

Wild Hair

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Wild Hair, the Fanzine that Tickles, is produced once every fourteen months by that zany crew who are known to all and sundry as the Insurgent Element of Southern California, not to be confused with the Outlander Society of which Rick Sneary is the Welcomer. In this particular instance, Wild Hair, the Functional Fanzine is jointly edited and produced by Charles Burbee, Cy Condra, Roger Graham, F. Towner Laney, The Amiable Killdozer, Sydney Stibbard, and Art Vidner. The production offices of Wild Hair, the Fanzine that Knows No Boundaries, is at 816 Vestboro Ave., Alhambra, California; but the mailing address is 1057 Normandie Ave., Los Angeles 6. The restrained and restraining feminine influence which, no doubt, shows on every page of Wild Hair, the Significant Fanzine, stems from the presence of Katherine Garrett and Cecile Laney. This magazine was not "set-up" (whatever that is) by Walter J. Daugherty. FOR FAPA -- February 26, 1949

A year or more has gone by, men have lived and died, empires have risen and fallen and once again there is that tension in the air. That taught feeling of expectancy (much as one gets when one is about to sit on an icy toilet seat) surrounds us all. Faces have changed but the fine fannish spirit of Wild Hair, the Pratfall Fanzine, goes on forever. Burbee, as usual, topped me when he read this paragraph and said, "Of course, that can only be appreciated by those of us who have to sit down to pee."

William Rotsler

Sydney Stibbard: A fan is one whose idea of space travel is the time elapsed between the takeoff and the pratfall.

It's been fourteen months since I last had the pleasure of composing an editorial for Wild Hair, the Mint Fanzine, and as I remember, we thought we had had a bang-up, first-class one shot session when it was over. But it was nothing to this one--the amount of material we have created here tonight, and the enjoyment experienced in writing and organising it has been on a level that can only be described as fabulous.

A lot of you people who will read this have also received a copy of the latest Shaggy, the house organ of the LASFS. Time was when material such as we offer you tonight would have gone into that mag. You've had a chance to compare that work with this. I'm not sure what you think, but have a sneaking suspicion that you rather feel as we do; that the insurgent element is justified in breaking the bonds of censorship so tightly clamped down by some of the more dignified minds of the club, taking the bit in our teeth and going all out to publish as we feel publishing should be done. Whether we're right or wrong doesn't matter, I guess. The thing that counts is that we've had a

whopping good time and, after all, isn't that what amateur publishing is for?

Cyrus B. Condra

Cyrus B Condra just asked you a question. Don't let him stand there waiting for an answer. Oh well. I dunno. I just got up from one typer where I had a prolonged session and managed to read one of the items that had been cooked up by one of my henchmen and then F Towner Laney dragged me over here (he was ten feet behind me as I ran eagerly) and here I am at another typer with a mind as blank as though I were sitting down to write the editorial for Shangri-LA #10. This has been a genuine cooperative session such as Valter J Daugherty has never dreamed about--that is to say, it has been in truth a cooperative session, with nobody having carte blanche, and with everybody actually contributing more than a lot of words and pretending to "set-up" things, whatever the hell that means. I don't want people to judge me too harshly for this paragraph. After all, I just this moment learned, on reading ftl's article, that Don Wilson does not exist. This is a great blow to me, for I had built up a mental picture of him and now I find that he is only the thin shadow of pretense originating in the brain of Howard Miller. Pardon me while I go away to cry again.

---Charles Burbee

I thought I saw Howard Miller and Don Wilson together once a long time ago, but that was when I was in my thirties and I've forgotten a lot since then. My impression is that the guy's name is Howard Wilson. So may I raise the possibility that neither Don Wilson nor Howard Miller exist? And was there ever a fanzine called Dream Quest? Let's look at the facts. Jimmy Taurasi of New York has been advertising for a D.Q. #1 for six months without getting one. The reason he hasn't gotten one must be because - you finish the obvious line of reasoning. Now, if neither Howard Miller nor Don Wilson exist, it is obvious that neither could have obtained membership for both of them. So there are two names on the list of F.A.P.A. members that are fictitious. This is padding, plain and simple. Its only purpose could be to make applicants for membership have to wait so they get the idea that F.A.P.A. is very popular. Since Burbee has verbally accused the F.F.F.F. of this practice he is obviously aware of the procedure. I deduce that if an investigation is made it will be found that the memberships of the mythical Miller and Wilson were turned over to Ackerman by Burbee alone - that Burbee created these two mythical characters - that Burbee does all the stuff that carries their name - and that Burbee himself is Don Miller and Howard Wilson.

---Rog Phillips

By rights the lengthy masthead should stand in lieu of my portion of the editorial. But then I am a verbose and garrulous sort of character, as full of words as this fabulous magazine of ours is full of quality. Now that is a subject upon which I could wax mightily enthusiastic--the quality and quantity of this fanzine which at this very moment you are holding in your hands. Do you realise, that except for 6 pages of pre-prepared mastersets and an approximately eq-

THE DEEPER SIGNIFICANCE OF SCIENCE- FICTION

BY
TOWNER
LANEY

"I hope...that fans will get a more serious view of what stf is and what it can be. Too many, I'm afraid, fail to see any further than a hobby of collecting and writing letters. These things are very fine, but I wanted to underscore the deeper significance of it to those who consider stf a mere hobby." ---Gwen Cunningham, DAWN #2, p. 1.

Here in our midst is one of the leading authors of science fiction of our time---Roger P. Graham, who has written and sold more science fiction than most fans have read.

"Roger," I said, "What is the deeper significance of science fiction?"

"Science-fiction," he said pensively, "is an escape used by escapists who are trying to escape from what they have escaped to."

(Here it is--the rest of the editorials):

ual amount of material in very rough draft form, this entire magazine was created by the seven of us in approximately six hours? And, in comparison with the \$50 expense bragged upon by the LASFS for their effluvium, our total expense exclusive of mailing is \$16.50 for an edition of 150 copies. If we sold every copy of WILD HAIR at the per issue rate set by the LASFS for Shaggy, we would actually net a small profit. And I'll bet that I alone had as much fun as all the LASFS put together. (All the LASFS put together---that sets me to thinking esoteric thoughts!) I veered. Anyway, this was loads of fun, and my only complaint at the moment is that the odors of bacon, eggs, hot biscuits, apple pie, and coffee are mingling in a gustatory symphony that is doing things to my gastric juices. To heck with editorials. I shall heed that clarion call.

F. Towner Laney

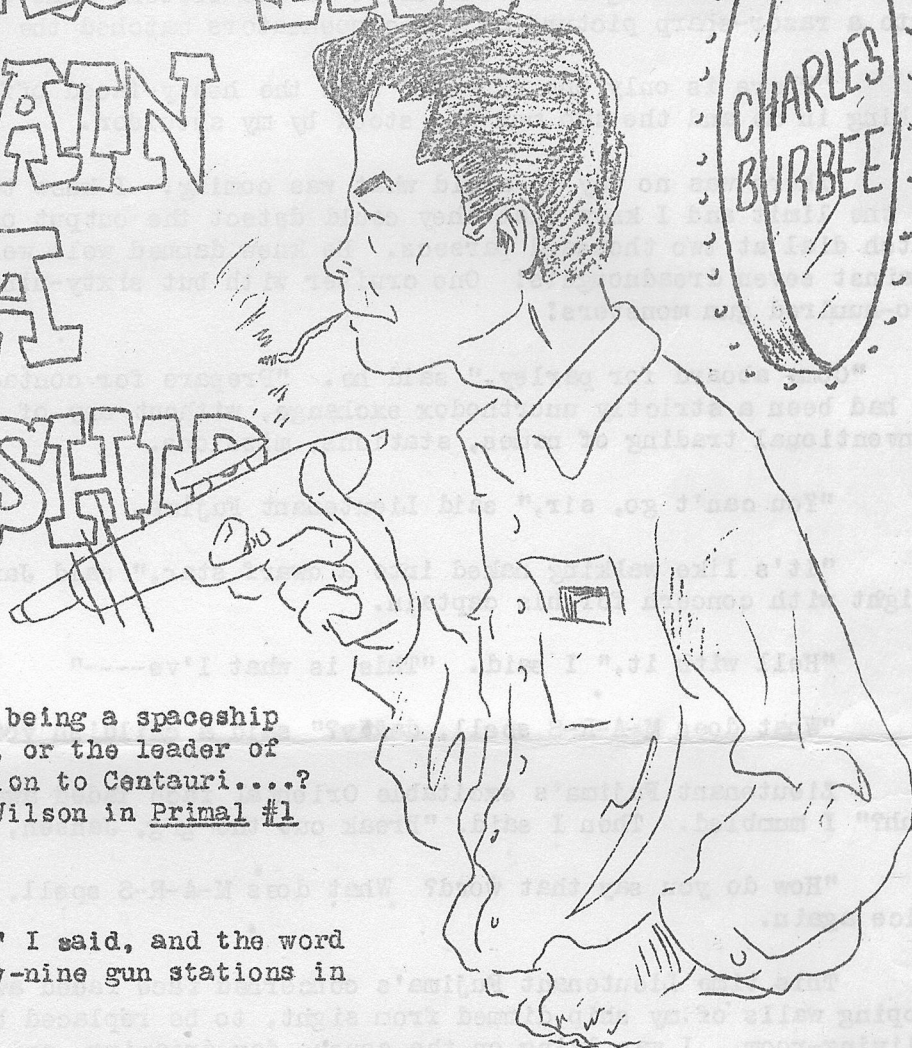
Yeah Man, that sho is the charionest call i ever done heard in mah bo'n days. In fact, it's so damned clarion, & me being something of a Humphrey Pennyworth character, that every time i sniff those delectable odors wafting in from the kitchen, my stomach keeps sending up messages like, "What the hell's the matter up there? Is your god-dam throat cut?" & so, being put on the end of this here editorializing spree with everything sensible & funny already said, i see no point in trying to top all the rest of these staling, untoppable characters, & furthermore, having always had a violent dislike of people who keep babbling along just for sake of filling up some empty space, i shall therefore let it remain

empty.

Art Widner

I WAS THE CAPTAIN OF A SPACESHIP

CHARLES
BURBEE



"Ever daydream of being a spaceship captain, you guys, or the leader of the first expedition to Centauri....?"

---Don Wilson in Primal #1

"Gunners alert," I said, and the word sped toward the sixty-nine gun stations in my craft.

Through the radarvisiscreen I saw Aldebaran IV swimming ominously up toward me and felt a surge of fear that I concealed from Lieutenant Fujima and Paymaster Jansen, who stood nearby, staring at the same screen.

This was it, the moment for which ten thousand million dollars had been spent and five thousand men had been expended.

"Fleet of spacecraft Green Zero Nine, Orange Zero Three," said the wall-speaker, which indicated that the lookout was ready and alert. If his voice wavered but a little, it was the reflection of the apprehension that stirred in all of us.

The screen shifted and now I could see them, too. There they were, six---no, seven large battleships of the Zudar type, emerging at the place of the ecliptic.

"Communication beam on," I said.

ILLUSTRATED
BY STIBBARD

"C-beam on, said the control room speaker.

"Ahoy, flagship!" I said into the microphone, as the murky figure of an Aldebaran officer began to take shape in the screen. The image suddenly cleared into a razor-sharp picture as the compensators matched the beam.

"There is only one of you?" said the heavy-faced officer, his quick eyes taking in me and the two men who stood by my shoulder.

There was no way to avoid what was coming. I knew their scanners were out to the limit and I knew that they could detect the output of a radium-painted watch dial at two thousand parsecs. He knew damned well we were alone! One ship, against seven dreadnoughts! One cruiser with but sixty-nine guns against these two-hundred gun monsters!

"Come aboard for parley," said he. "Prepare for contact." He switched off. It had been a strictly unorthodox exchange, without any of the usual amenities or conventional trading of names, stations, missions.

"You can't go, sir," said Lieutenant Fujima.

"It's like walking naked into a dwarf star," said Jansen, his blue eyes alight with concern for his captain.

"Hell with it," I said. "This is what I've----"

"What does M-A-R-S spell, daddy?" said a childish voice.

Lieutenant Fujima's excitable Oriental face faded away for a moment. "Huh?" I mumbled. Then I said, "Break out the gig, Jansen, if you please."

"How do you say that word? What does M-A-R-S spell, daddy?" It was that voice again.

This time Lieutenant Fujima's concerned face faded away entirely. The long sloping walls of my ship dimmed from sight, to be replaced by the angular lines of a living-room. I was lying on the couch, day-dreaming, and the voice was the voice of my little boy, laboriously spelling out a comic-book yarn.

"Huh?" I said again, looking up. Fujima and Jansen were gone now. So was the screen with those seven deadly battleships.

"Daddy!" his voice was impatient now. "I asked you something. Aren't you listening?"

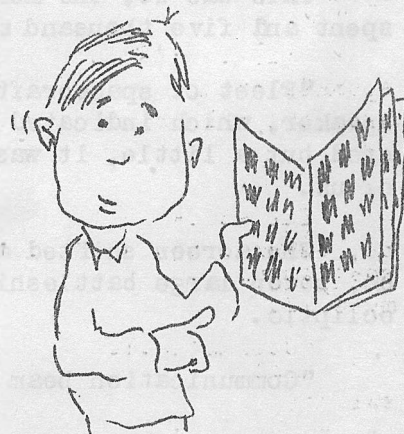
"Sure, sure," I said. "What do you want?"

"What does M-A-R-S spell?"

"That spells Mars."

"What's that mean?"

"Mars is a planet. That is, it's like the



Earth and it's several million miles away and the same sun shines there every day like it does here."

"Can you see it in the sky at night? Is it a star?"

"Well, not exactly a star. A star is really a sun, just like ours, only so far away that it's very small. But Mars shines in the sky at night just like a star, so I guess you could call it a star."

"Could we see it from the back porch?"

"Sure, it's out there plain enough."

"Will you show it to me? I mean tonight when it gets dark?"

"Sure," I said. "I'll show you Mars and Venus and the rest of them."

"OK," he said, and went back to his comic book. I went back to my couch.

Silly, being jerked back to the little solar system when I was venturing into the dimly known and dangerous areas of the outer galaxy--on a dangerous mission. Mars! Ha! That stupid little planet. My God, there were millions of other worlds, many of them peopled with strange and treacherous humans and half-humans, and some things that were even worse. And Aldebaran IV was a hell-hole of space.

In fact I was damned close to it right now. Already I could hear sounding in my ears the voder-voice saying "Captain's gig, ready to launch. Stand by."

Lieutenant Fujima and Paymaster Jansen stood by as I entered the small craft. I turned to them before the ensign shut the screwdoor. "If I'm not back in fifty minutes, you will please take command, Lieutenant Fujima, and perhaps Operation Six will be in order."

I stepped inside, their worried glances following me. They would not attempt further to dissuade me. They had served with me before, and knew my ways. They had utmost confidence in me...this time, though, their faith was being strained to the breaking point. After all, their eyes plainly said, when is a man of iron not a man of iron? The odds can't favor you all the time. You can't always win. I'd done it before enough times, but this seemed like THE time--the time that comes to all adventurers--the last time-- I gave them a tight-lipped smile as the screwdoor shut past their line of vision.

In a moment we had cast off and were headed toward the Aldebaran flagship which floated like some towering dinosaur dead ahead, blotting out, in its sheer immenseness, its home planet and occulting two of its escort.

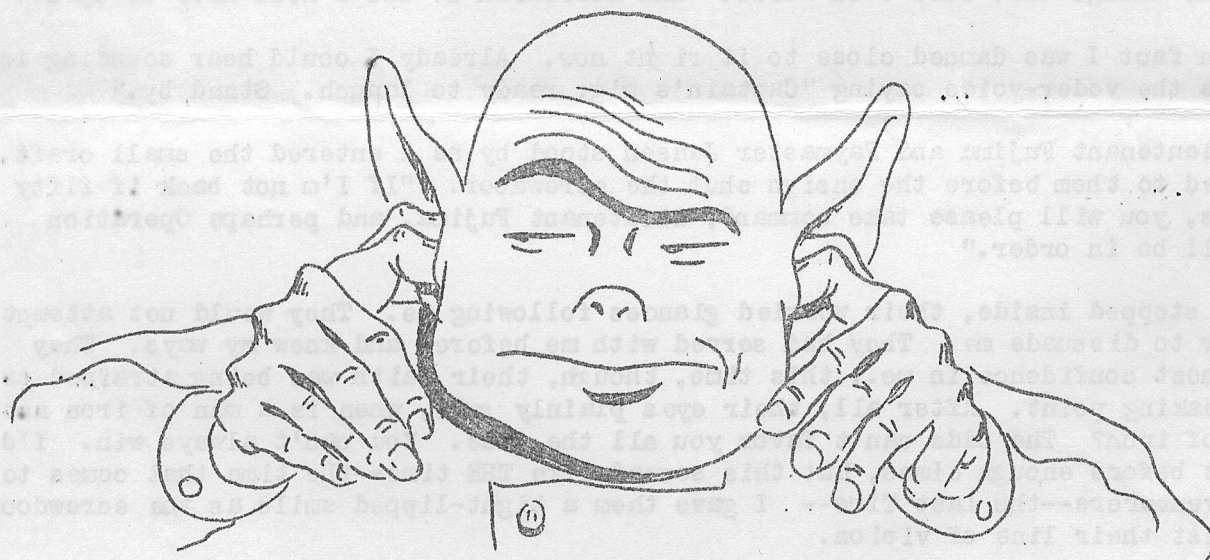
I stood by the viewport. The ensign did not venture to speak. I stood alone and thought my own thoughts. This was it, certainly. If I could not convince the Aldebaran captain of my plan, my ship would be instantly annihilated and I would be tortured to death with infinite slowness with the royal family looking on and popping octopus eyes into their mouths like salted peanuts as they watched. As a refinement in torture, they'd eventually strap a perceptor on me so I could see without eyes and could observe them popping my own eyes into their mouths, also like salted peanuts.

I had not much time for such thoughts, or any thoughts. We were in grapnel range now and I heard the metallic chunk of the magnetic tow-block strike our hull and then another and another, and we were being pulled in, power off. Into the gigantic airlock we went, and in a moment our screwdoor was being opened. I stepped out into the company of three sullen guards...frozenfaced as fish, they were--- wait! The one in the middle! I knew that face! A grey memory flashed to me--- that dismal storm on Longar VII, no water, no heaters, and that face that begged for both.... I had saved this man's life. But! He'd been a prince, then! Now? A common soldier? I caught a fragment of thought from him---he and I had practiced Aldebaran thought-transference during the long long night before we'd built a tiny power drive out of our suit-radios and made good our escape to one of Longar's moons where a small humanoid settlement existed. I was the only Earthman ever to understand the Aldebaran thought-level, which was why I had been chosen for this mission---but no one knew that I could read Aldebaran minds. Not unless Rancik had told.

The fragment of thought was incomplete, almost incoherent, but evidently all he could provide me with at the moment: "The Blue One--do not speak of snakes."

This was all I had to go on. It was almost not enough, I thought, as I stepped into the giant control-room and faced, at last, the Aldebaran captain.

"Well?" he said, hooking his double thumbs into his ears in a gesture of bravado. "Does one seek out the snake in his lair?"



The key word! I must progress with caution of the infinite sort.

He was waiting. I must make a major decision at once. Instantly. "When the visor is fogged, polaroid glasses are of little avail," I answered, spitting at his feet.

He stood perplexed. I could see him think. He knew that I was more aware of Aldebaran customs than he had at first supposed. He could no longer kill me out of hand and beg forgiveness because of traditional usage. We must first eat together.

"Bring food!" he ordered. And another major crisis was at hand.

Food was brought and he faced me over the smelly stuff. "Will you have meat first?" He grinned. An evil grin, it was, for now he felt he had me. His lieutenants clustered about him grinned also, taking cue from their captain. Their hands stole toward their guns. In a moment I would perhaps be a smoking piece of meat myself, lying on their spotless floor.

I picked up a slab of meat and cast it haughtily at his feet.

Shock dribbled through his brain. This, he thought, was inconceivable! His dismay was reflected on the faces of his men.

Swiftly he drew a sword and handed it to me. And now dismay flooded me in turn. What did I do now? I did not know the next step! This was a custom I had not heard of! What must I do? The fate of the solar system lay in my grasp--what was I to do? I sought swiftly on the thought-level of Rancik. It was blank. Fear, yes, fear, swept over me now. I was in a spot. I could only guess at the next step. A bead of sweat stood out on my brow. I felt it there like a lump of ice.

"Daddy, where is my telescope?" a childish voice inquired.

The rapt faces of the Aldebarans dimmed out a moment, then came in strong once more.

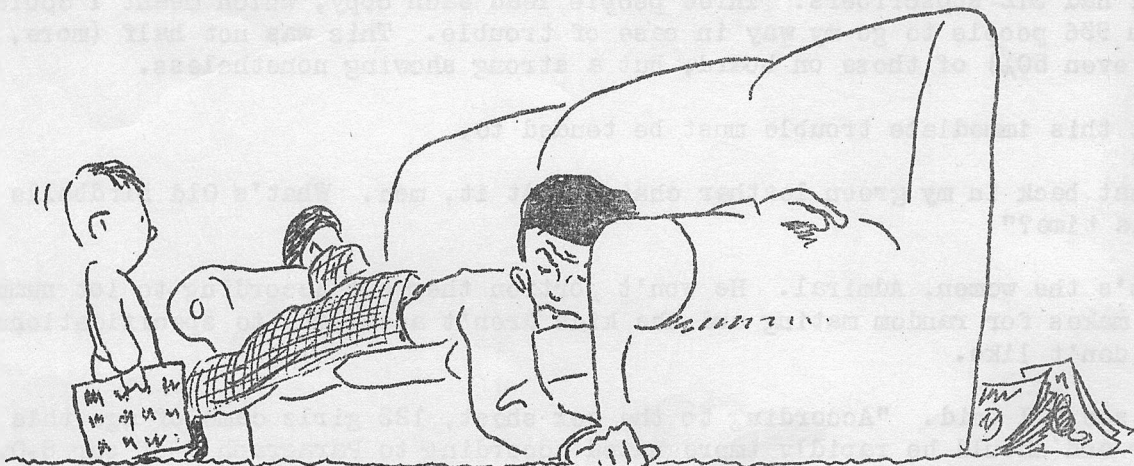
"Do you know where my telescope is?" the voice went on.

The captain stepped forward. "Is the blade too heavy for Earthman's hands?" he seemed to say, but his voice was faint in my ears.

"Daddy, where is my telescope--do you remember where I put it?"

The captain, his men, the giant control-room, flared up and vanished, came on again briefly, then was gone. Again I lay on my couch in my living-room. My little boy was standing beside me, poking my arm.

"Uh, your telescope? Uh, where did you put it? Where is it?"



"That's what I'm asking you," said he. "Where is it? Are you lying on it?"

"No, no." I rolled over, and sure enough there was the telescope. He pounced on it. "Good! Now I can look for Mars when it gets dark. When will that be?"

I looked out the window. "Oh, maybe not for another half hour yet."

"OK, but as soon as it gets dark you're going to show me Mars, remember."

"Oh yes, yes, I'll show you Mars."

He went away. I leaned back, rubbing my back where the telescope had been poking me all this time. What a day. A lazy day. Sunday. Nothing to do and no energy to do it. This must be the ennui that creeps over the crew of spaceships beating the long long way to the stars. Like going to Alpha Centauri, for example. The first expedition would take years and years to get there. Boys would be men before the trip was over... People would be born....

"The trip'll be over soon, men," I said to the "gripe" party in my cabin, but it did not seem to impress them overmuch. They shuffled a bit and then one of them, a ferret-faced Texan, spoke up: "Sure, Admiral, we know it'll be over, but the big questions is, are we going to stand for Captain Birdsall's high-handed ways any more?"

I chuckled heartily at them. But no answering smile appeared on their faces. This was serious. Always before, I'd been able to jolly them into a better mood. They'd go away mollified, to be tractable for a long time. Not this time. Plenty in the wind, if the signs were right.

I sighed. Being Admiral of the first expedition to Centaurus was not easy. I was not supposed to interfere with the running of the ship. That was the captain's job. I could not interfere unless it was absolutely necessary. Section 8 in the Space Code, Revised Edition 2089 A.A. set forth my powers explicitly. I knew Section 8 by heart. More to the point, so did Captain Birdsall. He and I had been at loggerheads since 3006, one year after the trip began. And here it was 3031, twenty-six years out, and we were still at loggerheads. He hated interference from me and expressed himself on the subject frequently.

I had early divined that trouble would one day break out, and that our little spaceship world would be at war. I had set about recruiting passengers and crew to my side. I published a little magazine, of necessity on toilet-paper, and filled its pages with subtle propaganda. Out of a passenger and crew list of more than 2,000, I had 312 subscribers. Three people read each copy, which meant I could count on 936 people to go my way in case of trouble. This was not half (more, it was not even 50%) of those on board, but a strong showing nonetheless.

But this immediate trouble must be tended to.

I sat back in my green leather chair. "At it, men. What's Old Birdballs done this time?"

"It's the women, Admiral. He won't portion them out according to lot number. Says it makes for random mating and the kids aren't according to specifications. That we don't like.

"I see," I said. "According to the sex sheet, 123 girls came of age this fiscal year and should be rapidly impregnated according to Paragraph 6 of our S.O. S. O. also states that they should be apportioned to those men who carry the same number, as drawn from the Cat Pot. Since 109 young men are eligible, this means each man gets a girl and there will be 14 Free Agents Special Service, abbreviated Free---"

"Ya, and Birdsall wants to change that. Says only 12 men qualify and each gets 10 girls. He wants the remaining three. Migod, Admiral! That's hell!"

I wanted to keep peace. "Men," I said heartily. "Who's the best mumble-peg player in the bunch?"

The men shifted about and shot quick glances at each other.

"Begging your pardon, sir, but mumbly-peg just hasn't got the old savor any more."

"But how about your dart-game?" I inquired desperately.

"No, sir."

"And quoits?"

"No, sir. And badminton, that was all the rage six months ago, that's out, too. The games just don't seem to have any flavor any more. Like potatoes without meat."

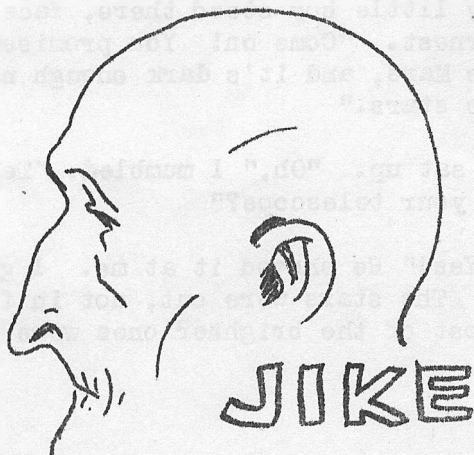
"This is serious, men. How is it that healthy young males like you aren't interested in physical games any more?"

"We like physical games, all right," said one. A laugh went around the group.

"We were wondering, sir, if you'd talk to the Captain for us about this."

I nodded. It was all I could do. These young men, who had been born aboard the ship, had heard of Spring and mating season only from books, yet they felt the season running wild in their blood. I'd have to write a monograph on that. The Seasons in a Can. Mating season was not dependent on outside influences such as temperature or wind from a certain direction or the angle of the sunlight, but showed up even in men who had never set foot on earth and could not conceive of a change in temperature.

"Come back at 48, men," I said. "I'll have something for you then."



The Captain's blinker showed he would receive me. I strode into his cabin. He was sitting at his littered desk. "What?" he demanded shortly. Bad mood. No salute. No rising respectfully. He just sprawled there like a phallic symbol. Behind him lurked his furtive footman, Jike, who, rumor had it, served him beyond the call of footmen.

"Time for the portioning-out, Captain. How's it going?"

"You know, Admiral Tinhat. Don't look surprized. I know what's going on on my own ship."

"Sure, Captain." I boiled inwardly. I wanted to smash his grinning face. "I'd have told you. You just found out 15 minutes sooner."

"I know what you're going to ask--no is the answer. I'm giving out those girls my way. Here's the list."

"But all these men are Birdsalls."

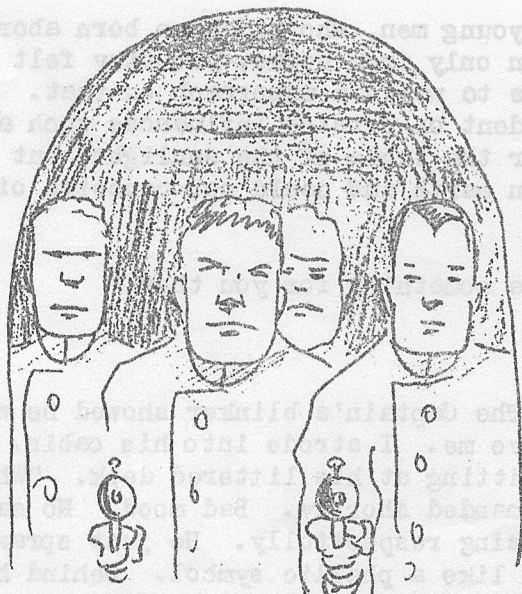
"Right. Going to do anything about it, Tinhat?"

I stepped forward, cold anger growing in me. I should have seen this sooner. A gun appeared in his hand, and I said, "This is mutiny. Put down that gun."

He hesitated. He'd gone too far. He probably wanted to turn back, but now the die was cast. "I was going to do it sooner or later anyway," he mumbled, half to me, half to himself. He pressed the trigger.

Some people overestimate the speed of a bullet, or the finger that tightens on the trigger of a blaster. In my earlier days as a Tiger fighting for Abhault, I'd learned a lot of little things--like how fast a man can move when he goes in low, using gravity and the strength of his legs to propel him...Birdsall's beam cut the grav panel and his head smacked the plastifloor a moment later, his cracked skull leaking his life away. I rose, whirling, to meet Jike's rush--true to his nature he was coming at me from behind. A quick blow and he was done in.

A sudden sound at the door---there stood the ship's officers, Birdsall men all, each armed with a blaster. I had one second to live, unless---



"It's time! It's dark enough to see the stars, cried a child's voice in my ear. In a haze, I picked up the desk--it was strangely light--and threw it at the unsubstantial men in the door. "Come on!" cried the child's voice. A hand shook my shoulder. The grim men in the doorway faded as the unreal desk ploughed into them. Then they were gone, the desk, the doorway, the cabin, all gone....

My little boy stood there, face eager and earnest. "Come on! You promised to show me Mars, and it's dark enough now to see the stars."

I sat up. "Oh," I mumbled. "Telescope ---got your telescope?"

"Yes!" He shoved it at me. I got up slowly and followed him out to the back porch. The stars were out, not in force as yet since it was still early evening, but most of the brighter ones were visible.

"Is that Mars?"

"No," I said. "I don't think so." I looked up at the stars. They did not impress me. There they were, each a star, perhaps each with its own planets, each planet peopled with human or quasi-human intelligences.... "Stow it," said the BirdMan from Xanoth to the Lizard Man from Hoth, as the Chinthian Serpent Man served them drinks.... the hell with it. I searched for Mars. Let's see, now. Mars was called the Red Planet. That simplified things. All I had to do was find a star with a reddish glow and that would be it. I peered intently at one. It assumed a reddish glow as I stared at it. I looked at another one. It also took on a reddish tinge as I stared at it. And so did all the others.

It finally came to me. It struck me---the staggering truth. I, who had in daydreams led the first expedition to Centaurus, I, who had captained a space ship, I, who had gone in---alone---where four Unattached Lensmen had failed, I, who had maneuvered a space ship through the Asteroid Belt with only the tip of my big toe---I, the man who had done all these marvelous things and a thousand more.... I didn't know where Mars was!

I took the telescope, aimed it at a likely-looking star, adjusted the focus, and said to my little boy, "There you are, that's Mars."

"Is it really Mars?"

"Sure it's Mars. I know all the stars and planets. That's Mars. Now I'm going back in. You can look at Mars all you want."

I went back in, lay down on the couch. My God, it was pitiful how little I knew of science when put to the test. After reading science-fiction steadily since 1926 (you could tell by the way I walked) too!

Ah, well.

Why did they call Mars the Red Planet, anyhow? Stories I'd read always called the soil red. Some said "ochre turf" and others "red desert" and others "red sand".... I wondered what it really was? Might not be red at all... what was the origin of the red theory, I wondered. Well, the first men to arrive on Mars would know....

Mars loomed large on the screen---not in color for it was not a color screen. We had no portholes and could not know the actual color till we opened the doors---after suitable tests had been made---and saw with our own eyes. I turned to the navigator. "Congratulations, Mr Davis, you've made an exact planetfall...."

"Hell, Captain, you taught me all I know about astrogation," he said. "I didn't figure the course---you did it all."

"Nevertheless, Mr Davis, it's going in the log that you did it."

"Thank you, sir."

I turned away as the control room door opened. Two oilers with blasters in hand entered. "What's this?" I bellowed.

"Mutiny, Captain, just mutiny," said one. His voice had a slight Teutonic accent. "We're claiming this planet for the Ninth Reich....."

...BUT WHY NOT READ FANTASY ?



by Francis T. Laney

---oo0oo---

"I would like to state plainly A SO-CALLED "READING" COPY IS NOT WORTH THE PRICE ASKED FOR IT, NO MATTER HOW SMALL THAT PRICE MAY BE." -- Samuel Anthony Peeples, Fantasy Advertiser III-1, p. 15.

Mr. Peeples' recent article, "The Technique of Fantasy Collecting", highlights a prevalent tendency among collectors of stfantasy; namely, the pointless hoarding of a great bulky stack of unread (and often unreadable) books. I was reading this article with considerable interest coupled with growing disbelief, and suddenly realised that Mr. Peeples is not in the least interested in reading these books; he's interested only in collecting them.

Just what, precisely, is the value of any collection of books, fantasy or otherwise? Mr. Peeples speaks of investment value, and of course to a certain limited extent he has something there. It is not difficult to see that it is sound business to pay the Salvation Army 25¢ for a \$5.00 book. It is not so obvious, though equally true, that if one counts his time and travel expense as being worth anything, the collecting of books from the investment point of view is a pure waste of time. If the junk-shop snooper charges 5¢ per mile for the use of his car and even so little as \$1.00 per hour for his own time against the books he finds, he will find that these 25¢ volumes are pretty expensive! And buying fantastic books from an informed dealer is simply bad business for the putative investor; it is seldom or never advisable to buy anything as an investment if it is either at the utmost top of the market or if it is an item not enough recognised by the general public to command immediate resale at top price. Fantastic literature, unfortunately, falls under both of these categories, and consequently cannot for a moment be seriously considered as an investment, except most incidentally. The wouldbe investor will get a far greater and surer return on his time and money if he dabbles in real estate or sells magazine subscriptions from door to door or buys government bonds.

There is of course a certain joy of the chase which is not to be discounted and which makes Salvation Army prowling a lot of fun. The indefatigable collector will every now and then be thrilled out of his socks by finding a desirable item for little or nothing. However, these kicks have to come reasonably often to make collecting pay off, and there certainly is no doubt that they come fewer and fewer in these days of increased collecting activity. The collecting tour which a decade ago would have knocked off an apple box full of desirable stuff will today net one or two dubious items.

And I suppose that to a certain type of personality there is a queer joy in possession which makes the ownership of shelf after shelf of unread volumes a source of pride and joy, particularly when some visiting fireman is browsing along them and making envious noises deep in his throat. Maybe this involves enough ego-gratification to war-

rant the year in and year out maintenance of an unsightly dust-catcher just so that it may be shown off once or twice a month.

But to my mind, there is one reason and one alone which can justify the ownership of a shelf or case of books, which can warrant moving it around with you, keeping it arranged and dusted, and spending money to augment it. And that reason is, simply, that these are books which you have read, and which you like so well that you know that some day you are going to want to reread them.

This being the case, many of the collector's criteria become somewhat less than meaningless. A reading copy, for example, is every bit as good as an unopened mint one, provided that the binding is not so utterly shabby as to ruin the looks of the shelf, and provided all the pages are there. As long as the text is uncut, a pocket book reprint is every whit as good as a first edition. The dust wrapper is a worthless excrescence which slithers around and gets in your way when you are trying to read. Fly-leaves, being blank pieces of paper, are of no practical value. And so on.

For the reader, one of the collector's major problems ceases to exist. I am referring to the constant struggle of trying to figure out whether or not a given book is fantasy-stuff, and consequently collectable. This problem may be partially solved by Bleiler's checklist; however, not only is this index bound to be incomplete, but it is certain to contain a few non-fantastic titles which have crept in despite all precautions.

I have frequently seen people at the LASFS spend an entire evening--often enough time to read the book in question--handing some volume around trying to find out if it is fantasy or not. I have seen this strange antic performed so many times that it can pretty much be cited as a consistent fannish habit rather than an amusing exception to sensible conduct.

And it is hilarious to notice the way occasional non-fantastic titles become "respectable", worthy volumes without which no collection is complete.

There is one whose title escapes me at the moment, a volume by Balmer and Wylie with the misleading sub-title "A Fantasy of London". Sam Russell read this volume, found it was non-fantasy despite the sub-title, and tried to spread the word. "But certainly it's fantasy," said Ackerman. "It is in everybody's collection, and it has a definite market value as a fantasy." One of the LASFS' part-time dealers got two copies of this book in the Salvation Army. "Huh," I said, "That isn't fantasy; Russell read it and said so." "I have an order for it right here in my pocket," said the dealer, "for \$2.50, too." "But it isn't fantasy." "It is too." "Have you ever read it?" "Well, no, but I know it's fantasy."

And there is the stupid little volume which I unwittingly thrust into the limelight. The Herb Moon it is called, and I paid a dime for it to find out what it was. It turned out to be non-fantasy and boringly unreadable to boot, but I carelessly stuck it back on my shelf instead of tossing it in the ashcan. At least two local collectors saw it on my shelves and promptly bought copies for themselves--Alva Rogers and Forrest Ackerman. When I hootingly asked them about it they answered almost identically, "But you have it in your collection; it must be fantasy." Rogers dumped his copy on my sayso. But

a couple of years later I was over at Ackerman's, and there in an honored place on his shelves sat The Herb Moon. I remonstrated with him gently. "But of course it is fantasy," he said plaintively. "I've seen it in several local collections." I told him how and why and where he had seen it, but he just shook his head dumbly like a great wounded animal. I'll bet The Herb Moon is in his collection to this day unless this article has caused him to discard it.

No, I guess I'm a heretic. I refuse to give shelfroom year after year to an unread book, unless of course it is a reference volume like a dictionary.

If the idea is just to collect books, it seems to me that the smart thing to do would be to rip off the bindings, glue them around blocks of wood, put a cheap bindery job on the texts and sell them for reading copies so as to finance the further purchase of books for one's collection.

No, I guess that wouldn't work either. From a technical point of view, this process would probably impair the sacred mintness of one's collection. Still, if one buys a new book he dare not read it, for then it wouldn't be mint, and according to Mr. Peeples, who says he is a recognised authority in the field, it would be worthless. If it's been read, it's a reading copy, isn't it? But fortunately, the true collector does not need to read, nor has he the time, even if he had the inclination and (whatever it) the intelligence. It is his sacred duty to spend all his spare time either hunting for other books, showing his collection to someone else, or looking at someone else's collection.

That's important! Just think how many precious and unreplaceable copies of The Outsider were totally destroyed, ruined, lost to posterity; simply because some collector was derelict in his duty and let a reader get his filthy, mintness destroying eyes and paws on them.

But cheer up, you book collectors. None of you I have yet known have sunk quite as far as two record collectors of whom I have heard. There is a man in Chicago who has a complete, mint collection of every Louis Armstrong record ever released commercially. Nary a record has been sullied by a needle, and they are being preserved in a fireproof vault while the owner is busily accumulating a duplicate set for playing purposes. And there is the local collector, perhaps apocryphal, who collects only the labels, carefully breaking the rest of the record from around them.

At the risk of offending the sensitive souls of true collectors, I will take my unalterable stand that books are made for one purpose and one alone--to be read. An unread book is a wasted book; it might as well never have existed.

It is a cliché, but very true, that a book worth reading is worth rereading, and a book worth rereading is worth owning. And that in my own humble opinion is the sole justification of book collecting. All this pother about fly-leaves and editions and mintness and dust-jackets and rebinds is just so much malarkey.

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Once over lightly cyrus condra

Here we are, opening the second memorable Wild Hair session, (unless we decide to call it the Six Fingered session) for sheer spontaneity the outstanding FAPA event of the year, and as I sit enjoying the gayety, wit and humor flowing from the lips of my associates and from their typers it occurs to me that you, the readers of this insurgent fanzine, are entitled to a look at some of the creators thereof. We may even let you look at all of them. And then, again, we may take it easy on you....

At the moment, Roger Phillips Graham, professional writer extraordinary, editor of Amazing's fanzine review column, man of many identities--but why go on?--is sitting at the other end of this table, pounding his typer like mad; Laney, behind me is alternately banging the keys of his machine and bellowing with laughter; Stibbard and Rotsler are sitting quiet as mice in the other room, sketching furiously, while Burbee's fingers are producing such a clatter from his typer that it sounds like a super machine gun. Material for this masterwork is pouring forth in tremendous volume. Burbee, Laney and Rotsler are three of the most active FAPAns imaginable; the activity requirement of eight pages a year, so onerous a burden for some of the rest of us, is as nothing to their fertile minds, for each of them always has something to say and the ability to say it; a most enviable faculty.

These are fine, feckless characters, these associates of mine and, lest this load of egoboo go to their fannish heads, let us understand right now that I write about them not because they are particularly worthy of comment (which, of course, they are) but because, at the moment, I can't think of anything else to write about. So here is a word picture of the creators of this fanzine, plus a few thoughts of my own as to what makes them tick.

Charles E. Burbee has a fairly easy time of it, as far as producing his quota of activity is concerned, because he's a crusader. Charles is a man of impeccable character, chaste intellect and flawless deportment, who is in a state of constant shock because of the absence of perfection in the conduct of the world at large and his present associates in particular, and would like to improve us all. He has become a crusader for better manners, better morals and the wider

application of the Golden Rule (sometimes known as the Doctrine of Brotherly Love) and, being a crusader, has much to say whether anyone is listening or not. Hence his prodigious literary output which, for sheer wit, humor and interest, is unsurpassed in all our organization. (He'll love this).



The physical Burbee, the Charles E. Burbee whom I see with my eyes and hear with my ears, may be described as being approximately six feet tall and of slender build, with the most unruly mop of curly black hair ever seen away from the ears of a black cocker spaniel. His voice is rather deep, well modulated, distinct and pleasant. He speaks not in sentences, but in clauses, pausing perceptibly wherever a punctuation mark would be indicated, but without lowering his voice--an infectious trick that has noticeably affected

my own pattern of speech. Inasmuch as his hair, eyes and skin are extremely dark, in the manner of certain Gallic types, I suspect him of being some sort of Frenchman. In support of this opinion it should be observed that he lives on Normandie Avenue, rolls his own cigarettes like the Frenchman whose picture is on the Zig-Zag cigarette paper package, and restrains himself with difficulty from kissing people on both cheeks when moved by the more profound emotions of gratitude or admiration.

So long as human frailty is rampant, and Burbee stands above it, his typer will never run dry. (May we all continue sinners!)

At the opposite extreme we have F. Towner Laney. Surely there never lived another man so unconcerned with the iniquities of his bretheren. Whether his fellow man is saint or sinner is a matter of utmost indifference to Laney. All he wants to know is, "Are you listenin'?"--and even that concern is more or less rhetorical.



Like his namesake, St. Francis of Assisi, he will discourse to the very birds in absence of a better audience, for Towner has much to say about ships and shoes and sealing wax; he lives in a universe crammed with interesting facts, and every one worthy of prolonged comment. His greatest misfortune is that he was born too late to write and publish the Encyclopaedia Britannica--a task for which he is eminently qualified and would most certainly have enjoyed. Indeed so catholic is his range of interests that he sometimes (quite innocently) prattles about subjects better left undiscussed, so that Charles

E. Burbee has rather helplessly characterized him as "The dirtiest talking man I've ever known."

The outward husk that is known as F.T.L. is as much of an individual as the neural structure whose responses to stimuli have become famous across the land. Also a six-footer, he is much lighter in coloring than Burbee, and slightly heavier. He is intense where Burbee is relaxed, that is to say, all over. But chiefest of his physical characteristics is the Laney voice and, more particularly, the Laney laugh, which is known wherever sound waves can travel. When Towner speaks, you will listen. When he laughs, a cataract of decibels pours forth, all Nature reels and the very stones of the walls of Jericho, buried in the dust of years, tremble in anticipation of a new cataclysm. Whether it is significant or not, the technology of soundproofing has attained tremendous stature in the lifetime of this remarkable man.

So long as Laney can respond to any sort of stimulus, his typer will not rust and we will continue to be amused and edified.

William Rotsler would be surprised to learn that the problem of eight pages per year even exists for other people. This extremely talented artist whose work is constantly in demand as a leaven and spice for the pulp produced by his less-gifted fellows-in-FAFA, pours forth his sketches as from a horn of plenty so that, without apparent effort, he measures his yearly output by the ream and bale.



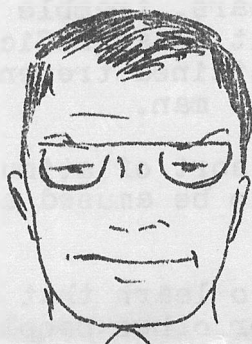
To see the man himself, after first having formed an opinion from an examination of his work, is a bit of a surprise. The grace and sweep of his artwork imply that the man ought to conform to the popular picture of the true esthete; that he should be a delicate structure of fragile limbs and airy movement. Actually, Rotsler is a man of almost formidable appearance. Of medium height, he is stocky and broad-shouldered in build with thick, strong limbs, fists like oversized door-knobs and a jaw like the grill of a two-ton Dodge truck. He moves with the leisurely assurance of an amiable bull-dozer and has the same pleasant air of absolute dependability. He is good-looking and, for sheer likability, has few equals.

So long as Rotsler continues to be managed and exploited by his fellow FAFAns, such as Laney, Burbee and myself, his output will continue to be fabulous and we will all live in a state of pleasant satisfaction.

Art Widner is sitting back behind me here, wearing a pair of checkered pants, some other articles of clothing that I won't bother to itemize, and a worried look. I haven't known Art very long, so I don't know what the spiritual Widner, the real man, is like. "What sort of a fellow are you, Art?" I said. "Don't bother me," said Art Widner. "I'm trying to write something for this fanzine."

"But I want to write something about you for my article," I said.

"I have broad mental horizons, a sensitive fannish face, and view the past, present and future as one continuous scroll," said Widner, abstractedly. "Now will you get to hell out of here and let me write?"



shot session.

As you can see from the above, Widner is a man of slightly less than average height with thinning black hair, dark eyes and a darkish, ruddy complexion. Nearly of Rotsler's build, he is much faster in his movements and reactions and is famous for his prodigious appetite. He ingests and disburses energy at a furious rate, has a quick and penetrating wit and is, all things considered, a good guy to have around a bull or one-

Stanley Stibbard is sketching away on the davenport in the next room. "What kind of a guy are you, Stan," I asked. "Sydney," he said. "The name is Sydney Stibbard--Please!" "Well, what are you like?" "Ask Burbee," he said. "He sees me as I am." and went back to his stencils.

"Burbee," I said, "What kind of fellow is this Stanley Stibbard?"

"Sydney!" insisted a voice from across the room.

"Uh ----- Stibbard," mused Burbee, "is exactly the way you see him now. Gay, handsome, dashing and a master--yes, a veritable master--of the prattfall. And he has a putty nose." And he resumed his typing.



"I shall say that Stanley or, as he seems to insist, Sydney Stibbard is of medium height, fairly slender, reasonably good looking and has a resonant voice in addition to the qualities you have enumerated," I said to Burbee. "Have you any further suggestions?"

That was five or ten minutes ago. Just now, as Charles E. Burbee's nimble fingers were flying over his machine,

he must have caught up with the question. At any rate, without pausing from his work, he suddenly rumbled in a strong Southern accent, "Ah wouldn' give a nickel for a man who didn't have a putty nose!" and then sank back into the unreverberate blackness of fandom.

It's a bit difficult to reduce the incredible character of Roger Phillips Graham to imperishable print because at this very moment he is standing beside me, reading what I write, with one hand behind his back in a manner that impels me to utmost caution. I pause and essay a friendly grin at the subject of this sketch. "Go on," he says, noncommittally. So here we go.

Rog is the biggest of us here, both physically and in reputation. Standing two inches over six feet in height, he weighs slightly more than 200 pounds, all of which (he confesses) is brain. His voice is quite deep, his hair a dark brown and he has a trick of talking just enough to keep a conversation going, but without making any attempt to monopolize it--a trait that thoroughly endears him to Burbee, Laney, Rotsler and all those others of us who love to hear our own voices. He has a puckish sense of humor that manifests itself in dry, seriously delivered statements whose implications begin to strike the listener a minute or so later.

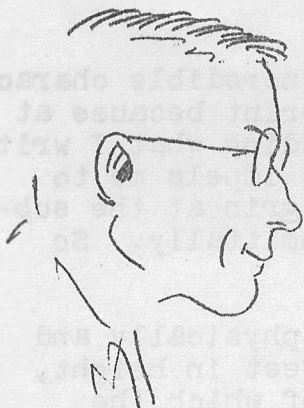


R.P.G. is not a native Californian and arrived here recently in the midst of a spell of unusual weather. After a hasty visit to the nearest clothing store in search of parka, snow-shoes, skis, etc, he has been enjoying our balmy sunshine and refreshing breezes to the utmost.

"So many people come to California to die," he remarks. "I'm beginning to understand that, now.....it's so much easier here...."

And that takes care of the more active creators of this fanzine, except for myself---

This is Burbee taking over. Condra was just about to start writing about THE MAN CONDRA, and I thought it would be better if I took over and said all the nice things myself. Coming from another person, they'd sound so much better. That's what I told Condra. He didn't believe me, or something, so I called our amiable bulldozer Rotsler over, and the amiable bulldozer dragged Condra away and at this very moment is offering to bet Condra that Condra's head is harder than an eggshell. "I'll bet a dollar," I can hear the amiable bulldozer saying, "that I can't, no matter how hard I press, crush your head like an eggshell." "I'm not a betting man!" Condra is shouting.

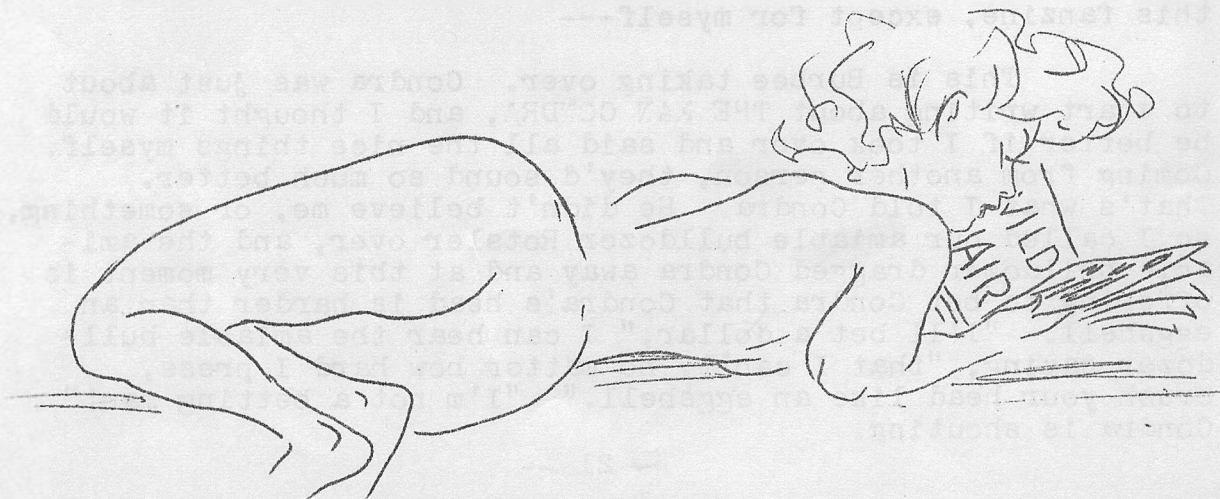


Oh, well. To get to THE MAN CONDRA. He is either a small man who gives the appearance of being big, or is an exceptionally large man who has successfully compressed himself into a medium build. GI haircut--he got it in the army and has kept hold of it ever since. Glasses of normal make. A ready smile (displayed frequently as he tells his stories), a deep resonant voice that can pontificate on any subject and takes twice as long to reach the point as any voice present. A self-assured manner. Maybe it's his courtroom manner--he is studying law. I think that Cyrus B. could walk into a

cathedral or saunter up an alley smoking a cigarette and look just like he belonged there. He has a smooth personality (holdover from the Bedside Manner he picked up while studying medicine) that enables him to make fast friends with anybody from fans on up. He likes everybody. He likes Laney, he likes Evans, he likes Ackerman and, God Almighty, he even likes Walter J. Daugherty! He used to like me, too, till I came along and insisted on writing this last paragraph for him.

Condra is back, having talked fast and furiously to anaesthetize the gambling instincts of his blood brother, Wm. (Killdozer) Roteler, to complete this sketch by making mention of the two non-contributing members of this group who have assisted us to the utmost, nevertheless.

A vote of heartfelt thanks is due to Cecile Laney (Mrs. F.T.L.) whose gracious welcome has been more than confirmed by her subsequent hospitality; and a welcome is extended to guest-of-the-evening Katherine Garrett, who has pleasantly and unbelievably stood by and watched this mad horde create this fabulous fanzine as though it were an every day occurrence.



BANNING'S LEADING FAPA MEMBER

by F. Towner Laney

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"Does Miller really exist--or is he another of Don Wilson's pen names?" Coslet, MESH #8.

Howard Miller is the leading FAPA member of Banning, California. This statement, which he would certainly not deny if on oath, is common knowledge to all of us in Southern California; and, we had assumed, to everyone else through the length and breadth of our land. But if one does not know, perhaps others too may not be conversant with the true story of Howard Miller.

Howard Miller, I can say with assurance, really does exist. He is a 6-foot, 180 pound, character--looks like a high school football player, and may be readily recognized by his voice.

It is difficult to describe the voice of Howard Miller. In the first place, it is an adult voice, deep and fully changed. It did not break into a falsetto even when Burbee showed Miller the picture of Everett which always makes Al Ashley squeak and twitter like a church mouse.

But still, it is a voice to hear with awe. If it were operated electronically, one might say that the volume control was on the blink. He will be talking in a normal, window-shaking, conversational bellow, and all of a sudden the volume increases and increases and increases and you jam your hands over your ears and then all of a sudden it will fade out in mid-word, and he is again talking in a normal, window-shaking, conversational bellow.

And this is not all. He seems to have little control over the pitch of this titanic voice of his. He will be talking in a rumbling bass and all of a sudden--whoops, he is a tenor.

There is apparently no positive correlation between the changes in volume and in pitch. He may be at full volume bass, medium volume tenor, comparatively soft baritone, or any other combination that is mathematically possible. The interplay of pitch and volume set up exciting cross rhythms and stuff vaguely analogous to boogie-woogie or Balinese primitive music. And every once in a while he will get his controls jammed and heterodyne to beat hell for a minute.

It is easy to see that Howard Miller is a man one will remember. I met him over at Burbee's nearly a year ago, and it is just as though it were yesterday.

For this reason, I had quite a shock when I was at Burbee's birthday party last October. Here sat Howard Miller, his voice in full play.

Howard," I said.

"Hiyah,

The fellow stopped talking and stared at me suspiciously. "I don't believe I know you," he said. "Do you Believe in Shaverism?"

"Oh Towner," said Burbee, "I want you to meet Don Wilson."

"Don, this is F. Towner Laney."

"Oh Laney, I've ALWAYS wanted to meet you," gushed Don Wilson. "Here is the rough outline of a ten thousand word article I want you to do for EGO BEAST and send to me tomorrow and have you read the latest Amazing and I hope Miller didn't make too big a fool of himself when you met him--he always makes a fool of himself unless I am there to help him and say while you are at it will you autograph these fanzines for me they have stuff by you in them and I want a set of Acolytes and oh boy do I like to meet big name fans."

"Uh," I said eloquently.

I studied that guy all the rest of the evening, and the more I listened to him the more I knew it was Howard Miller in disguise. "Hey Burb," I whispered when I got a chance "Is that guy really Don Wilson?"

"Sure he is."

"But he looks and sounds exactly like Howard Miller."

"That's how I know it is Don Wilson," said Burbee.

Later in the evening, Burbee came to me. "Say Towner, have you ever seen Wilson and Miller together?"

It shortly developed that neither of us had. And we've done a lot of thinking on the subject since.

There is no question about it, none whatever. Don Wilson and Howard Miller are one and the same person.

Look at the evidence, and decide for yourself.

Do you remember a FAPA post-mailing called PREMONITION OF DISASTER? It came out last spring and dealt with the menace of Shaverism and how FAPA had been sold out to Palmer. This was supposedly published by Howard Miller, but microscopic examination shows conclusively that it was identical with all "Don Wilson" publications--identical in typing, paper, ink, and mimeograph impression.

Then a very few days later, Burbee got a typed letter signed Howard Miller disclaiming the whole thing as a merry jest.

A few days after that, Burbee got a handwritten letter from Howard Miller telling him that Wilson was writing letters and signing his name to them and to disregard all letters from Howard Miller unless written entirely in longhand--for he, Howard Miller, had no typewriter.

Then came in the same mail letters from both Wilson and Miller--both typed. Wilson said PREMONITIONS OF DISASTER was a joke. Miller said it was in earnest, but to disregard his previous warning about typed letters from him because he had just bought a typewriter.

And here is the real kicker. The typing and handwriting of ALL these letters is/was microscopically identical.

It so happens that I have a non-fan friend in Banning. While I was able to shrug off the episode of the identical typing and handwriting as one of those things, this thing of meeting Wilson and finding him identical with Miller simply disturbed the hell out of me. So I wrote to my friend and

enlisted his aid as a private eye.

He went to 1421 West George St. Miller was there, but he was not interested in a club subscription to THE AMERICAN BOY, VOGUE, LOOK, THE AMERICAN KENNEL, and EVERYBODY'S POULTRY DIGEST.

My man then went to 495 North Third Street, which turned out to be just around the corner. He was met by a very lovely, white-haired old lady who laughed and laughed when he asked for Don Wilson.

"That's my grandson," she gasped, "but his name is really Howard Miller. He uses the name of Don Wilson for business purposes. Now don't you tell him I told you, but if you want to see him, he lives just around the corner on George Street. 1421.

At this point, my friend heard a hoarse bellow coming through the back yard. "Gran! Gran! Any mail yet today?"

"But isn't there a Don Wilson?" asked my friend hurriedly.

"Land no! Here comes Howard now."

And my friend fled. He had already met Miller once that day.

So you see? Coslet is a shrewd boy. One can hardly blame him for thinking the extremely active Wilson was the real person.

But as one thinks about it, the whole thing seems amazingly logical.

Here is this lone fan, isolated in this tiny town in the California hinterland. He alone, of all Banningites, knows what is meant by . . . Kimball Kinnison. He alone knows what it is to pilot a spaceship, to flit through time, to delve into the mighty secrets of the atom. Small wonder that he was forced to create for himself a peer.

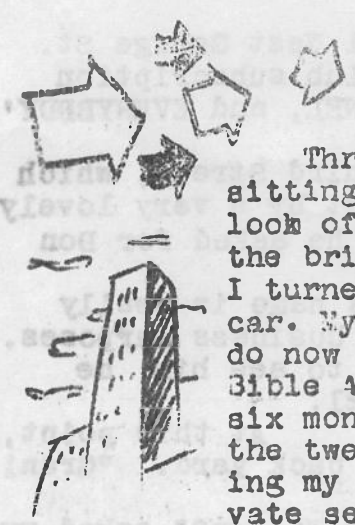
For they must have scoffed and derided when he strode through the streets of Banning, talking to himself. But now he had a devastating retort. "What do you mean, talking to myself? I'm talking to the coeditor of my new fanzine."

And Miller is such an active fan. It is a mere nothing for him to keep up two memberships in FAPA.

And it is so convenient to have an uncomplaining scape-goat on which to lay the onus of one's mistakes. If Howard has had any doubt as to the sanity of any statement he has wished to make, he has put the dubious item out under the name of Don Wilson. When he is sure how something is going to be received by fandom, then of course he comes out under his real name. The nicest part of it is that the unkind thoughts held by many about Don Wilson don't hurt any one, since there is no Don Wilson.

As people from time to time suspected the true secret of Miller/Wilson, "they" would promptly put on a great show of disagreement, as in the matter of the PREMONITIONS OF DISASTER.

It would have been better if Miller had taken more pains with his alter-ego, attempted to make him talk and think differently than himself. As it is, "Wilson" is little more than a faint carbon copy of Miller. But even so, this is the greatest deception since Jack Speer created John Bristol.




THE HESITANT ANGEL

Through the dust filmed window I saw the five men sitting in a semicircle before the large fireplace, a look of peace and contentment on their angelic faces, the bright flames casting shadows about them cozily. I turned away and made my way back to the highway to my car. My mission was accomplished. All there was left to do now was make my report to my employers, the National Bible Association. And what a report. It had all begun six months before. I had been sitting in my office on the twenty-third floor of the 185 Tabash Building thumbing my - I mean twiddling my thumbs, when Cloe, my private secretary came in unexpectedly.

There's a "ister Flaumbaum to see you - bub. She said with a knowing leer. Zipping up - I mean jumping up with one swift, flow of muscles, I said, show him in - uh - you.

Little did I know that this meeting was to be the beginning of one of the most Wild Hair-raising adventures of my colorful career as the greatest detective of all time.



I'm Mr. Flaumbaum, the grey haired gentleman said when he had seated himself and accepted the cigar I had been saving for over a year in the hopes I would have a customer someday. I understand from your ad that you are the greatest detective in the world. That's right, I said.


Two months later after a wild dash across the continent, interrupted by a three week stopover at Reno where I tried to run my advance fee up to where it would make the job worth while, I found myself browsing over the books in the largest Bible store in Hollywood. I had been browsing there for three days. Eight hours a day, too.

Suddenly the clerk gave me the high sign. At once I alerted my Amazing senses. (There I got Amazing into this.) The man who had just come in was perhaps the most pious appearing fellow I had ever met. Handsome, noble appearing, intellectual, I could see the light of the Crusades in his eyes - the flames of campfire meetings and Evangelism.


Yet there was that air of mystery I had been warned about - the poker-faced expression, the tense suppression of inner feelings. Here was the beginning of the trail.

How many Bibles do you have in stock, Mr. Cleanwat

BY
"Roy"
PHILLIPS




er? the man of mystery asked crisply. Oh, quite a few, Mr. Clearwater the clerk said. Well, about how much do all of them cost - with my usual discount, of course? the man of mystery asked crisply. Well I was expecting you so I took inventory, Mr. Clearwater replied. They run to about three hundred and twenty-four dollars and seven cents including the tax...




I followed along behind the truck with its load of Bibles as it crept slowly up the steep mountain road toward the summit. The smooth engine under the hood of my car purred smoothly while my car crept slowly along in low, staying just far enough behind the truck to keep out of sight.

My thoughts turned back to the long talk I had had with Mr. Flaumbaum about the mystery of the zooming sales of Bibles. At first the syndicate had thought that Christianity was booming. Then sales of Bibles had mounted, year after year, until there had been almost five Bibles published and sold for every living person on Earth.



The zooming sales of Bibles had been considered proof that Christianity was growing on popularity. It had been the great argument that had brought millions of faltering agnostics into the Fold. All over the world Bibles had been sold by the millions, and people had been convinced that it was really something. Why not? Look at all the Bibles being sold.



So Mr. Flaumbaum had hired me to find out how come there were more horses than people - I mean, how come more Bibles were being sold than there were people. And here I was on a lonely mountain road behind a truckload of Bibles being carted into the wilds of Wild Horse Mesa - or someplace.

The truck turned in finally onto a road that was nothing more than two ruts running through the trees. I followed on foot after hiding my car.

The cabin was apparently deserted when the truck pulled up. The mysterious Bible buyer unloaded the Bibles and carted them inside. Meanwhile I made a wide circle and crept up to the rear of the cabin. I had just reached the back of the cabin when another car arrived, dislodging several pious appearing mysterious strangers. Mysterious? Not any more. They were atheists who spent all their money buying up Bibles and burning them. They had been the ones to zoom Christianity in their efforts to wipe it out. The more they burned the more were published. The more published the more Christianity flourished. I watched them start the fire, said tsktsk. End.

WATCH YOUR MONEY!

BY F. TOWNER LANEX

The money market has recently become flooded with very dangerous counterfeits of the new issue of 20 Ack bank notes, and you must accept all double timebinders with caution.

Since the paper of the counterfeits is genuine--stolen from the Official NFFF Engraving Office at Fargo, North Dakota--these bills crinkle and feel just like the real thing. The color of the ink is also identical, a warm and fragrant spaceship brown.

The only way these counterfeits can be identified is through slight differences in the design.

Bear in mind that there are no phoneys of the first issue of double-timebinders. This issue is the one showing on the obverse the radiant Kimball Win-nison, sitting on the famous alabaster water closet at Tendril Towers reading a copy of the Timebinder. In the border of the reverse, instead of conventional wreaths and floral designs, is the interlocked chain of Ultra Weird Artists. This is the issue which was suppressed because the counterfoil was in the shape of a grey moustache, instead of the less obvious tesseract. But all of these are genuine, so if you have any twenty ack bills with Kim on them you can turn them in to K. Martin Carlson at the Vault in Moorhead, and he will give you crisp new bills of the current issue.

The issue that was counterfeited was the new one. On the obverse appears a glorified portrait of Richard S. Shaver, which, upon being turned upside down, gives an optical illusion of the face of Forrest J Ackerman in childbirth--the whole being symbolic of Ackerman's boycott giving birth to a new and revitalised Amazing Stories, with the biggest circulation any sfzine has yet attained.

In each corner of the border appears a vignette of deep fannish import, as follows: upper left, a mint copy of the first issue of Amazing; lower left, a spewing mimeograph rampant on Skeeter's chest (this being symbolic of one of fandom's most sacred rites); upper right, a mint copy of the book edition of The Moon Pool; lower right, a symbolic hyena with the face of Walter J. Daugherty crouching with its claws rending the flesh of a dead female figure labelled the LASFS.

In the counterfeit notes, the copy of the Moon Pool is the edition in which the villain has a Russian name, while in the original the edition with the Teutonic villain is featured. Thus the counterfeits are difficult to identify at a glance, and can in fact only be distinguished through the use of an X-ray, since the book of course is closed.

The reverse, as you know, is a reproduction of that famous scene on the lawn of the Summer Palace at Battle Creek. Leda is the comely boy in the center of the picture, depicted languidly holding a bottle of Chanel #5 in one hand. Tsar Everett I, despairing of gain-

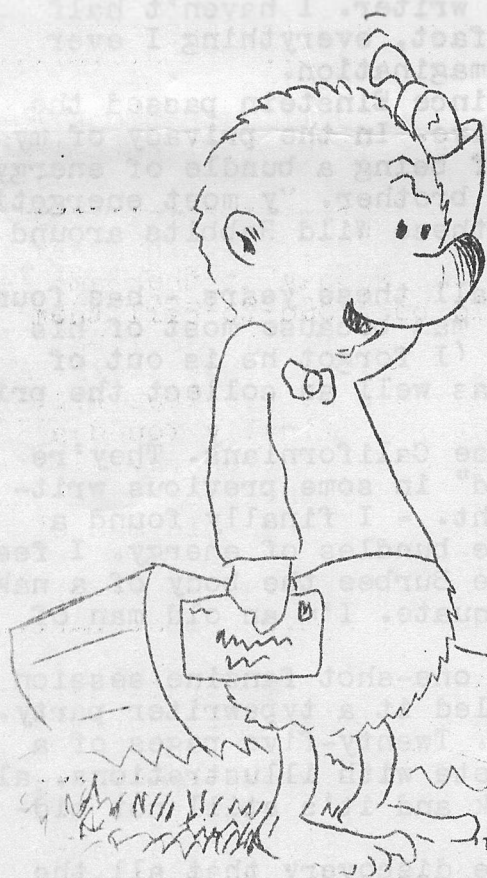
ing his ends otherwase, has through the application of semantics and timebinding turned himself into a swan, and is permitting the Boy Leda to stroke his neck. (Obviously it is but a short evolutionary step from a swan to a goose.) In the background, hanging onto his pose of saintly patience with an obvious effort, is the Tsarina, Al-freda Laverne.

Now.

The counterfeited plates for the reverse are photographically accurate in every detail. But each counterfeit examined to date has more or less smudging, or spotting--almost as if the counterfeiter had studied this inspiring scene until it did something to him.

So check your double timebinders. Do not allow yourself to be mulcted by a crass forgery.

A FAN IS A KINDLY OLD MAN WHO USES APPLIED SEMANTICS TO BEND YOUNG BOYS TO HIS WILL.



DISH YERE MAN BY
DE NAME OF TIGAH
BURBEE GOT A BUNCH
OF BISCIT BATTER
FO' BRAINS ...!

HE AINT BEEN GETTIN' THE NOO YORK PAPERS!



JIVE SESSION

- ROGER P. GRAHAM

Uh - I'm supposed to write something. Uh - I'm an old man now. Just left my 39th year last week. I'm a little dazed by all the energy unleashed around me tonight. Madly typing maniacs - madly sketching fan artists - the deafening trip hammer sounds of typers being rapidly pounded to pieces.

I don't even know where I am. They say it's - I can't remember the name of the town but it's in California - I think Alhambra?

"Where's my name in their?" Burbee just wailed. (I mean there, not their.)

I'm confused. I haven't had my coffee for several hours. (I'm an addict, you ~~don't~~ know. Didn't you know?) (Another insane peal of laughter in the background. Gad, how these boys can laugh.

I can remember when I used to be able to laugh like that. I was insane then, too. (Note for semanticists - that's a two valued statement.) I was younger then. Full of - well - not vinegar exactly.

Strange how all these boys of the insurgent section of the south seem to think I'm an imaginative writer. I haven't half the imagination any of them possess. In fact, everything I ever wrote was the truth as I see it - not imagination.

You know, everything is relative since Einstein passed the law of relativity. Even energy is relative. In the privacy of my own workshop I can attain an illusion of being a bundle of energy, and thus put out the work. But here - oh brother. My most energetic moments are sheer lethargy compared to these Wild Rabbits around me.

Laney has a nice house and - after all these years - has found a very nice wife. He's obviously a poor man because most of his books are second hand, not mint copies. (I forgot he is out of fandom now and hence permitted to read as well as collect the printed word.)

Boy I sure feel slow around all these Californians. They're bundles of energy. Did I say "undirected" in some previous writing? I was wrong. It's directed all right. - I finally found a word to describe how I feel around these bundles of energy. I feel - somebody just said, "I'm going to give Burbee the body of a naked woman." - inadequate. Yes, I feel inadequate. I'm an old man of forty. I can't keep up the pace.

I've finally discovered what a true one-shot fanzine session is. Mrs. Laney gave me the key. She called it a typewriter party. It's actually a typewriter jive session. Twenty-five pages of a fanzine turned out in one evening complete with illustrations, all composed and created since seven o'clock and it's still not midnight.

One of my greatest surprises was the discovery that all the big insurgent Names are human. Though a disappointment, in a way, it was a pleasant surprise to find that, as we say at the Sam Houston Institute of Technology, "I would be proud to call them my friends." Laying my school letters aside, I really do like them. I hope I'm here for Wild Hare session number four.

THE INSURGENT ELEMENT LOOKS AT SHANGRI-LA #10



CHARLES BURBEE:

I have seen Shangri-La #10. As editor of Shangri-La Affaires for 22 issues, I was sent a copy of this magazine so that I might shake my head in shame and say: "God, look what can be done with cooperative effort." I did shake my head. At the expense and at the "cooperative" angle. It is typical of Daugherty publications; cleanly mimeographed, with lithographs and even edging--and dull as hell. WJD's idea of "cooperation" (as evidenced by his mis-handling of the Pacifoon) is for him to have carte blanche, and for everyone else to "cooperate" with him, i.e., to do all the work. He didn't do anything that I know of....somebody else did the writing, the even edging, the stencilling, the mimeography, the assembly, and the addressing and mailing. Oh yes, he did make a profit off the "hard to get" 24-lb paper. But that is about all.

I shook my head at the terrible cost of the magazine. \$50 for 100 copies. I figured out that I could have published perhaps six magazines for this price. I often did it. I did 22 issues of Shangri-La Affaires, so I know whereof I speak. My cost sheet would have read like this: 18 stencils at 12¢, \$2.16; 1350 sheets of 24-lb paper (at \$3.30 a ream) \$3.50; mail 100 copies at 2¢, \$2.00. Distribute 30-odd copies free in the club. Have 20 copies left over for later sale via the back-issue route. Total cost, including 50¢ worth of ink, about \$8.16. That cost is for 150 copies.

Aside: Kelly Paper Company, where WJD buys all his paper, informs me that 24-lb paper, instead of being "hard-to-get" is in plentiful supply, and has been for the last two years, and furthermore, has never at any time cost more than \$1.35 a ream top. The club paid WJD \$2.50 per ream for four reams. I seem to see a profit there of \$4.60. (Actually, 6 reams @ \$2½ adds to a rakeoff of \$6/90--f1)

Aside: Now that he's spent \$50 for one issue of the club mag, how are the other guys going to come near that figure? The club can't afford to pay that much for a regularly appearing magazine, not and sell it for 15¢ a copy, a dead loss of 35¢ each to start off with. Of course, as he told me, "I don't care if the club never publishes another magazine. That isn't my worry. My only responsibility is seeing that this issue gets published." That's what he said. I don't know what he meant, but that is what he said.

TOWNER LANEY:

Making critical remarks about this imposing fanzine is very difficult. Not, I hasten to add, from any lack of flaws in

Shangri La #10, but simply because the hive of LASFS drones and the Queen Mother, Walter J. Daugherty, are so proud of it. And to those who know, the simplest comment covers the whole ground. All else is redundancy. The LASFS gave Walter J. Daugherty "a complete carte blanche" and the result is every bit as fuggheaded as one might expect when that mighty fugghead is given free rein to his fuggheadedness without let or hindrance. Unlike most Daugherty projects, the magazine did come out. Evidently Ackerman and Evans put out Shangri La in the same way they did the real work for the Pacificon.

There

was nothing really bad in Shangri La #10--it's just that there was nothing good. The one genuinely interesting item in the entire \$50 worth is Alan Hershey's article on Los Alamos, and much of its interest is inherent in the subject matter covered.

A good writer can take a dull topic and make it readable, entertaining, and interesting. A poor writer can take the most fascinating subject in the world and put you to sleep with it. Give a poor writer a poor topic, mix it with the braying voice of Walter J. Daugherty behind the poor guy as he types it, and the result is the sort of junk that comprises most of the magazine...a witch's brew comprised of equal portions of uninspired fuggheadedness, uninformed ~~xxx~~ illiteracy, and an overdose of barbitol.

But the Chinese ahkrat was cute.

---ooOoo---

CY CONDRA:

It seems that each of us is expected to comment on the latest Shaggy. Personally, I find this a rather difficult thing to do. I rather feel that the less said about Shaggy the better, for all concerned, but if I must comment, then it will be as follows:

I think that Walter J. Daugherty has done a truly remarkable job in making the recent Shaggy a model of mechanical good taste and publishing technique. WJD is one of the few amateur publishers (in fact, he's the only one of my acquaintance) who has both the equipment and the technical skill even to attempt to present an amateur publication so near to professional standards. But he can't do the whole job by himself, because mechanical technique is only half of the publishing battle, and not the most important half at that.

It is the task of those who write for the magazine to breathe life into the prepared structure. In my opinion, Shaggy is a bit of a corpse. All the details are there, all the mechanical things that go to make up a good fan mag. But that elusive, imponderable element that makes you run to the mailbox or climb into the car and drive 18 miles to the club just to get the latest issue because you can't live without it, is not there.

My criticism of Shaggy ~~ix~~ today is simply that the old creative zest, once shared by the editor and writers alike, is gone. Today the mag needs more humor, more imagination; more spontaneity of the type that once made the LASFS mag the second best fanzine in the country. That was quite a record, when you stop to think about it. It's a record that the present approach of the club can never hope to equal.

?? WILL THE NFFF EVER COLLECT THE PACIFICON MONEY FROM DAUGHERTY ??

I TALKED WITH A MAN FROM THE FUTURE - YES, I REALLY DID!

BY ART
WIDNER

He came just the way i always knew he would come. I was sitting there, admiring my copy of "The Moon is Down", which i had been fortunate enuf to obtain that afternoon -- Mint! Dust Jacket! (& best of all) Pages Uncut! That was proof positive that no heretical, misbegotten disgrace to the Name of Fandom had violated the virgin pages with evil, curious eyes. Rapacious eyes, seeking to desecrate the sacred writing by actually (ugh!) reading it! Of course, certain destructively (as opposed to constructively) minded fen have hinted that this book was not fantasy, but what of it? It has "Moon" in the title. That's enuf for me.

At first, when i noticed the shelves dimming & wavering a little before my gaze, i mistook it for an incipient orgasm, & concentrated harder on the more sublime aspects of owning 6,969 books, all absolutely MINT! MINT! - i tell you - hah huh, hah huh, hah huh -- i began to breath deeply, to aid the oncoming ecstacy.

However, altho the shimmering grew more distinct & began to take on a greenish hue tinged with brown, the proper accompanying sensations were not forthcoming. I reluctantly realized that i was actually seeing something.

Slowly the form grew more solid, & at last he stepped from the beautiful translucent cube of green & brown to stand before me. I knew instantly, of course, exactly what he was. He was a Man from the Future, who had appeared before me as the only being in this barbaric world who would possibly be able to understand him -- the only one who comprehended the true significance of it all.

"Do not be afraid," he began....

"I'm not," i replied.

"Good. I knew i made the right choice --" he started again.

"Naturally."

He appeared a trifle annoyed at this, but proceeded: "I am a Man from --"

"-- the Future," i finished triumphantly.

He started slightly. "Ah -- yes," he replied. "A future, to be exact...."

"Oh yes," i said, "Stupid of me to forget that time is branched, parallel, & circular."

"Eh?" said the Man from the Future.

"You know," I said, "the way all the great authors have written about it."

"Uh -- I guess so," said the Man from the Future. "I have no doubt now that I have succeeded beyond my expectations, & actually contacted one of those mythical, fabulous being of the Shrouded Past; a living, breathing, Fayum! Not only that, but do I dare hope -- can it be...." his voice sank to an awed, hushed whisper, "Big - Name - Fayum?"

"Yuo," I said, tittle-tine a little. But discreetly, of course.

His eyes became a trifle glassy, but they did not lose their lustrous beauty. He was a beautiful man. Even more beautiful than - but let me try to describe him. Iron grey crew haircut, beautiful little grey mustache, downward slanting eyes -- but what's the use? How can one describe the indescribable? Such ethereal Loveliness is not to be captured with mere words.

He regained his composure & said, "Now as to the purpose of my visit. I cannot remain long, & it is my mission to obtain from you invaluable historical knowledge --"

"I understand," I said understandingly, then added in a kindly tone, "What do you wish to know?"

"Uk!" said the Man from the Future, then gasping a little, said hastily, "Do not concern yourself, Big Name Fayum, it was only a vagrant vortex crossing my time-track."

I nodded knowingly. "Of course."

"As a being of your powers," he continued respectfully, "We have very little knowledge of pre-Blowup civilization, and this is the first time we have been able to break thru the zone of intense radioactivity around the end of the, ah, 20th Century."

"Oh sure," I said, "I bet it raises all kinds of trouble with your time machines. Vortex warps, and all that."

He smiled to himself, no doubt recalling some humorous incident connected with a vortex warp, of which I shall never know.

"Um...yes," he replied. "Vortex-warps. But my time here is fleeting. Tell me about your world of 1949. First, what system of distribution do you use for providing citizens with the necessities and pleasures of life?"

"Duh-distribution?" I said, while I struggled to grasp this mighty concept of the future. Then, in a flash, my keen analytical brain and broad mental horizons (after a suitable cortico-thalamic pause, of course) came to the rescue.

"Oh!" I said, "You mean fanzines! Why, we just mail them, that's all."

"Fuh?" said the Man from the Future. "Forgive me, I have studied as much of your ancient modes of expression as were available, but of course there are great gaps in my knowledge. Could you explain further?"

"Well," I said, thinking that perhaps these men of the future might not be quite as super-intelligent as I had imagined, "We go down to the postoffice, put some stamps on them, & write on the outside the address of the person for whom the package that means so much to him is intended."

"Oh. Ah. Amazing," said the Man from the Future.

I leaped to my feet, simply blazing with fury. It was with great difficulty that I restrained myself from slapping his nasty old face. Then, remembering my semantic training, I brot myself under control.

Struggling to keep emotion out of my voice, I replied. "How dare you, sir! To mention that - that Thing -- right here in my very presence, right in my very own Room! But - but perhaps - it's barely possible that you come from such an unthinkable far future than the Colossal Infamy of It All has grown dim, altho I find it hard to believe."

He had retreated into his cube & placed his hand on a small lever, in readiness for flight.

I mastered myself with a deep sigh. "Come back," I said magnanimously, "I will forgive you, if you promise not to mention that Word again."

He stepped down apprehensively, & said, "I'm truly sorry. As you say, the uh - Infamy of Am-- uh, it, has grown dim." He added, half to himself, "Very dim."

Continuing, he said, "Perhaps we should go on to another subject, since ah -- distribution has such unpleasant connotations for you. Tell me, what are the relative positions of men & women in 1949?"

"We fen have nothing to do with women!" I snapped haughtily. "We regard such vulgar associations as beneath us, & only distracting to the pursuit of the advancement of fandon!"

His mouth fell open. "But - but how do you reproduce yourselves?" he spluttered.

"Reproduce? Oh, you mean get new members for the NFFF, Well, mostly from the letter columns of the prozines. Sometimes we even convert people."

"People?" he said. "What are people?"

"People," I said. ~~Neanderthals~~ "are members of an inferior race, the remnants of that outmoded relic of a species, homo sapiens. Creatures who are unable to appreciate the star-begotten fen, & our lofty aims & purposes. Miserable things who hardly notice us & reject our generous advice on how to run things."

"Remarkable," said the Man from the Future. "We had always believed that the the Neanderthals had become extinct some time before this date."

"Well," I said, "They're not exactly Neanderthals, but they're pretty close."

He had taken out a small black box from somewhere & pressed various combinations of studs as I talked. He finished recording my last statement, & looked up.

"Now," he said, "would you tell me what you do in the line of social activity & recreation?"

I looked at him pityingly. "Why, we write & publish of course. What else would we do?"

"I mean what do you do when you meet personally with your own kind?"

"Oh, we have a convention once a year."

"But what do you do at the conventions?"

"Well, we go there, & ah - sort of sit around & see what each other looks like, & then we go home & write about it for the next six months."

"I see," said the Man from the Future, but i don't think he really saw.

He glanced back into the cube at one of the dials, & went on hurriedly, "Do you still have a government al structure?" he asked.

"Oh sure," i beamed, happy that he had touched upon this subject so dear to my heart. "We have the NFFF." I leaned back contentedly for the next question.

"NFFF?" he said.

I sat bolt upright. It could not be. Such a thing just could - not - be! I could see how the evil Am----- could be forgotten in the far far, Future, but the NFFF! Dear, dear Klono's brazen testicles, not the NFFF!

I looked at him searchingly as i repeated in a whisper, "Yes, the NFFF...." I looked, agonized, for some sign of recognition on his face, but i looked in vain.

Only vague puzzlement was there. I broke down & wept.

When i recovered, he was gone.

