

The WSFA Journal

AUGUST 2005

The Official Newsletter of the Washington Science Fiction Association -- ISSN 0894-5411

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Please direct all correspondence to editor@wsfa.org. Please put either "for publication" or "not for publication" on the subject line. (It MUST contain one or the other, or else your email may be deleted unread by spam filters.) I can also be reached by snail mail at 220 Cedar Lane #62, Vienna VA 22180-6623 USA.

The past thirty years of WSFA Journals are online at <http://www.wsfa.org/>. The minutes of the latest meeting are also online there if it's been more than a few days since that meeting.

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Congratulations to Mike Walsh for his nomination for a World Fantasy Award. The nominations can be seen at <http://www.worldfantasy.org/awards/>

This Month in History

From the Secretary's Archives

August 1995:

First and Third Friday Meetings at the Ginters' and Gillilands', with 31 and 24 people present. Treasury \$4,182.11. Dan Hoey, Chair of the 1995 Disclave, handed over a check for \$4,000 from his Disclave's account. Secretary Joe Mayhew pleaded for articles, reviews, con reports, etc., for the *WSFA Journal*. Two WSFA Journals, six and eight pages, were published in August. (Two issues were published almost every month from early 1995 through mid-1996, ending only when editor Joe Mayhew had a heart attack.) They contained several con reports, a book review, full-page Joe Mayhew cartoons, and a report on the *Fast Forward* cable TV show. Many WSFAans attended the Worldcon in Glasgow towards the end of the month. Lance Oszko announced that there would be a vigil at the BSFS clubhouse awaiting news of who won the 1998 Worldcon bid. (Baltimore won.)

August 1985:

First Friday at the Gillilands', with 45 people; Third Friday at Alan Huff's, with 33. Fifth Friday party at Jack Heneghan's. Treasury \$3,769.99. John Pomeranz joined, as it was his third meeting. (His first two meetings had been four years earlier.) First Friday was Lance Oszko's first meeting. It was announced that next year's Disclave would, for the third consecutive time, be at the New Carrollton hotel, whose room rate was \$55 per night. Jim Thomas printed up the WSFA rules of poker. No *WSFA Journal* was published in August; Ginny McNitt published four-page issues in July and September. The Worldcon was in Melbourne, Australia for the second time.

August 1975:

No WSFA Journal (that I can find a copy of, anyway) was published between December 1974 and August 1978. Nor do I have any other non-Disclave WSFA information from most of that time. Anyone with such information please contact me. The Worldcon was in Melbourne, Australia for the first time. *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* was released.

August 1965:

Meetings on First and Third Friday at Elizabeth Cullen's in Washington, DC, with 18 and 18 members present -- no quorum either evening. (A quorum was then defined as over half the membership, which was then 36.) Treasury \$78.67. Attendees included Jack Chalker, Joe Mayhew, and email list member Dick Eney, but nobody else who has been to a meeting in the past few years. The pending motion to open meetings with a prayer was defeated. (With no quorum?) Two WSFA Journals were published: #5 and #6, ten and six pages. (They contained meeting minutes, reviews of SF books and magazines (some by Alexis Gilliland), con reports, a list of upcoming events, and a roster (and address list) of all WSFA members.) Don Miller discussed the financing of the WSFA Journal, and announced that it was accepting ads. The Worldcon was in London, England. There were riots in the Watts area of Los Angeles.

August 1955:

Meetings on First and Third Sunday at Dot Cole's in Arlington, with 10 and 14 people present, including Ted White, but nobody else who has been to WSFA in recent years. Treasury \$49.70. At First Sunday President-elect Ted White was appointed our representative to the Worldcon (in Cleveland in September), to present a DC Worldcon bid, after Vice-President-elect Bob Pavlat moved to rescind his

last month's motion that we not bid. At Third Sunday, Ted White ended the bid since there wasn't enough willingness to work. The movie *Creature with the Atom Brain* was released (or did it escape?).

August 1945:

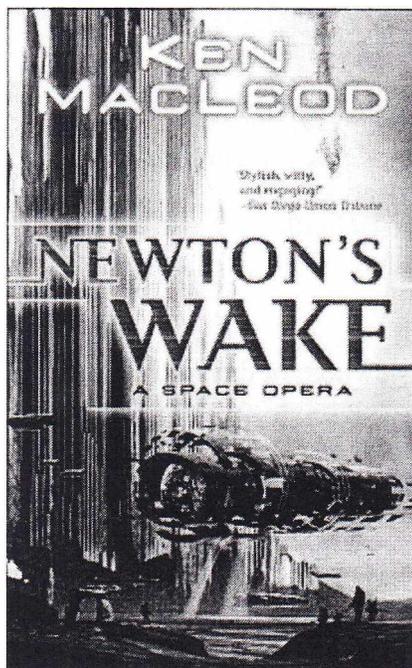
WWII ended, which allowed Worldcons to resume the following year. A year after that, seven DC fans who met at the 1947 Worldcon in Philadelphia would found WSFA.

Newton's Wake: A Space Opera

Written by Ken MacLeod

Tor Paperback Edition March 2005

Reviewed by Nicholas Sanders



It's 2367: Do you know where your transcendent AIs are? The toys they've left behind -- are they treasure troves of technological advancement, or cosmic minefields into which only the foolish set foot?

More than 200 years after the Singularity (aka the "Hard Rapture") destroyed the majority of Terran life and rendered most of Earth uninhabitable, what's left of humanity is divided into four groups, "kindae wee empires like." With cornucopia machines available to all, the "wee empires" are defined primarily by their socio-economic philosophies, but are also defined by their attitudes toward investigating the potentially dangerous posthuman technology left strewn around the universe by sentient AIs as they evolved past human understanding. That the posthuman artifacts are dangerous is well understood; but the groups disagree on whether the potential benefits outweigh the inevitable cost.

The Knights of Enlightenment, descendants from technologically advanced Asia and its subcontinent, are an ascetic -- perhaps mystic -- order dedicated to measured, circumspect investigation of posthuman technology. They are dead set against terraforming or abusive use of planet-based resources -- "some kindae religious thing," as our protagonist describes it.

The DKs -- Demokratische Kommunistbund ("or maybe Democratic Korea or Kampuchea for all I know") -- are a "self-reliant" space-based community dedicated to increasing their population and supporting it by means such as strip-mining potentially habitable worlds to create their orbital habitats. They don't investigate posthuman technology on their own; but they buy or license it from others, and often customize it to meet their needs. "Guerrillas and peasants and what have you," says our protagonist in an expository moment.

AO -- America Offline -- is a community of terraformers and farmers, descended from "folks who escaped the Hard Rapture due to no being wired up, and they kindae continue like that." White-trash Yankee colonists with a strong aversion to posthuman technology, they are Manifest Destiny made

manifest.

And then there's the Carlyle Family, or the "bloody Carlyles" as many others call them. To understand the Carlyles, one first needs to understand the role of the wormhole "skein," a largely unexplored tunnel of wormholes linking planets by instant teleportation. While all the groups possess starships that regularly "fittle" at FTL speeds, it is the skein that links together the far-flung worlds -- and the Carlyles, by luck or circumstance, control the skein, often by military force. They do not seek to understand the posthuman technology, as much as they are into "salvaging" it for use, license, or sale to others. They explore, and they plunder and exploit whatever resources or technology they find in the worlds they visit.

Clearly, MacLeod has created a universe rife with possibilities for conflict, which is a critical need in a good space opera. The nascent possibilities, of course, come to fruition as the pages are turned and the plot unfolds.

So now let us introduce the protagonist, Lucinda Carlyle, on her first mission as leader of a team of "combat archaeologists" exploring a wormhole's exit, who will assess the world to which it is linked, and grab whatever posthuman artifacts are there for the taking. (If you're starting to wonder if I'm describing a steroid-juiced version of Stargate SG-1, don't worry. We're just getting started here.)

Lucinda is accompanied by her "thrall," Professor Isaac Shlaim, who was an Israeli computer science academic before dying during the Singularity. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on one's viewpoint), his personality was recorded just before (or during) his death by an AI, and rescued/resurrected/returned/enslaved by the Carlyles to advise them on the technology they encounter. (We don't know why AIs would record personalities or how humans could have developed the technology to download them, but don't worry. We're still getting started.)

Moving along, Lucinda's first mission takes her to the planet Eurydice, somewhere in the Sagittarius Arm. Eurydice is inhabited by humans who belong to none of the four "wee empires" of mankind. It seems that another group of technologically advanced Terrans escaped during the Hard Rapture via an STL ship. When they arrived at Eurydice, they found it to be Earth standard, but with its own unique fossil history -- suggesting an alien race with a parallel evolutionary track. The Eurydice colonists also found a large structure filled with posthuman technology and AI war machines, further suggesting that the native aliens had their own Hard Rapture and are now extinct.

Lucinda is at once confronted by several mysteries, such as: how did the Terrans get to Eurydice so fast if their ship wasn't able to fittle? And if the planet held native life, how come the unmistakable signs of AO-like terraforming are present? Also: what is the purpose of the large posthuman structure on Eurydice and the mysterious EMP signal it broadcasts into space the moment she and her team enter it? Finally, what is she to do when she is captured by the Eurydiceans and her team is forced to retreat back into the skein, leaving her (and Professor Shlaim) behind?

Thus opens the story, a complex "space opera" of the most au courant kind. MacLeod has a light-hearted, almost puckish style, filled with puns and bon mots and other goodies. (I kept waiting for a line about "fittling while Rome burns" but MacLeod has more restraint -- or taste -- than that.) There are battles and challenges and mysteries aplenty. There is death and resurrection and a poor man's apotheosis. There are songs and poetry and at least one play within a play. MacLeod makes it all work together like a masterful orchestra conductor.

Adding to the novel's richness is the in-depth exploration of Eurydicean society, more sophisticated than

any of the other "barbarian" empires. It has its own political and philosophical tensions, which are exacerbated when it finds itself the center of attention by each of the other four "wee empires" who have been co-existing (more or less) until Lucinda discovers Eurydice and its mysteries. Of course, as Eurydice belongs to none of the four Terran clades, it should be obvious to every space opera fan that it will become the center of the conflicts, the axis mundi around which the other clades fight, and the catalyst for change.

Central among the Eurydicean issues is the fight between Reformers and Returners. The Reformers want to grow their society without resurrecting the recorded personalities of the past, while the Returners not only want to resurrect all recorded personalities that Eurydice possesses -- they also want to return to Earth to resurrect the millions and/or billions of personalities they believe to have been recorded by AIs during the Hard Rapture.

Adding to the novel's complexity is the vast ensemble of story characters, some more well-drawn than others. Among the more interesting characters is a man who acts as the Eurydicean equivalent of a Broadway producer, proud playwright/adaptor/producer/director of such classics as *West Side Story*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Tragedy of Leonid Brezhnev, Prince of Muscovy*. The producer sees that Eurydice's sudden re-introduction to the rest of humanity may be the necessary catalyst to shake-up Eurydicean society. He intends to precipitate the shake-up, no matter what the cost. (Yes, I am saying that he's the catalyst of the catalyst. As is Lucinda. As is Shlaim. As are others. In fact, the leitmotiv of the book is change and change agents.)

We also meet two Returnee musicians, resurrected from death to provide music and socially barbed commentary. There's the asteroid miner and his out-of-control ship, a pair of "lightning catchers," a resurrected general, and many other assorted characters of varied interest and depth. And then there's Professor Shlaim, who starts as a disembodied voice and who later transcends his existence to become a disembodied voice. (More on that bit later). There are so many characters, many of such hidden motivation and dubious loyalty, that it was difficult for me to know who to root for.

And therein lays my main criticism of this otherwise tour de force novel. There are no clear-cut heroes to root for and no obvious villains to root against. Call me old fashioned; tell me I don't understand the post-modern neo-classic deconstruction of the venerable space opera form and structure. Whatever. But I need heroes to root for who overcome adversity and triumph in the end. Don't set me up to root for an anti-hero and to root against the resourceful Heinlein man of action. Don't keep on throwing rocks at my protagonist right up through the climax and dénouement. It just doesn't sit well with me. I want pay-off for my investment in the character, dammit!

And too many characters lacked depth and arc. Let's take the late, unlamented, Professor Shlaim as an example. As mentioned, the Professor's personality starts out as essentially a disembodied voice inside Lucinda's helmet; he's a most unwilling expert, a reluctant *deus ex machina* with no ability to act. Through a series of events (the reviewer said vaguely, not wanting to spoil the plot) the personality gains a measure of freedom and with it the ability to affect events. So how does MacLeod use the character? Essentially, Professor Shlaim remains a disembodied voice for the rest of the novel, appearing here and there to expound on events or to challenge a philosophical point. The character does initiate actions -- but the actions are all carried out offstage (as it were) and MacLeod never actually describes them until we (and Lucinda) are presented with *fait accompli* after *fait accompli* -- apparently just to move the plot along. Shlaim is arguably as much a catalyst for change as Lucinda or anybody else in the novel, yet we never learn about him and we never see him act. At the novel's climax, Professor Shlaim is still, for all intents and purposes, a disembodied voice coming from a speaker. That the location and type of the speaker has changed, affects not at all the fact that he's still just a voice without much personality. The character of Professor Shlaim, his motivations and desires, are essentially the

same in the first chapter as they are in the final chapter, and that's a pity.

I also didn't care so much for the ending, which obliquely describes a middling existence -- somewhere between human perception and godhood -- as a consummation devoutly to be wished. Instead of the climactic triumph I hoped for, and expected, in a space opera, I was left with a let-down feeling and a sense of "is that all there is?" (Answer: Probably not. See my final line, below.)

And while I'm at it, what's with MacLeod and Stross anyway? You might recall that I reviewed Stross' *Singularity Sky* a while ago -- and loved it. But the same concepts appear in both Stross' and MacLeod's works (e.g., the Singularity, transcendent AIs, cornucopia machines, humankind evolved into clades, etc.) -- almost as if they're sharing the same universe. What's up with that, anyway? Was there a party or con or whatever somewhere in Great Britain where the leading SF authors got together and invented themselves a Future History, some other Medea, to be used as a foundation from which to launch their individual space operas? No? Just a coincidence, then? Maybe it's just me...



But my carping aside, let's address the central question. Will you enjoy MacLeod's *Newton's Wake*? Almost certainly. Its battles don't have the powerful descriptions that Drake (or Stirling) would bring, and its plotting is not as linear as I would wish. But the size and scope of the universe, the richness of (some of) the characters, the detailed society-building, and MacLeod's inimitable style more than make up for the minor lacks I've criticized. It's always easier to point out a novel's faults than its highlights; but with MacLeod's novels the faults are really minor when compared to the highlights. If you have not read MacLeod, you really must -- and *Newton's Wake* is a great place to start. It's a rich, complex, universe that he (and Stross?) has created, with lots of room for further exploration.

I predict sequels.

The House of Storms

By Ian R. MacLeod

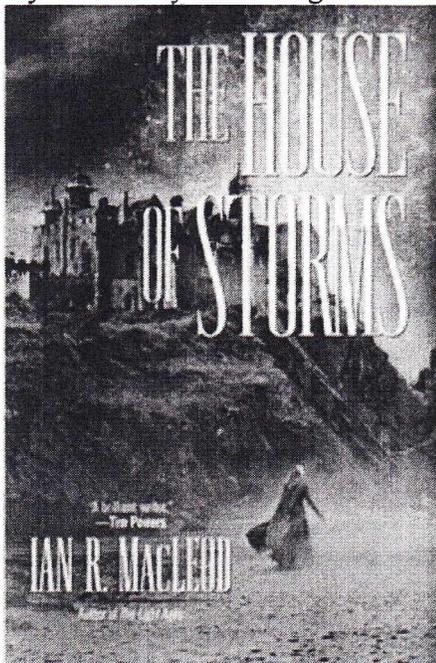
New York : Ace, 2005

A review by Colleen R. Cahill

Is great literature unreadable? Certainly I have not attempted to wade through James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* or Spencer's *The Faerie Queene*, as I prefer a book that requires less work. This is not to say that readable books are not great literature, as Ian R. MacLeod's *The House of Storms* proves. This is a wonderful book, full of energy and life, written in a flowing style that is almost poetic at times, but still lets me drift into this world without fighting his vocabulary.

A sequel to *The Light Ages*, this book is set ninety-nine years after the first work. The world is a different place, one that is closer to the roaring twenties, with fast cars, gramophones and a booming

economy and yet also has parts of an older age, with bondage of blacks, smuggling brandy from France and the beginnings of natural science. The story follows Alice Meynell and her son Ralph who is suffering from tuberculosis. Believing he could be dying, Alice takes Ralph to Invercombe, a secluded estate in the west of England, in hopes of a miracle. The wife of a Greatgrandmaster of the Telegraphers Guild with money and power at her command, Alice is a woman who lets nothing get in her way and will do anything, to murder and beyond, to reach her goal. If science won't save her son, then magic might, so Alice turns to Einfeld, the land of changelings, to heal Ralph. Her goals will not be swayed by anyone: not by her loving husband, nor by Ralph's love for Marion Price, a servant girl at Invercombe.



MacLeod gives us a fully formed world, one that is intriguingly different while being hauntingly familiar. In a previous age, the magical substance of æther was discovered and now it powers much of industry. If overexposed to æther, humans deform into changelings, beings that are so different they were burned or imprisoned in previous times, but now are sent off to Einfeld which is kind of a fairy reservation. The discovery of electricity did not slow the use of æther, as each power has its own benefits and risks. The author gives us a land of magic and science combined, with spells that can keep one young or kill a rival and machines that are videophones or that can control the local weather. The blending of æther and electricity brings wonders and terrors, especially when a civil war in England allows men to explore new ways to kill each other.

In a commingling of science fiction, fantasy, romance, war story and thriller, *The House of Storms* is a very entertaining read with a quick moving plot and fascinating characters. What takes it beyond being just a good book is the writing, as MacLeod has the talent of a master, forging his story with words that carry you to Invercombe to taste the sea air, take you to the wonder and the horror that is Einfeld, and bring you face to face with the delights and despairs of Alice, Ralph, Marion and all the people they touch.

I highly recommend *The House of Storms*, which can be enjoyed without having read *The Light Ages*. I predict this will receive award nominations in the coming year: give this a try and see if you agree.

First Friday Minutes

Note that there's a [brief summary](#) at the end.

The regular First Friday meeting of the Washington Science Fiction Association was called to order by President Sam Lubell at 9:15 pm on July 1st, 2005, in the downstairs of the Gillilands', at 4030 8th Street in Arlington, Virginia, the usual First Friday location.

In attendance were President Samuel Lubell, Secretary Keith Lynch, Treasurer Bob MacIntosh, all three trustees (Lee Gilliland, Ernest Lilley, and Barry Newton), Capclave '05 Chair Michael Walsh, Capclave '07 Chair Colleen Cahill, Drew and Katherine Bittner, Elaine Brennan, Adrienne Ertman, David Faith, Joel B. Finkleman, Alexis Gilliland, Marc Gordon, Paul Haggerty, Scott Hofmann, Eric Jablow, Robert J. LaPointe, Don Lundry, Nicki and Richard Lynch, Tom McCabe, Michael Nelson, Judy Newton, Lance Oszko, Kathi Overton, John Pomeranz, Rebecca Prather, Judy and Sam Scheiner, George Shaner, Steven Smith, Gayle Surette, and Elizabeth Twitchell. 36 people. Jim Kling and Ivy Yap were marked

present, but weren't seen by the secretary.

The president asked the secretary to summarize the previous meeting, which took place on Friday, June 17th, at the same location. The secretary said:

- July's Third Friday will be at Gayle and Paul's in Brandywine, Maryland. Sam Lubell and Tamara Griesel had both volunteered to drive people from Metro.
- More than half the attendees had arrived late. The secretary asked people to please arrive on time, or if this isn't possible, to consider starting the meetings later in the evening. He clarified that this wasn't meant as criticism, but as a query as to whether it would be easier for people to arrive earlier or for meetings to start later.
- It was announced that the *Future Washington* anthology wouldn't be ready until August.
- Colleen needed a hotel liaison for Capclave '07. Also a hotel and a weekend.
- WFC '03 is still owed several thousand dollars; we voted not to publish the names of the debtors.
- We voted to have the Capclave committee look into how the capclave.org Internet domain should be set up.
- We voted to deem the Pomeranz/Overton 4th of July party July's Fifth Friday, even though it's on a First Monday.
- It was announced that Bobby Gear was in a hospice. She died on June 25th.

TREASURY: Treasurer Bob MacIntosh said we had \$20,008.46 in our main account. [After the meeting, he said we also have \$15,015.87 in CDs, for a total of \$35,024.33.]

CAPCLAVE PRESENT:

Chairman Mike Walsh said James Morrow will be at the con. Walter Miles resigned as head of programming, due to his new fatherhood, and has been replaced by Colleen Cahill and Ernest Lilley. Ernest pointed out there's an "e" in his last name, to which Mike responded, "Oh, stop gilding." Ernest responded, "Toil not nor do we weep; toil not nor do we weep." Keith said that Ted White had volunteered to give advice on programming, and to be on the program, and that Ted had extensive experience in both.

Barry Newton is taking over registration from Colleen.

Richard asked about finance. Mike said there are currently 136 paid members. Bob said over \$3000 is in the Capclave account, which is separate from the WSFA accounts. Bob said another \$1000 is expected from dealers, as there will be 20 tables which will sell for \$50 each. Ernest said he wanted a table. We need another 130 people to break even financially. We already have more paid members than the final total for last year. Sam Lubell asked how many we could expect at the door. Bob said we got 70 at the door in 2003 and 140 at the door in 2002, both at that same Silver Spring hotel. Keith asked about room reservations, since if we don't meet our room block, we have to pay the hotel the difference. Nobody knew how many rooms had been reserved yet.

Mike said that he and Elspeth will miss the July 15th meeting. Sam Lubell suggested inviting past guests of honor. Mike said there might be a SFWA regional meeting at Capclave. SFWA members don't need Capclave memberships to attend if they're on programming, or if they don't attend anything else at Capclave. Fliers were/are at Midwestcon [Cincinnati, last weekend] and Westercon [Calgary, this weekend]. John Hertz had one of our dodo puppets at Westercon. Nobody present planned to go to Shore Leave, which will be near Baltimore next weekend. Mike will be at Confluence, which will be in Pittsburgh in two weeks, opposite Third Friday. Bob suggested that Hal Haag might be going to Shore

Leave. Elizabeth asked about new fliers. She plans to go to Dragoncon in September. [She has since decided not to go.] Bob suggested printing them from the website. Paul said there are three new program participants.

CAPCLAVE FUTURE: Mike Walsh said Elspeth is ill. She has guests of honor in mind. She hasn't written them yet.

CAPCLAVE FAR FUTURE: Colleen has a lead on a hotel liaison. She wants guidance on whether to sign a one-year or a two-year contract. She will wait until after this year's Capclave before signing anything.

WORLD FANTASY '03: Mike said we're owed a total of \$7845 by advertisers, of which \$6575 were professional and \$1270 were fannish. The biggest debtor owes \$4125. The bills had gone out late. There was one ad which we won't be collecting on since it was for a dealer who didn't get a table, and hence cancelled their souvenir book ad, but we accidentally ran their ad anyway. Barry suggested selling the debts to a bill collector. Ernest suggested that one of us who needs a summer job could take over the collections for 10%.

PUBLICATIONS: The secretary said that June and July WSFA Journals are available, and the last 30 years of issues are available online at wsfa.org. Also, a sign-in sheet was circulating.

BOOK:

Ernest said Bob Garcia has everything he needs for Quark conversion. The text of the *Future Washington* anthology is complete; the cover still needs a little work. The book is still on target for August publication, though the official date is in September. Ernest thanked everyone who had provided feedback, especially Eric Jablow and Keith Lynch. Drew Bittner is in charge of publicity. Colleen said the cable TV show *Fast Forward* had reviewed the book, and the review will be out before the book is. Ernest said there will be cover blurbs by Bruce Sterling and by Mike Dirda of the *Washington Post*. The Dirda blurb is very complimentary. John said that Mike Dirda had left that newspaper. There will be a book committee meeting upstairs in the living room immediately after the regular meeting adjourns. Ten ARCs have gone out but not yet any review copies per se.

A 32-page chapbook, with a color cover, which will include two of the *Future Washington* stories (the ones by Joe Haldeman and James Alan Gardner), Sam Lubell's one-page history of WSFA, and a Capclave ad, will be at Readercon, which will be in Massachusetts in a week. A 500-copy printing of the chapbook cost only \$400, not \$1700, due to Ernest's employee discount at Kinkos. Authors will get ten copies each of it in lieu of royalties. There will be a reception at Readercon. Joe Haldeman, the con's guest of honor, will be there, as will James Alan Gardner, and at least five of the WSFA members at this meeting. Ernest volunteered the five to help him set up the reception.

ENTERTAINMENT: Alexis got a (paper) letter from someone in South Africa who needs help getting millions of dollars out of that country. Alexis recognized it as the classic "Spanish Prisoner" or "419" scam, of which literally *trillions* have been circulating on the Internet in recent years. He was going to read it to us, but Lee had taken it to the Post Office fraud department. John and Mike mentioned that one of our Capclave fan guests of honor, Teresa Nielsen Hayden, had written some spam poetry.

ACTIVITIES: Lee asked if anyone was interested in watching *War of the Worlds* at 4 pm tomorrow at the Courthouse theater. No one was.

OLD BUSINESS: Colleen said a meeting of the Capclave committee was scheduled, to discuss the website, to meet upstairs in the living room after the book committee meeting adjourns. Keith clarified that he is, and will remain, WSFA's webmaster, and that Paul and Gayle are, and will remain, Capclave's webmasters, that the Capclave website is hosted on wsfa.org, that capclave.org, which is run by Sam Lubell, is just a pointer to the Capclave area on the WSFA website, that Paul and Gayle provide the files and Keith puts them up, and that there has been no contention, and no problems coordinating. Everything has been working smoothly, despite rumors to the contrary. He has no preference as to whether the Capclave web page is hosted in WSFA's space or not.

NEW BUSINESS: Lee suggested that it would be appropriate to donate money to Bobby's Gear's preferred charity, since she had died on June 25th. Colleen moved that we donate \$50 to Reading is Fundamental in honor of Bobby Gear. The motion carried.

NEW TRADITION (as it was once called): Five people were here for the first time: Katherine Bittner (Drew's bride), David Faith (an SF and fantasy enthusiast who moved to this area last September, and found us through our website), Joel Finkleman (a friend of Keith's from the Life Extension Society), Robert J. LaPointe (Lee's Tai Chi instructor, and an SF author), and Don Lundry (chair of the 1977 Worldcon, who moved here from New Jersey). It wasn't anyone's second or third meeting. At that point someone's cell phone played *The Ride of The Valkyries*, causing lots of laughter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The secretary made the usual first announcement: Announcements should ideally be submitted in writing, or via email. He also reiterated that WSFA Journals were available, and that a sign-in sheet was circulating. He also announced that there's a weekend-long party in Gaithersburg at the home of Sam, Pooh, and Margaret Hogan and Marc Drexler, to which all of fandom is invited.

Our hostess, Lee, made the usual second announcement: Use toilet paper, not paper towels, in the toilet, and don't let the cats outside.

Lance conveyed greetings from the Melbourne SF club. He got his trip to that city to pay for itself. He had *Chronons* and British DVDs: *Crime Traveller*, a TV series by the people who did *Wallace & Gromit*, and a sequel to *Quatermass*.

Colleen said P.J. Fischer would speak at the Library of Congress on August 12th, and that Neil Gaiman and George R.R. Martin would be at the National Book Festival on the National Mall in September.

Eric mentioned the Deep Impact mission to a comet. He gave the secretary a note that said "Deep Impact is scheduled to strike Comet Tempel late in the night of July 3. We will not be able to see it, but we may be able to see the remnants at 10:00 July 4."

Barry said that he and his wife Judy had found something new to do on the way to WSFA. After the titters died down, he said there's a Wegmans gourmet grocery store a few miles south of the meeting place.

Nicki touted the folklife festival on the National Mall.

It was the Scheiners' 25th anniversary, and tomorrow was the Newtons' 32nd. [5² and 2⁵]



John Pomeranz said there would be a discussion of the stories in the July issue of *Asimov's Science Fiction* upstairs after the meeting. He has a science-fictional car: a Prius. He is hosting a 4th of July picnic, starting at noon on that day, at which there will be a half keg of Dominion root beer, a quarter keg of Yuengling lager, real barbecue, and homemade bratwurst.

Lee said Arlington County isn't setting off fireworks this year. John said a place across the river is. Rebecca said so is Falls Church.

Lance said ConCarolinas, a week after Balticon, will have Spider Robinson as a guest of honor.

Eric said the latest Harry Potter book will be released at midnight on the night of Third Friday. He asked where the nearest bookstore was to our Third Friday meeting place. Paul said Waldorf. Sam Lubell said we'd do a pilgrimage after that meeting.

George Shaner and Mike Walsh each had books for sale.

Lee was impressed with the photos Rebecca had taken at the previous meeting. She showed some of them, and said Rebecca had really captured the personalities of her subjects. She then made the usual final announcement: Chairs are to be moved to the edges of the room after adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 pm. Exactly 1 hour. [There were ten seconds of tape left on the secretary's recorder.]

Capclave Committee Meeting

The Capclave Committee meeting began at about 10:40 pm on July 1st, 2005, in the upstairs of the Gillilands'.

In attendance were Capclave '05 Chair Michael Walsh, Capclave '07 Chair Colleen Cahill, Capclave Webmasters Paul Haggerty and Gayle Surette, WSFA Webmaster Keith Lynch, Lee Gilliland, Samuel Lubell, Bob MacIntosh, Michael Nelson, and Barry Newton. Ten people.

PHP, MySQL, and SSL are needed to do financial transactions. These functions would cost \$700 a year at Panix. Also, Keith pointed out that the WSFA website is brushing against its 150 megabyte disk space limit. So the consensus was to host the Capclave web pages elsewhere. The financial part of the Capclave website is already hosted at globat.com. We decided to move the rest of it there, including websites for future Capclaves. (There are already Capclave '06 and '07 sites at wsfa.org.) Paul and Gayle will work on this transition, though it may take two weeks since they'll be at Readercon next weekend.

Once each Capclave is over, the page will be moved to wsfa.org for archival purposes. Keith said it would be quick and easy to replace the Capclave pages on wsfa.org with pointers to the appropriate pages on capclave.org, but said this should be the last step, since it's not useful to have pages at wsfa.org and capclave.org point at each other with no actual content anywhere.

Everything should be ready for testing by Third Friday, and the cutover should take place that weekend.

The Capclave Committee meeting ended after about 15 minutes.

People were still present when the secretary left at 11:40 pm.

It was warm, damp, and threatening to rain, but it didn't rain until about midnight.

Summary of 7/1/05 meetings:

- The next meeting will be at Gayle and Paul's in Brandywine, Maryland. Directions are available on the website and in the July *WSFA Journal*. Sam Lubell and Tamara Griesel have both volunteered to drive people to and from Metro.
- We voted to donate \$50 to Reading is Fundamental in honor of Bobby Gear, who died on June 25th.
- *Future Washington* will be available in August. A chapbook will be at a reception at Readercon.
- The Capclave Committee decided to host the Capclave website at globalat.com. This should be ready for testing by July's Third Friday.

Letters to WSFA

Date: Wed, 29 Jun 2005 14:51:54 -0700

From: "Chris Garcia" <garcia@computerhistory.org>

To: <editor@wsfa.org>

So, I was recently elected Vice-Pres of the Bay Area Science Fiction Association (BASFA) and I figured that I'd been sheltered in my little world long enough and should probably start seeing what other groups around the country are putting out. Sadly, BASFA doesn't really have a newsletter (there is one called *Justifying The Neans*, but no official editor exists and it's likely to end up being my job before too long), I thought to give a look at what else is out there.

Quite saddened to hear about Bobby Gear's passing. My dad used to make a point of getting all the Hugo-nominated fanzines together and I can remember reading *Greater Columbia Fantasy Costumers Guild Newsletter*, which took him forever to find anyone he knew who could give him one.

I really enjoyed the reviews. As a guy who writes a lot of reviews, I'm always impressed when folks do a good job at them. I have to say I totally agree with *The Loafers of Refuge* thoughts. It's one of those books that I tried to read in a weekend that just about destroyed me. It's dated, almost as much as Keith Laumer's *The Great Time Machine Hoax*, but I thought it was a fun read.

The Einstein look was great. I make my living as a Computer Historian, so I'm always keeping up on the important figures in the history of the sciences. That, and NPR has been running stories about Big Al's 1905 Bonanza all-year long. Most people fail to note that Einstein wasn't a name in the field when he submitted those papers to get published. He was just another patent clerk who had done OK at university. Even the things that he said that turned out to be untrue, disproved by quantum mechanics and so on, fundamentally changed not only the way we looked at things, but the way we tried to look for things. His thought experiments were revolutionary and some of them are not fully appreciated even today.

The search for a perfect pangram is one of those things that has been tried ever since computer came around. There are 60 or so known perfect pangrams in various languages that I've ever seen. Some are great, though only a couple make sense. Claude Shannon, computer pioneer and AI theorist, found one. One of the earliest language-manipulating computer programs was a perfect pangram search for the Univac 2 (it may have been attempted on the 1, but I'm not sure). Supposedly that led to the discovery of a new one, though I'm not sure which. The problem with perfect pangrams is there just aren't enough vowels to go around.

You folks put out a fantastic fanzine, here. I hope I get to read more.

Chris

Christopher J. Garcia
Assistant Curator: The Computer History Museum
Vice-President (On Odd-Numbered Meetings): BASFA
Editor: The Drink Tank on eFanzines.com
Writer: Falls Count Anywhere on fanboyplanet.com

From: Beth Tanner
Subject: Might be of interest to WSFen - Writing Workshop
Date: Tue, 26 Jul 2005 15:54:00 +0000

Hello WSFA folks,

I am helping spread the word about an upcoming writing workshop in the DC area. Don Maass (author of Writing the Breakout Novel and a NY agent) is coming to DC on September 24 & 25 for a day-and-a-half hands-on workshop for novelists on taking fiction to the next level. Knowing the number of writers and aspiring writers in WSFA, I thought this might be of interest.

More details can be had at www.free-expressions.com or via email.

Thanks!

Beth Tanner
DC contact person for WBON workshop with Don Maass

Date: Tue, 26 Jul 2005 17:51:53 +0200 (CEST)
From: abdeslem kired <abdeslemkired@yahoo.fr>
Subject: info

Bonjour, j'ai écrit le plus grand récit de science fiction de tous les temps; mon livre a été écrit en 1986; il a été édité en 1990; dès cette date je parlai de médecine prédictive, je développai le temps comme une projection et non pas un écoulement; en outre vous trouverez des révélations qui vont vous étonner.

Tapez mon nom: kired abdeslem et découvrez moi, car mon livre est visionnaire avec des preuves.

salutations.

Upcoming Events

This is excerpted from our online calendar of upcoming events, at <http://www.wsfa.org/calendar.htm>. I recommend you check it frequently, in case of last minute additions or corrections. Also, it contains links to more information about the events, including directions to our meeting places. This is a regular feature of The WSFA Journal.

August 4 - 8: **63rd World SF Convention: Interaction**

Glasgow, once more with ceiling.

Friday, August 5th: **WSFA First Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Gillilands', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

Friday, August 12th: **P.J. Fischer speaks at LoC**

P.J. Fischer, author of *Julia and the Dream Maker*, speaks on "Evolution As Theory and As Metaphor" at the Library of Congress at the Madison Building, Dining Room A, 6th floor, at 12:10 pm. A book signing will follow. Copies will be available for purchase. No reservations are needed; open to staff and the public.

August 19 - August 21: **Otakon**

A very large anime convention in Baltimore.

Friday, August 19th: **WSFA Third Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Madigans', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

September 1 - 5: **CascadiaCon**

The 2005 NASFiC, near Seattle.

Thursday, September 1st: **DC Transhumanist Dinner**

7 pm at Hamburger Hamlet in Crystal City.

Friday, September 2nd: **WSFA First Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Gillilands', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

Friday, September 16th: **WSFA Third Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Madigans', as usual. Newcomers welcome.

Saturday, September 24th: **4th National Book Festival**

Hosted by First Lady Laura Bush and the Library of Congress, on the mall between 7th and 14th streets, in Washington DC, from 10 am until 5 pm. Free event. There will be a Fiction & Fantasy Pavilion.

Sunday, September 25th: **Life Extension Society Meeting**

The local cryonics and life extension group will hold an open meeting at 1 PM at Mark Mugler's home, 48 Adams St. NW, Washington DC.

October 14 - 16: **Capclave 2005**

WSFA is putting on a convention! In Silver Spring, MD.

December 9 - 11: **Philcon 2005**

The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society (PSFS) brings you another Philcon, in Philadelphia.

Third Friday Minutes

Note that there's a [brief summary](#) at the end.

The regular Third Friday quasi-meeting of the Washington Science Fiction Association was called to order by President Samuel Lubell at 10:08 pm on July 15th, 2005, in the downstairs of the Haggerty/Surette home, at 16440 Baden-Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland. This was the first time we had ever met there.

In attendance were President Samuel Lubell, Vice President Cathy Green, Secretary Keith Lynch, Treasurer Bob MacIntosh, Trustee Barry Newton, Adrienne Ertman, Paul Haggerty, Eric Jablow, Judy Newton, Gayle Surette, and Madeleine Yeh. 11 people. Jim Kling and Ivy Yap were marked present, but weren't seen by the secretary.



The president asked the secretary to summarize the previous meeting, which took place on Friday, July 1st, at the Gillilands'. The secretary said:

- The location of this meeting was announced, as was the fact that the directions are available on the website and in the July *WSFA Journal*, and that Sam Lubell and Tamara Griesel both volunteered to drive people to and from Metro. (The secretary then remarked on Tamara's absence.)
- We voted to donate \$50 to Reading is Fundamental in honor of Bobby Gear, who died on June 25th.
- Ernest Lilley announced that the *Future Washington* anthology will be available in August, and that a chapbook would be at a reception at Readercon, which was last weekend, July 8-10.
- The Capclave Committee decided to host the Capclave website at globo.com. This should be ready for testing by July's Third Friday, i.e. today.

TREASURY: Treasurer Bob MacIntosh said we had \$10,662.21 in our main account, about \$7,200 in the World Fantasy account, and about \$15,100 in CDs. And that the World Fantasy account had spent about \$2000 to pay Ernest's Lilley's authors. Bob will miss the next two meetings.

Madeleine moved that we not investigate further CDs. There was no second and no quorum.

ENTERTAINMENT:

Alexis Gilliland was at Confluence. The president asked if anyone else had done anything entertaining.

Cathy said she had "threatened some people into submission," so she doesn't have to go to Texas next week.

Adrienne said she had "seen a plethora of people on various blogs declaring that they solemnly swear that they would not spoil Harry Potter Six." Paul said that reminded him that we had discussed going to a bookstore at midnight after the meeting to buy that book. He said the waiting lists are so long that there's no point. Bob said Amazon would be delivering his tomorrow. Paul said Sam's Club would have them at 7 am tomorrow. Cathy said she'd borrow Elizabeth Twitchell's copy when Elizabeth was done with it. Bob said that should be Monday, as Elizabeth planned to spend all weekend reading it. Sam said he had promised himself that he could buy a copy Monday if he spent all weekend working on his dissertation. Adrienne objected that this is supposed to be entertainment, not work. Judy said she read the first book, but didn't care enough to read any others.

CAPCLAVE:

None of the Capclave chairfen were present.

Barry said we have 180 members, and there had been no new registrations for a week or two. There were briefly 181, but only because one person was inadvertently listed twice.

Gayle said Capclave fliers at Readercon were used in lieu of the waxed paper that was supposed to have been distributed at the meet-the-pros event, but wasn't, to hold labels from the pros to make poetry with, meaning that people are much more likely to take the fliers home and keep them, which is good news for us.

Sam mentioned that the dodo puppets and the Capclave banner were present at the *Future Washington* reception at Readercon last weekend.

Judy said we didn't sell any Capclave memberships at Readercon. Sam said that's because we didn't have a table there. Bob said Readercon doesn't have tables.

Sam asked about other cons. Bob mentioned Shore Leave, which was held near Baltimore last weekend. Sam said Mike Nelson had promised to send Capclave fliers there. Bob said Mike Nelson had said he'd get Hal Haag to take some there. Sam said Mike Walsh had fliers at Confluence this weekend. Bob didn't think there were any other upcoming cons in nearby cities.

Several people were all speaking at once about Capclave fliers and WSFA ribbons at Dragon*Con, a very large con in Atlanta in September, CascadiaCon, the NASFiC, which will be near Seattle in September, and Interaction, the Worldcon in Glasgow in three weeks. Jim and Ivy are going to one of these cons, and Judy Newton volunteered to take something somewhere.

Sam will talk to Jim and Ivy about CascadiaCon. Bob said Judy Kindell has to go to CascadiaCon because the student contest is there, and that Peggy Rae, who is currently in Japan, will be at both the Worldcon and the NASFiC, but that we may have a hard time catching up with her.

Keith read the following email from Capclave '06 Chairfan Elspeth Kovar, which she had sent to the chat list the previous afternoon:

Folks,

I'm going to miss tomorrow's meeting but at least it's not because I'm sick; I'm going out of town for my birthday.

The current hotel news for '05 is that we have a new CSM (Convention Services Manager) who needs a bit of breaking in, so to speak. Thus I couldn't get Judy in to measure the Chesapeake ballroom yesterday. We're currently trying for sometime next week before she and then I head off to the UK.

[After the meeting, Elspeth said that she was mistaken; Judy did measure the ballroom.]

I also have a list of people who've made reservations and it's pretty short. This doesn't bode well, folks, and doesn't help me get my phone calls returned.

The good news for '06 is that it looks pretty likely that we'll be able to nail down the dates now rather than having to wait until next January. Glenda, our Sales Manager, and I have been playing phone tag to make this happen and should be able to catch up with each other soon. I have the letters written to my proposed Guests of Honor and am just waiting to put in the date before sending them.

And no, I'm not going to say who I'm hoping to get. The other Capclave chairs and the WSFA president know and approve but one of the guests may not be able to make it so I'm holding off making an announcement until I know.

In health news, and unfortunately my health does wind up being Capclave related, for now we've given up on getting me off the stuff that causes nasty withdrawal symptoms: it was just causing too much havoc and making it impossible for me to work. So at least I'm back to where I was when all of this started and we'll try something else.

See some of you in Glasgow -

Elsbeth

Keith said that her being in Glasgow means she'll miss the next meeting, since it's opposite the Glasgow Worldcon. It was then confirmed that the next meeting will indeed be at the Gillilands'. Most WSFAns aren't going to the Worldcon. Barry said the total Worldcon attendance is under 500. Keith said that can't be right, since his membership, which he bought three years ago (and later sold), was in the 600s. Barry said two people from Britain are coming to Capclave because they can't afford the Worldcon.

Paul said the website account has been set up with globalat.com, as had been decided at the Capclave committee meeting at First Friday. It cost us only \$30 for a year, due to a 4th of July special. It's ready for cutover. Sam needs to change the hosting of capclave.org to globalat.com, and once that is done Keith needs to replace the content in the Capclave '05 area of wsfa.org with pointers to capclave.org. The online registration is down until at least Sam's part is done. (All of this was done by the following day, and cutover is complete.)

WORLD FANTASY '03: Chairfan Mike Walsh wasn't present. Bob said no new money had come in.

DISCON '11:

Bob said that Marriott and Bob Johnson of the Black Entertainment Network are planning on financing a 1200 room hotel at Massachusetts Avenue and 9th Street, adjacent, perhaps even attached, to the new convention center, if a trade can be arranged for another parcel of land on the site of the old convention center. Ground would be broken next year, and the hotel would be finished two years later, one year before the 2011 Worldcon site selection. This would be good news for our bid.

We were contacted on July 4th via the rec.arts.sf.fandom newsgroup by the Gaylord people about their upcoming 300,000 square foot Washington Harbor resort convention center in P.G. County immediately south of the Wilson Bridge. Bob said they will probably have sufficient function space, but probably not enough hotel capacity. The planned on-site hotel will only have about a thousand rooms, and an east coast Worldcon needs at least twice that. [Their website, <http://www.gaylordhotels.com/gaylordnational/>, says 1500 rooms.] It is nowhere near any Metro station or any existing hotels or motels, but parking would be "copious and free". Ground has not yet been broken. We will keep their site in mind.

PUBLICATIONS: The secretary said that July *WSFA Journals* were available, as were a small number of May and June issues. [By the end of the evening one July, and no May or June issues, had been taken.]

BOOK:

Gayle said that there was a *Future Washington* wine and cheese reception at Readercon, at which chapbooks were distributed to everyone who showed up. The chapbook contained stories from Joe Haldeman and James Alan Gardner, both of whom were there and signed chapbooks. Allen Steele, who has a story in the final book, though not the chapbook, was also there, as were many other authors who expressed interest in being published in subsequent WSFA Press anthologies.

Gayle will update the *Future Washington* website [<http://www.futurewashington.com/>] so that orders can be placed on it.

Bob Garcia of Garcia Publishing Services is doing the final layout, and expects to have it done Sunday. He's doing it in return for ten trade paperback copies and two hardcover copies. Next week we'll get it to the publisher, Thomson-Shore. The back cover is done, and the front cover is almost done.

Paul had a large number of chapbooks left over, as 500 had been printed. A copy was given to everyone present at the quasi-meeting. Gayle apologized for "a" typo on the cover, which was the one part of the chapbook that wasn't proofread. [The secretary spotted two: "tomorrow" was spelled with only one "r," and it says "Fifteen tales," while the table of contents lists 16: the 15 that were in the Advance Reading Copy, plus "Agenda" by Travis Taylor.] Paul will return the rest of the chapbooks to Ernest Lilley, who Gayle said is currently ill with shingles.

ACTIVITIES: Lee Gilliland wasn't present, and nobody else had anything to report.

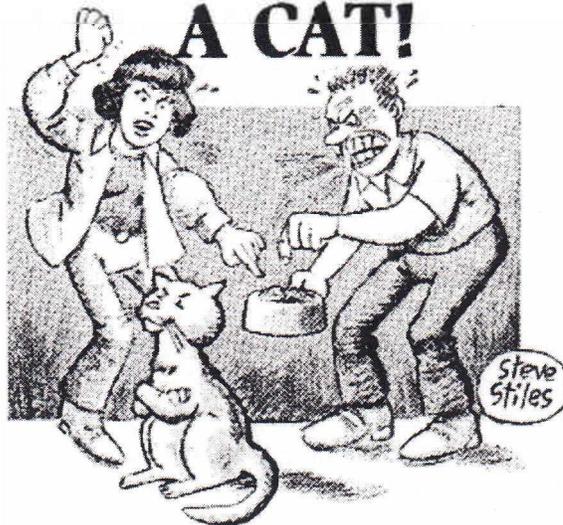
OLD AND NEW BUSINESS: None could be done due to the lack of a quorum.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The secretary made the usual first announcement: Announcements should ideally be submitted in writing, or via the email address on the cover of the WSFA Journal, or via the email address on the website, or... "you all know how to reach me". Sam responded "passenger pigeon". The secretary said that wasn't one of the ways. Eric said there's an RFC about it. The secretary said that was carrier pigeons, not passenger pigeons, which are extinct. [Actually, RFC 1149 simply says "avian carriers," and nowhere specifies which kind of bird is contemplated. Other, later, unofficial comments mention CPIP (Carrier Pigeon Internet Protocol).]

Gayle said there are drinks here, and food is upstairs in the dining room. There are two bathrooms, no cats, and no paper towels. Don't panic if you see creepy-crawly things, such as caterpillars, wood

NEVER TRY TO OUTSTUBBORN A CAT!



beetles, or large spiders, which she has seen in the house. If you see one, tell Paul or Gayle, and they'll deal with it. Paul added that we shouldn't put depleted uranium down the toilet.

Paul said the basement floor had been finished at 3 pm. He also sealed up every crack he could find, but pointed out that we're on five acres of forest.

Madeleine said Burke Used Books was selling books for half price until the end of July. They have Flint-free James Schmitz novels. "They've got lots of old science fiction back in the days when Ted White, you know, still knew everything in the world." Bob said he still thinks he knows everything in the world. Judy asked "What's changed?"

Eric asked if anyone was knowledgeable about the Oracle database, as he needs help with it. He also asked if anyone had seen Deep Impact. Keith said that collision was below the horizon from here.

Madeleine said the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission needs a web designer. This is a contractor position, not civil service.

Eric moved that we adjourn. Sam then adjourned the meeting at 10:45 (37 minutes), saying that we can't vote on the motion since we don't have a quorum. He then said "but if we did have a motion I'd say something like 'all those in favor ...'," after which we went through the motions of our usual noisy adjournment.

People were still present when the secretary left at about midnight.

It had rained earlier that evening, and was warm, damp, and foggy.

Summary of 7/15/05 meetings:

- We didn't get a quorum, so no business was done. We had just 11 people, perhaps due to the remote location, the fog, single-tracking on Metro, single-laning on the Wilson bridge, and Confluence (a con in Pittsburgh).
- The Capclave website was almost ready for cutover from wsfa.org to globat.com. (This was completed the following day.)
- Capclave is stalled at 180 members, with an ominously low number of hotel room night reservations.

James Doohan (1920-2005)

- The *Future Washington* anthology is still on target for August. The Readercon reception was a success. Chapbooks were distributed and signed at that reception.



James Doohan, best known among SF fans for playing Montgomery Scott (Scottie) on the original *Star Trek* TV series, died on July 20th of Alzheimer's disease complicated by pneumonia. He was a Canadian WWII veteran who lost a finger in action on D-Day.

All the *Star Trek* regulars were born in the 1920s or 1930s. All except James Doohan and DeForest Kelley, who died in 1999, are still living.

Morrie the Critic Discusses RAH and His Fear of Death

By Alexis Gilliland

Usually an essay doesn't require a prologue, but this question came up on a forum which Lee frequents, and she was somewhat annoyed by the rather brusque dismissal of her statement that Heinlein was afraid of death. After this had gone on for awhile, I did Morrie the Critic discussing the issue, and what follows is a slightly revised version of the essay posted on that forum.

"That's an idiotic idea," I said disdainfully. "Where does Heinlein say that he is afraid of death, eh? Cite me a citation."

Morrie the Critic emptied the bottle of Dos Equis into his glass. "Where does he say that he *isn't* afraid of death, Max? As some two bit genre detective used to say: 'The absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence.' Just because the man never used it in a PowerPoint presentation doesn't mean he didn't have such a fear."

"He died before PowerPoint presentations were invented, right? But. It is not in his letters, it's not anywhere," I replied. "Therefore, your idea has no textual support whatsoever. Why don't you admit you're mistaken?"

Morrie took a sip of beer. "The Master provided a lot of texts," he observed amiably. "And as a critic, finding textual evidence to support my half-assed opinions is what I do for a living. Why, I have even been known to work backwards, to base my opinions on a reasonable interpretation of the text which I had been tasked with reviewing."

Irony sets my teeth on edge. "I suppose you have reviewed all of Heinlein?"

"No, but I've read most of what he wrote, or tried to. I gave up on *The Number Of The Beast* after about a hundred pages, the same thing with *I Will Fear No Evil*. A couple of bloated, boring, self-indulgent potboilers that had no other virtue than making money. And *Job* was another, right?"

"Some of Heinlein's books were less than good," I conceded. "But where does he say he is afraid of death? Where does he even come close?"

"Close is for horseshoes and hand grenades," Morrie observed with a faint smile. "But didn't he say: 'It is an emotional impossibility for any man to believe in his own death'?"

That stopped me for a moment. "Ah, yes, I think he might have said something like that. But that isn't the same as saying he was afraid of death."

"It isn't?" Morrie composed his hands in front of him. "Suppose we parse that sentence to find its sense. Start with that 'any' of his, because if you go around and talk with war veterans who survived combat, like my father, and unlike Heinlein, who was invalided out before the start of World War II, you will find any number of them, including my father, who will say that they did, indeed, believe in their own death, and emotionally rather than intellectually, because at the time they were highly stressed and in real fear for their lives. So with his universal 'any' reduced to a mere 'some' I put this question to you: Is Heinlein included in that 'some'?"

I didn't like the way that the text was being morphed into something else, but there wasn't anything to do about it. "Well, he clearly included himself before, so even if he was mistaken about all men, I guess the answer would still have to be yes."

"In which case, Max, can we paraphrase the Heinlein quote to: 'It is an emotional impossibility for me to believe in my own death.' Yes or no?"

I took a swallow of beer. "Yes, but that is not the same as saying he was afraid of death. It isn't even close."

He laughed in that snarky sort of way of his. "Until you ask *why* it is impossible for him to believe. Did he lack imagination? Clearly he did not. And anyway, the impossibility is an emotional impossibility, so what emotion is involved? Inquiring critics want to know."

I finished my beer. "What utter garbage, Morrie. First you bend the quote all out of shape and then you ask a stupid-ass question about it."

"That's literary criticism at work, Max, and sometimes it isn't pretty. What is the emotion usually associated with death? Some people may be in love with easeful death, but Heinlein was surely not one of them, envy and jealousy don't apply at all, while anger and hatred only apply to the deaths of others, as you react to the loss which death has inflicted on you. What emotion applies to the contemplation of one's own death?"

"He never said he was afraid of death. He didn't say it!"

Morrie nodded in faux agreement. "Not in so many words, but the reason, no, the *emotion* that made Heinlein emotionally unable to believe in his own death has to be fear. Nothing else works."

I shook my head vigorously. "You twist his words and then make idiotic inferences from where you twisted."

"Maybe," He finished his beer. "Maybe not. You wanted a citation, you got a citation, but a single sentence might not be terribly heavy in the scales of evidence, so how about taking a look at what the Master wrote? He never said he was afraid of death, but how did he deal with death in his writing?" The waitress came over with our standing order, a Bud Lite for me, a Dos Equis for him. "His short story, 'The Elephant Circuit,' is explicitly about death. The hero is this traveling salesman who likes to go to fairs, and when he retires -- a kind of death -- he cheats the retirement death by pretending to be traveling in elephants, so that he still gets to travel to his beloved fairs, to go on enjoying life, even though his wife, Martha, and his dog, Bindlestiff, have predeceased him offstage in softly euphemistic language. At which point, our hero suffers the real death in a bus wreck. End of story? No, not at all. We cut to our salesman-hero in Heaven, which turns out to be a sort of super fair, where he receives the thunderous accolades of the Heavenly Host, and is last seen leading a parade of elephants with his much beloved wife and dog restored to him."

"Come on, Morrie, that wasn't even one of his better stories. And besides, what does it have to say about anything?"

He poured his beer into the glass. "As a critic, I ask only what it says about the Master's attitude towards death, and what the story says is that death has no power over a salesman who loves life. Which is simply not true. So the Master is in denial about the power of death. From which, it is a not

unreasonable inference that he is afraid of death.”

“To hell with your no-good inferences! Heinlein wasn't afraid of death, and he never said that he was.”

“Maybe,” Morrie took a sip of beer. “Maybe not. A lonely short story might not weigh heavily in the scales of evidence, either. So how about the novels? The afterlife features prominently in *Stranger in a Strange Land*, devaluing the climactic martyrdom of the hero, while in *I Will Fear No Evil*, the initial set up is this dying old white man, a billionaire who is possibly a Heinlein surrogate, getting his mind transplanted into the body of a vital young black woman. The story was kind of stupid, but what it says about the Master's attitude towards death is that he thought of it as something to be avoided at all costs.”

“Baloney,” I said. “The brain transfer was just a hook to consider gender differences, nothing else.”

“Which he didn't do at all well, in my opinion,” Morrie conceded. “Then how about a novel featuring Lazarus Long, who was the prototypical wise old fart and definitely, positively a surrogate for the Master himself?”

“Which novel?” I asked. “Lazarus Long even had his own book of quotations.”

“The one I had in mind was *Time Enough For Love*, because it also deals with death, and pretty directly, too. At the beginning, Lazarus is old and tired and sick and wanting to die, but his faithful support group, consisting of family, friends, and lovers, drag him all unwilling to the rejuvenation center to have him made young again. And sure enough, his newly youthful body perks up his aged and weary mind so that he gets his groove back in a manner of speaking, and goes off adventuring into the early 20th century as a happy time traveler, visiting (revisiting?) the Missouri of Heinlein's youth.”

“At the end, he is Sergeant Lazarus Long, fighting for the good old USA in World War I, when he is persuaded to take a Jewish incompetent along on a night patrol against the German lines, and the well-meaning klutz gets him killed. Well, no, not really. After being mortally wounded (for 1918 medicine) on the field of battle, his faithful support group travels through time, overcoming the technical obstacles the Master has written into the story to provide suspense, arriving at the very last second (if they missed, how many rewrites until they succeeded?) to whisk the gravely (but not mortally) wounded Lazarus Long off to the futuristic medical center where he can once again be made to rejoin the living.”

“As a critic, I ask what this novel says about the Master's attitude towards death. What the novel says is that an immortal man -- the surrogate Heinlein -- who has a good support group that can do time travel and has lots and lots of money, that immortal man will live forever in spite of himself. Which is as unreal as 'The Elephant Circuit,' only using science fictional tropes instead of religious ones. There are no immortal men, time travel doesn't exist, and Heinlein is *again* denying the power of death. We have already asked why, and the most persuasive inference is that Heinlein was afraid of death.”

“No,” I growled. “Alexei Panshin said that in *Heinlein In Dimension* and Heinlein said that Panshin's book was full of shit. So, you have made the same mistake as Panshin did, and you too, are full of shit.”

“Ah, Max.” he replied in that annoyingly condescending manner of his. “As a critic, I can tell you that an author should never respond to criticism, except to correct an error of fact, and then only to make the critic look like an idiot. Heinlein's outburst against Panshin was not only unseemly, but it suggests that Panshin made some points that the Master didn't like and couldn't refute.”

“Baloney!” I took a sip of beer. “Panshin *is* an idiot.”

“No,” Morrie shook his head. “Panshin was not only a perceptive critic, but a talented writer as well. His first novel, *Rite Of Passage*, which was written in the style of Heinlein -- an homage perhaps -- was maybe the best thing he ever did.”

“Whatever else he wrote doesn't matter. Panshin was wrong, and you are wrong, because Heinlein wasn't a coward!”

He threw back his head and roared with laughter. “Talk about subverting the text to refute an argument! Heinlein was not a coward, as his actions proved, but he was afraid of death, which made his actions all the braver.”

“I'm glad we agree that he wasn't a coward, but -- uh -- what particular actions are you talking about?”

“At MidAmericon, back in 1976, Heinlein was the guest of honor, and they videotaped his guest of honor speech. Up until then, the Master had refused to admit that he might have a neurological problem, but upon watching that tape, he saw his lapses from coherence with his own eyes, and immediately put his affairs in order before having highly risky corrective surgery. The problem turned out to be a cranial artery that was partially blocked, which meant that intermittently his brain was not fully oxygenated, so that even if he didn't lose consciousness, he at least lost his concentration. Happily, the operation was successful, and even Heinlein's brain worked better with sufficient oxygen, as suggested by the fact that his first post operative book was *Friday*, the best thing he'd done in quite awhile.”

“Okay, Morrie,” I said, coming in for the kill. “Doesn't Heinlein seeking to have that very dangerous operation refute your argument that he wanted to avoid dying at any cost?”

“That depends on how you define dying, Max old chap,” he said, taking a sip of beer. “To slip the fist of Death the Master was theoretically willing to give up being white, and being a man, but practically he was not willing to give up being Heinlein in order to keep on living as some doddering old fool who used to be Heinlein.”

Having won all the debater's points I was likely to get, I changed the subject to *Starship Troopers*.

The End

[*Editor's note: “The Elephant Circuit” is better known as “The Man Who Traveled in Elephants.”*]

Gloriana; or, The Unfulfill'd Queen

Being a Romance by Michael Moorcock

New York: Avon Books, 1979

Being a review by Lee Strong

[*Editor's note: Lee Strong has resigned from WSFA, and prefers that no WSFA member except Sam Lubell contact him for any reason. However, he has not rescinded his permission to print the material he had previously submitted to the WSFA Journal.*]

“Gloriana the First, Queen of Albion, Empress of Asia and Virginia, is a Sovereign loved and

worshipped... admired and respected by many more millions throughout the Globe." Indeed, in this fabulous alternate history, the entire world revolves around the living Juno... and the Queen's Trouble.



The joyous coronation of Gloriana has rescued Albion, and much of its world, from bloody war and dark tyranny and ushered in an apparent golden age. But, it is a golden age sustained by an unsustainable romantic myth: that the State is All and the Queen is Just. Dark forces lurk behind the Arcadian scenes in the form of political machinations, private lusts and other agendas, and even a bizarre underworld hidden within the walls of the Queen's own palace. Things come to a head when foreign suitors press their bids for the all-powerful Queen's hand (and other parts) in marriage. Arabia enlists the aid of a brilliant Chancellor's agent, temporarily at loose ends because his patron does not appreciate his psychological and political artistry, to arouse the Queen's interest and deliver her into the hands of the Caliph. With consummate skill, Captain Quire manipulates the Court with diplomacy, deception, lust and gold, but to what end? And can the dutiful but unhappy monarch ever truly be fulfilled?

This rococo, neo-Shakespearean story is quite different from the usual alternate history or medieval fantasy, but a tasty treat for the discerning reader. It examines the politics of a very human Realm in exquisite detail with some interesting twists that modern sf fans will appreciate. Characters are explored in detail amid the brilliant hues of a Faerie court. My chief problem is the morality: Captain Quire employs some very dark methods to achieve his ends, some justified by 16th Century constitutional theory, others not so easily dismissed. In the end, it is an eccentric and biting but ultimately delicious story of human beings in an unusual setting.

I rate *Gloriana; or, The Unfulfill'd Queen* as *** on the five star scale. -- LS

Corrections

Correction: WSFA Journal #4 is not missing from our archives. The only issues missing from both our archives and from Alexis Gilliland's stash are issues #80, #82, and (if it ever existed) #85. All are from the early- to mid-1970s. Please contact us if you can find any of them. Thanks.

I thank all the contributors to this issue. I bumped my Einstein article, and my response to S.M. Stirling's idea that scientific revolutions are extraordinarily unlikely, to next month, to make room.

The deadline for the September issue is Friday the 26th. As always, I eagerly solicit material: News from this year's Worldcon, Interaction; Fannish autobiographies; reviews of books (old or new); movies (likewise); TV shows; conventions; or talks. Reports on new scientific discoveries. Letters of comment. Cartoons. Nearly anything except current American politics.