Of all the old black & white daily comic strip crimefighters, I think my favorite is Sherlock Holmes, but he falls well outside the "costumed hero" subgenre (so do Modesty Blaise and James Bond) so a direct comparison isn't quite valid.

Cheers!
Jefferson P. Swycaffer

Hi, George--
Commiserations on the death of your stapler! Regarding Fandbook 8, is it available only in a print edition or will there be an electronic one?

Best wishes,
Robert Lichtman

GP: Electronic to appear on N3F.org sooner or later.

Alley Oop and V. T. Hamlin by Jon D. Swartz, Ph.D. N3F Historian

Alley Oop is a syndicated newspaper comic strip, created in 1932 by cartoonist V. T. Hamlin, who wrote and drew the strip through four decades for the Newspaper Enterprise Association (NEA). In his strip Hamlin introduced a unique cast of characters, and his story lines were a combination of science fiction (SF), adventure, and humor.



Dragon Flow by Angela K. Walker

According to Hamlin, Oop lived from a million to 50 million years ago, in what Hamlin originally thought of as The Bone Age.

The principal characters in the strip are Alley Oop -- named for the French tumblers' call -- a time-traveling caveman whose favorite weapon is his stone ax; Ooola, Oop's smart and pretty girlfriend; Foozy, Oop's shifty pal, who talks in rhyme; Dinny, Oop's pet dinosaur, a stegosaurus; King Guzzle, Ruler of Moo; Queen Umpateedle, Queen of Moo; The Grand Wizer (pronounced "wiser"), advisor to King Guzzle; the bald and white-bearded inventor Dr. Elbert Wonmug; and the bald and black-bearded scientist G. Oscar Boom, Ph.D., Wonmug's partner and sometimes rival.

The first stories centered on Oop's dealings with his fellow cavemen in the Kingdom of Moo. Oop and his pals had occasional skirmishes with the rival kingdom of Lem, ruled by King Tunk. The names Moo and Lem are thought to be references to the fabled lost continents of Mu and Lemuria.

On April 5, 1939, Hamlin introduced a new plot device, which greatly expanded his choice of story lines: a time machine, invented by the 20th Century scientist Dr. Wonmug (who bore a strong resemblance to the Grand Wizer). The name Wonmug was a bilingual pun on Albert Einstein's name: "ein" is

German for “one,” and a “stein” is a form of drinking mug.

Transported to the 20th Century by an early test of the time machine (in the Sunday strip of April 9, 1939), Oop did not find modern society very daunting or all that different from his own time. He subsequently became Dr. Wonmug's “man in the field,” embarking on adventures in various places and time periods in world history.

In his adventures Oop met such historical and mythical figures as Archimedes, Julius Caesar & Cleopatra, Napoleon & Josephine, King Arthur, Helen of Troy & Ulysses, Hercules, and [Queen Hippolyta](#) and her Amazons.

In addition to the time machine, other SF elements were introduced into the strip over the years. For example, Oop once drove an electric-powered race car; and, in the 1940s, he even traveled to the moon where he battled alien saucer men.

Newspaper Strip History

Initially, Alley Oop was a daily strip which had a run from December 5, 1932 to April 26, 1933. Beginning August 7, 1933 the strip was “reworked for a larger readership.” A full-page Sunday strip was then added, beginning on September 9, 1934.

When Hamlin retired in 1971, his assistant Dave Graue took over. Graue had been doing the daily strip by himself since 1966, although the strip was co-signed by Hamlin. The last daily strip signed by Hamlin appeared December 31, 1972, and his last signed Sunday strip was on April 1, 1973.

From his North Carolina studio, Graue wrote and drew the strip through the 1970s-1980s, until Jack Bender took over as the illustrator in 1991. Graue continued to write the strip until his retirement in 2001. Then the Alley Oop Sunday and daily strips were drawn by Jack Bender, and written by Bender's wife, Carole. When the couple retired recently, reruns were published until a new writer and artist could be found.

The current strip is by the team of writer Joey Alison Sayers and artist Jonathan Lemon. They pro-

duce Alley Oop six days a week, Mondays through Saturdays. On Sundays, they shift to the story of [Little Oop](#), a pre-teen version of Alley Oop, set in his early middle-school years.

Big Little Books (BLBs)/Reprint Books/Comic Books

Many Alley Oop daily strips and Sundays have been reprinted by Whitman Publishing, Dragon Lady Press, Kitchen Sink Press, Manuscript Press, Happy House Books, Treasure Books, Ken Pierce Inc., SPEC Books, etc.

The following published titles were all attributed to V. T. Hamlin:

Alley Oop and Dinny (BLB #763, 1935) Whitman

Alley Oop in The Invasion of Moo (1935)

(Cocomalt Premium) Whitman

Alley Oop and the Missing King of Moo (Penny Book, 1936) Whitman [art not by Hamlin]

Alley Oop and Dinny in the Jungles of Moo (BLB #1473, 1938) Whitman

Alley Oop and the Cave Men of Moo (Pan-Am Premium, 1938) Whitman

Alley Oop in the Kingdom of Foo (Pan-Am Premium, 1938) Whitman

Alley Oop: Taming a Dinosaur (Pan-Am Premium, 1938) Whitman

Alley Oop Coloring Book (1962) Treasure Books

Alley Oop Fun Book (1981) Happy House Books

Alley Oop: The Sawalla Chronicles (1983) Ken Pierce

Alley Oop #1: The Legend Begins (1987) Dragon Lady

Alley Oop #2: Enter the Time Machine (1987) Dragon Lady

Alley Oop #3: Oop vs. Hercules (1988) Dragon Lady

Alley Oop Volume 1: The Adventures of a Time-Traveling Caveman (1990) [Kitchen Sink reprint series began with this first volume]

Alley Oop has also appeared in several different comic books over the years. Publishers have included Dell, Standard/Pines, Argo, and Antarctic.

Merchandise

Compared to other popular newspaper comic charac-

ters, there has been very little merchandising of the Alley Oop characters. A couple of games, a cigarette case, a key chain, a pinback of Oop and Ooola, and some Oop [statuettes](#)/action figures (one by Dark Horse Comics) are the only examples I've been able to find, other than the many reprints of the daily and Sunday strips in book form.

The 1930s Sunday strips occasionally had paper dolls of Alley Oop characters that could be cut out and dressed in outfits that were also provided. These paper doll cut-outs are often offered for sale today on eBay.

Postage Stamp

An Alley Oop postage stamp, one of twenty in the USPS Comic Strip Classics series, was issued in 1995. This stamp was also marketed as a metal pin.

Television

Although Oop never made it to radio or the movies, he did appear on television as part of Archie's TV Funnies during 1971-1973. In addition, during the 1970s, Alley Oop was a segment of a Saturday morning TV cartoon series, Fabulous Funnies, appearing intermittently with other comic strips.

V. T. Hamlin

Vincent Trout Hamlin (May 10, 1900 - June 14, 1993) preferred the name V. T. Hamlin. Born in Perry, Iowa, son of a dentist, the young Hamlin was small and in poor health for much of his life. He began drawing at an early age, including drawing a version of his later Alley Oop character at age eleven. Hamlin once stated that he was inspired to be a cartoonist by reading the Buck Rogers comic strip.

By lying about his age, Hamlin enlisted in the U. S. Army to fight in World War I. After his discharge for health reasons, Hamlin went back to Perry High School. He then attended college, first at the University of Missouri in 1920, followed by his study of journalism at Drake University in 1922.

After employment in 1922 as a journalist at the Des Moines News, Hamlin then worked for the

Fort Worth Record. By 1923, he was on staff as a photographer, cartoonist, and writer at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, where he created his first comic strip, The Hired Hand, and also a sports feature that he titled The Panther Kitten and signed as by Vee Tee Hamlin.

On December 24, 1926, Hamlin married his high school sweetheart, Dorothy Stapleton, who became the model for his Ooola character. He and Dorothy had two children, a daughter Theodora (born in 1927) and a son Jon (born in 1936). (He later added a character named Jon to the strip; Jon worked as an early assistant to Dr. Wonmug.)

In 1930 the Hamlins returned to Perry, Iowa. Back in Perry, Hamlin began thinking about dinosaurs and started drawing a comic strip he titled The Mighty Oop. He was not pleased with what he had created, however; and, instead of sending it to a newspaper syndicate for possible publication, he destroyed it.

A year later, he tried again, submitting Alley Oop to a small syndicate, Bonnet-Brown, which launched the strip as a daily, beginning December 5, 1932. A few months later, Bonnet-Brown collapsed, bringing the strip to an abrupt end. NEA picked it up, however, and the strip started again in August, 1933. Success of the daily strip led to a Sunday strip that was added in September, 1934.

Some Concluding Comments

Alley Oop was the first continuity comic strip to feature prehistoric characters. This influential SF strip became a success, and continues to be published even today.

While the anatomy of most of the prehistoric men and women drawn in Alley Oop is highly unlikely, the local fauna – as far as is known -- are usually depicted accurately. For a time in the 1930s, Hamlin included a topper panel, "Dinny's Family Album," with realistic drawings of the prehistoric beasts that he had roaming through his strip.

The song, Alley Oop ("There's a man in the funny papers we all know. . ."), reached No. 1 on the charts in 1960. The Alley Award, named after Oop, was an annual series of comic book fan awards, first pre-



sented in 1962. Organized under the aegis of The Academy of Comic Book Arts and Sciences, The Alley is the first known comic book fan award. Caveman: V. T. Hamlin and Alley Oop, a DVD by Max Allan Collins, was released in 2009. The Alley Oop character was under option for several years as a starring vehicle for the actor John Belushi, whose early death ended the project. At its peak, the Alley Oop comic strip was carried by between 800 and 900 newspapers.

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N3F TNFF
c/o George Phillies
48 Hancock Hill Drive
Worcester MA 01609