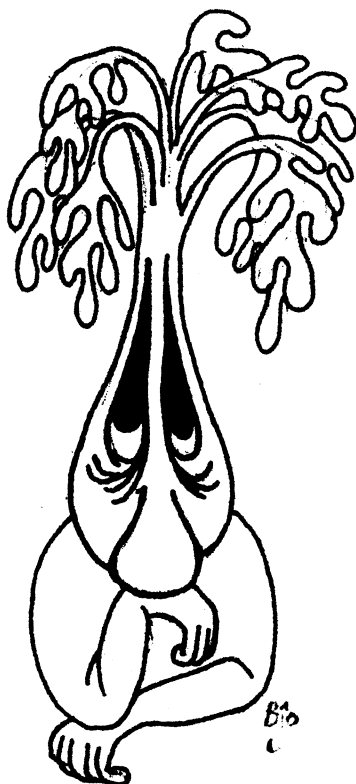


one prefers to contribute page after page of solid type, that's their choice. All I ask is that they take the time to make it legible.

And that's where I'm at as far as fanzines are concerned.

"Uneasily I recalled the tribute paid the speeches of former American President, Warren G. Harding. 'They leave the impression of an army of pompous phrases moving over the landscape in search of an idea: sometimes these meandering words would actually capture a straggling thought and bear it triumphantly, a prisoner in their midst, until it died of servitude and overwork.'"



"What 'm I doin' here?"

---early 60s pop song

Having disposed of the general question of fanzines, I hasten to point out that the preceding comments were not aimed at contributors to the last mailing. I'll be doing mailing comments later on, but on the whole I enjoyed the 34th mailing and found it to be generally quite readable.

One thing that did strike me, and gave me pause for thought, was the preponderance of discussion on politics and music, two topics in which I have little interest and even less knowledge. I found myself wondering if I'd have enough to say to interest my fellow apans, and whether they'd have enough to say to interest me. From the number of checkmarks in the borders of contributions to the last mailing, I'd say there's going to be little difficulty with the second part of my wondering. As for the first part, time, as they say, will tell.

I wasn't always out of touch with modern music, no sir. At one time I was the only person in my class who could name all four Kinks! But then I spent over two years without a radio, and got out of the habit of listening. I haven't bought a record in years (although watching late-night Buffalo TV I'm sometimes tempted to send away for a 6 album 'Leaders Of The Pack' or 'Old 'n Golden Goodies from The Fifties' that they advertize.) Does this disqualify me? (And can anyone identify that short line from a gag song out of my youth which titles this short section?)

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you

---If, Rudyard Kipling

Running a Worldcon requires a certain type of person rare even in fandom. Running a Worldcon and retaining your sense of humour and perspective is more difficult still. You'll all be glad to know that the 1974 Worldcon is in very good hands indeed. I sent Chairman Jay Haldeman -- an old and dear friend -- an irate letter when the most recent PR had us listed as \$3 supporting members even though we'd paid the full \$5 attending fee. In satirical style I accused Jay of ripping off fandom and trying to grow rich on the proceeds of the Worldcon. His answer is worth reproducing in full here; and remember, this man is running your Worldcon!

DISCON II

32ND WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

28 January, 1973

My Dear Mr. GLICKSOHN,

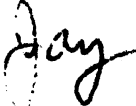
Congratulations Mr CLICKSON, you may have already won! Yes indeed, Mr. QUICKSUN, your own home state of CANADA can boast of many winners in our contest! You, or you neighbor, SUSAN GLICK SOHN, may be among our GRAND PRIZE WINNERS! Right now, without delay, soak your thumb in orange juice. In six months a number will appear. The first three or four digits are your membership number and the *last digit* (subject to keypunching error) is THE AMOUNT YOU PAID! Isn't this FUN?

Your new numbers are 01495 and 01505. Or maybe 01494 and 01504. At any rate, if these numbers match the numbers appearing on your thumb MIKE AND SUSAN GLICKSOHNN, you have ATTENDING memberships! And at no extra charge you get full rights and priviliges of DISCON II membership like all those neat progress reports and stuff.

And yes, MR GLICKERSOHN, your progress report was mailed at the exact same time as that of ypur neighbor, SUSAN GLICK=KSOHN. Blame any delay on the Post Office, US or Canada.

Our computer sends its REGUARD)ZS.

We send our love,


Jay Halldermahnn

CO CHAIRMEN
JAY & ALICE HALDEMAN
RON BOUNDS VICE CHAIRMAN
BILL EVANS TREASURER TED PAULS SECRETARY
32ND WORLD SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION

Jay, it seems, has just the right degree of mental aberration to make a fine Con chairman. In fact, considering the creative skill shown by his letter, I even took the liberty of suggesting to him that once the DISCON II is over, he should consider taking up writing as a career...

As it happens, computer-printed "personal" letters were a bit in the news in our recent federal election. (In which our leader too was re-elected; the difference being that most of us were pleased by that.) The Prime Minister's office sent out about 50,000 letters, apparently signed by Pierre Trudeau, which were personalized to the extent of referring to local issues and circumstances of personal interest to the addressee. A great many people were quite upset when they discovered that the letters came from a machine, not their Prime Minister, and hence had little if any value. Many complained of feeling cheated or tricked, and the Liberals eventually admitted that it'd been a poor campaigning technique.

Personally I've never felt depersonalized when I've dealt with computers but perhaps teaching Fortran has something to do with that. As I saw it, the biggest goof the organizers of this strategy made was in their poor selection of recipients of the letters. They sent one to the leader of one of the other political parties, for example, and another to my father-in-law, who'd been dead for several months. If a thing's worth doing, as Bill Bowers has never been heard to say, it's worth doing well.

A letter from a publisher to a prospective customer read, "Many thanks for your recent order. We wish we could fill it at once, but improvements in our procedure will mean a delay in shipping."

A man of hope and forward-looking mind
Even to the last!

---The Excursion, Wordsworth

I had thought of including a brief description of the current job situation for teachers in Ontario along with some very humorous (to me, anyway) cartoon strips underlining some of the contradictory aspects of the situation at this point. However, planning ahead, I'll hold off until next issue.

As some of you may know, or all of you will know if you read the last mailing, our genzine ENERGUMEN will cease publication with issue #15, which will hopefully appear sometime between this and the next mailing of apa-45. Three years of publishing a genzine has brought us into contact with a lot of people we'd like to stay in touch with, in addition to getting us hooked on egoboo and plentiful interesting mail. So when ENERGUMEN is no more, we're going to expand XENIUM into a personalzine and send it to our fannish friends who are not members of this apa. The print

run will still be limited, and the size is small enough that production will not be a chore. But it does mean that rather than repeat things later on, we've decided to save certain items until next issue, so that all our friends will know about them. So next issue you can look forward to all sorts of exciting things like full-page cartoon strips, Susan's "Duchess of Canadian Fandom" saga and full details as to why neither of us has a job for the coming year...maybe.



"As the meeting was about to start, we had the pleasant shock of noting that Trekkie was not in attendance. 'What would a meeting without the Trekkie be like?' a new member asked. None of the older members could answer, it had been so long. So, in lack of anything else, we decided to make do with what we had. We all divvied up Jim's annoying characteristics among the assembled members, who would then employ them to the utmost, creating a real 'Trekkielike' atmosphere." ---NOSFAN 23

Animals are such agreeable friends -- they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms.

-- Mr Gilfil's Love-Story, 'George Eliot'

Aware as I am of the negative connotations of that opening quotation, I deem it perfect as an introduction to our latest acquisition from the animal world. (Perhaps I should say "mylatest acquisition" since no doubt an armchair analyst could have a field day with my preference in pets and Susan is a normal red-blooded cat-person.)



In addition to Larson E the boa, Windsor the rabbit and Puppy the cat (plus the...er...12 unnamed mice) our cluttered household now contains a small tortoise. I've always thought tortoises were intriguing creatures, but the recent salmonella scare removed them all from the pet-stores. I mentioned this to Randy Bathurst one time, as ----- he is somewhat of an expert in such things, and when he and Terry Austin came to see us last January, they smuggled a small tortoise over with them. Already owning a rabbit, there was nothing else to do but name him Xeno.

As well as not asking questions or passing criticisms, Xeno has learned not to do anything else either. His sole ability seems to be that of getting dusty, although one must admit he is masterful in this. In the two months we've had him, he has yet to eat, and has moved a grand total of about twelve feet over perhaps five different occasions. I'm hoping that once the summer arrives he'll come out of hibernation and indulge in some more interesting activities. I'm amused by the possibility of greeting visitors with the warning "Don't step on the tortoise!" (In the meantime, I'm giving serious consideration to getting a pet rock.)

A questionnaire on the application for service in a counter-intelligence agency read, "Have you or any members of your family ever committed suicide?"

When I am dead, I hope it may be said:
"His sins were scarlet, but his books were read."

---Epigrams, Hilaire Belloc

This being a science fiction apa, and this writer being a science fiction fan, it is only right and proper that I include a few comments on the books I've read of late. Remarkably, I find I've actually read thirteen sf books, half a fantasy and two mysteries so far this year. Compared to my recent input of books, this is high indeed, although I've a way to go before I can challenge Buck Coulson or Ethel Lindsay.

The half of a fantasy is easiest to dispose of. We'd been given a copy of Austin

Tappen Wright's ISLANDIA and it sat on the shelves for over a year. I'm not one of your all-time fantasy enthusiasts, but eventually I started reading it. I managed about 150 pages before being bored into submission. (Which makes it actually only a sixth of a fantasy that I've read.) Wright makes Tolkien look like a whirling dervish and, classic or not, I couldn't pick it up again once I'd put it down.

You buy different books for different reasons, and maybe this influences your reaction to them. I picked up Spinrad's THE IRON DREAM because the idea sounded fantastic. I loved the book. I admire it, and I admire Spinrad for devising a way of writing a badly-written book and getting away with it. I hope it gets a Hugo nomination. I bought Andy Offutt's THE CASTLE KEEPS because Andy told me what a great book it was. It is a good book, a little too sermonizing in spots, but well-told in a frighteningly low-key manner. Well characterized, nicely-written although it fragmented a bit at the end. Someday Andy will write an award-winner, and this is a good step toward it. Leo Kelley's MINDMIX was the only sf book available in the bus depot when Susan and I returned from Ottawa. It helped pass the time. The question of whether the end justifies the means in scientific experimentation was surprisingly well handled for a rather routine 'sci-fi thriller.'

It's a telling comment on the state of current sf that by far the most enjoyable book I've read this year was WAR WITH THE NEWTS by Karel Capek, written in 1936. This witty, inventive satire is both delightful and disquieting as it dissects mankind in all its frailty. Typographical trickery abounds, predating Bester by a generation, and the translation is both charmingly out-of-fashion and remarkably modern. I completely enjoyed this book and recommend it heartily. THE ABSOLUTE AT LARGE, by the same author with the English version copyright 1927, deals with the controlled release of atomic energy. An unfortunate byproduct is the creation of God by every atomic motor and the near-destruction of civilization. Capek was far ahead of his time and it's a great loss that his brilliant fiction seems to have been nearly forgotten. If you get the chance, read him; you'll not be disappointed.

As is well known, all collectors are prepared to steal or murder if it is a question of getting another piece for their collection; but this does not lower their moral character in the least. ---WAR WITH THE NEWTS, Karel Capek

There are a lot of forgettable books being published, aren't there? WARLOCK, by Dean Koontz and BUMSIDER by C C MacApp, for example. Henry Kuttner's FURY lacks the appeal of his many fine short stories, but still has its moments. AT THE SEVENTH LEVEL by Suzette Haden Elgin fails, understandably, to live up to the promise of its powerful opening novelette "For The Sake of Grace" but is a superior book. THE BOOK OF PHILIP K DICK and Bob Shaw's TOMORROW LIES IN AMBUSH are two collections of short stories I enjoyed more than most of the novels I've read by these two gentlemen. The Dick is early 50s material and struck me as far more enjoyable than most of the prozine fiction I've read of late. THE LION GAME by James Schmitz has some fine ideas, some excellent writing, and a great cover, although it's a bit hard to identify with or worry about the very mature, nearly omnipotent 15 year old heroine.

THE COPPER BEECHES, by Arthur Lewis, is a thriller centred around the activities of a Philadelphia branch of the Baker Street Irregulars. It's also a fine satire, as the narrator is a pompous Philadelphia aristocrat whose unconscious prejudices are expertly woven into the story. The 'mystery' itself won't fool too many experienced readers, but the quality of the writing and the inventiveness of the story make this an exceptionally enjoyable novel.

Hope that didn't overly bore too many of you, but it's been so long since I've read any books, and even longer since I've commented on any, that I couldn't pass up the opportunity. Many things are left unsaid, but now it's time for the mailing comments to begin. More, perhaps, at another time.



GRUMP!

BEING A COLLECTION
OF UNCOMPROMISING
MAILING COMMENTS

ART AND DOMESTICITY
Mike Horvat

I can barely read this, which is a shame since what I did force myself to plow through seemed interesting. Since the artwork repros well, it isn't the machine that's at fault, but the typing of the stencils. Are you typing through the ribbon? I'd love to comment on that filler item from The Intellectual Life, but as I'm sitting here with a frosted pewter tankard of cold Canadian ale by my typewriter, I'm far too placid to say anything in my own defense.

VISIONS OF PARADISE
Bob Sabella

Without wishing to sound unduly cruel -- especially as I'm just a newcomer -- I hope that you're professionally-oriented writing shows a little more polish than your contribution here. Your enthusiasm is fine, but the literacy of your comments leaves much to be desired.

Like you, my life has been changed by living with a group of like-minded people. I spent the year I attended graduate school in a university co-op residence, my first time away from home, and it affected me greatly. It was one of the happiest times of my life and perhaps one of the most significant. Recently, though, I've found myself becoming far less gregarious. I still enjoy being with other people, and I look forward to conventions and the chance to renew, or begin, fannish friendships, but I also value the calm that comes from living with just a wife, our family of pets, a typewriter, a bottle of good Scotch, good books, fanzines, and the mailman. Essentially, I think, I'm a semi-hermit by nature.

I think I enjoyed DV more than ADV because the original volume had fewer 'commercial' stories. There are stories in ADV that seem to me to be there because they'll help sell the book to the general public, and they weaken the volume for me. I'd agree fully that "The Barn" is an elaborate joke by Piers and I'm surprised Harlan fell for it. I also fully share your enthusiasm for Silverberg's BOOK OF SKULLS. It may not be science fiction, but it's the best writing and the best characterization I've seen from Bob in a long time (at least since NIGHTWINGS which seems a long time, anyway.) I hope it wins Bob the novel Hugo he so richly deserves.

SURFIN' SAFARI
Ken Budka

I don't know that I've ever really faunched to be a mailman (as a kid I always wanted to be a jockey) but I can think of many far worse things to be. And I've been many of them! Three years ago,

before ENERGIUMEN and Susan (given in that order because the appearance of NERG predated my engagement to Susan) I was broke and unemployed in Ottawa. I applied for a job as a mailman. And heard nothing. About a year and a half later, after I was married, moved to Toronto, and nearly qualified as a teacher, I received a letter forwarded from Ottawa ordering me to appear for an interview at such-and-such a time and place. No wonder the mail service is so fucked up.

I've got a checkmark beside your remarks about drinking tea but what I could have wanted to say I can't imagine. Must have been drunk when I put it there.

But hockey games, on the other hand, I could chat about for pages! Hockey may well be the best spectator sport there is, when it's played between two good teams. It's certainly the fastest game around. I'm a keen hockey fan, even though it's considered somewhat gauche among the intellectuals, and generally watch a game or two a week. With the Stanley Cup playoffs coming up, this will go up to four or five games a week, and will play havoc with my lesson preps. The recent Canada-Russia hockey series was the most exciting sports spectacle I've ever known, all questions of idiot nationalism aside. The winning Canadian goal, with 36 seconds to go in the final game of the eight game series, produced a roar from just about every house and apartment in the country. It was a finish that would have produced jeers of derision in a movie, but in actuality it even caused me to shout in exultation when I saw it again on the replay of the game in the evening. Compared to that brand of hockey even the NHL, and certainly the WHA, is tame indeed. Watch the Stanley Cup playoffs if you can; if Montreal and Boston end up in the finals, you'll see some really fine hockey.

It's nice to find other males who don't mind admitting to tears over sad movie endings. I'm often choked up when watching late shows on TV, even while thinking to myself how hokey it all is. Both the stage and film versions of MAN OF LA MANCHA sent me for the Kleenex, and most of the old tear-jerkers work on me. I know I'm being manipulated, especially in the Jackie Cooper school of movies, but it doesn't prevent the tears. I figure I'm all right as long as the soap operas only bring forth gales of laughter though.

Your comment to Paj about doing what you want to be happy reflects what I call the Doctrine of Enlightened Self Interest. Is there any other reasonable philosophy? Altruists would have us believe we should live with the welfare of our fellow beings foremost in our minds, but I've always been suspicious of those pinko preverts anyway. Too many people are embarrassed to admit that they're essentially selfish, that's the problem. If you can bring happiness to others while satisfying yourself, or better still, if you can satisfy yourself by bringing happiness to others, great. But when you get down to it, how many people truly put themselves second and others first? It's look out for Number One...and let Number 6 take care of Number 2.



TOUCHSTONE
David Grigg

Even without art and with "as little effort and thought...as is possible while maintaining a decent standard", this is one of the most attractive and enjoyable contributions in the mailing. Funny how the zines I'd consider to show the greatest care and effort in reproduction are Canadian or Australian. Must be the essential superiority of British breeding showing through...

We don't have a car, and have no immediate plans to buy one. Toronto's public transport system is perfectly adequate for getting around town and while a car would be nice for getting to cons, this isn't a sufficient reason to buy one. I take the public transport to work each day, although I'd much rather be close enough to walk. Recently, one of the Board of Education trustees proposed a plan to collect a parking fee from all teachers who drive to work (and currently park for free) to be used to reimburse those who use the buses and subways. Despite my complete approval, I doubt that the scheme will ever come into being. Sigh.

Despite my contribution to the last mailing describing the utter chaos in which I live, I must disagree with some of Christine's assertions. There are certain things that Ghu and Roscoe meant to exist in a random universe: fanzines, books, the ways and means of fanzine production, the raison d'etres of the collector, etc. But on the other hand, despite the apparent disarray with which I surround myself in my inner sanctum, I do not enjoy randomness in clothes, dirty dishes, or the like. Not that I'm fanatical about apartment neatness, but perhaps my mind contains some sort of scale that balances general neatness against the disorder of my personal possessions. And one thing you'll never find around here is an overflowing ashtray. We both find cigarette smoking a rather nauseating habit and most of our friends know this and refrain from smoking when they visit us. (For that matter, the great majority of our friends don't smoke cigarettes either.)

I've never worried about the bomb. Or pollution death. Or overpopulation. Or whether I'll have a job next year. This is essentially because I do not worry about the future. And I don't worry about the future because I'm having enough trouble coping with the present and because I won't be living in most of that future. Selfish? Of course. I do my best not to add to the difficulties which beset this world, most of which I'm well aware of, but I do not crusade against them. Such is not my nature. There are those who will argue that it is our duty to be more concerned with the world, that it is not enough to be dealing only with that small part of the problem that impinges on our private lives. But this requires that you truly care about your fellow man, and apart from a smallish circle of exceptions, I really don't care all that much about my fellow man. The Doctrine of Enlightened Self Interest. Plus the fact that my fellow man really hasn't shown himself to be all that worthy of interest. And, as I said, I'm still sorting out my own house, thank you. So I don't worry too much about the future...except for LOCUS, of course...

The rest of TS (tsk, tsk) is excellent, but calls forth little comment. Bangsund is brilliant, and Ron Smith highly entertaining. A thoroughly enjoyable contribution.

DIVERSITY
Harris/Bridges

I'm not sure quite what to do with a fanzine that I've already received and loosed. It seems redundant to say anything more.

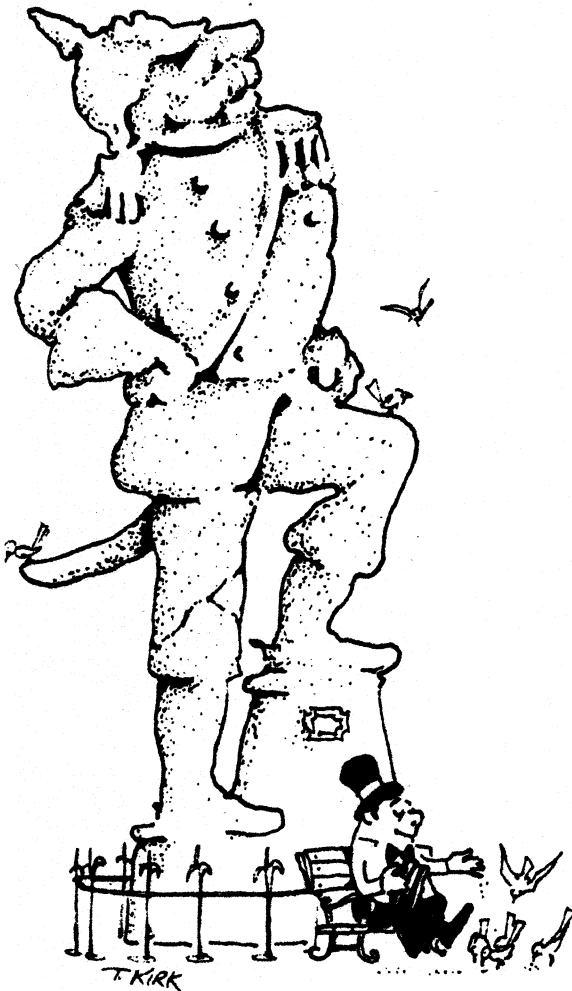
SF COMMENTARY
Bruce Gillespie

I have to admit that this is the first issue of SFC that I've ever read in its entirety. As John Berry said so well in one of the numerous issues we've received since the mailing arrived, there is always material in SFC which doesn't interest me, be-

cause of content or manner of presentation. This issue was about people and conventions, though, and I enjoyed reading it, even if there isn't much I can comment on.

Congratulations on winning the Ditmar, which strikes me as a far more attractive award than the Hugo. My chances of ever winning either one are about the same, but yours has far more elegance and class than the traditional rocket.

Just for the record, you've got my little exchange with Ethel Lindsay completely wrong. I never "ticked off English fanzine publishers because they don't publish illustrations that look as good as those in American fanzines." What I did do was ask Ethel, in all innocence, why English fanzines had such abysmal repro when with a little care and effort most any mimeograph could be coaxed into giving better service. I wasn't talking about art at all, since I've enough intelligence to realize that not everyone has access to a cheap electrostencil machine. But, as I've already said in my earlier remarks, I see no reason to distribute a badly-printed fanzine that's faded or overprinted or nearly illegible. When I made that well-intended remark, most of the English fanzines I'd seen were very difficult to read due to lack



of technical proficiency (as well as being extremely cluttered due to complete absence of borders or any noticeable attempt at layout or design) and I wondered why. Certainly finances have something to do with it, but when you consider what Bill Bowers accomplished with his generations-old hand-crank, or what you do with what I gather is an ancient machine, then there must be other factors involved. Do you suppose it's that pride I talked about before? Regardless, I'd like you to know I'm not quite as fuggheaded as you may have thought, at least in as far as that particular episode is concerned.

I admire your honesty in discussing, and displaying, your emotions in this issue. If it weren't for your obvious sincerity, and the fact that you are undergoing the archetypal fan-discovers-girls reaction, this might have been maudlin. As it is, I imagine quite a few of your readers will sympathize with you to the fullest.

GENUINE VICTORIAN WICKER DUNKLE
Leigh Edmonds

Naturally I'm delighted to see a mathematical type cover, although I wonder if there's any particular reason for it being there? This is as good a place as any to throw in a series

problem to see if there are any gamesters in the apa. Complete the following finite sequence: 10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,20,22,24,31,100,121,?,?.

I was thinking of discussing our recent elections but I'm honestly disinterested in politics other than Monty Python's Silly Party and I don't wish to bore you.

Don't answer that! I must congratulate you on a really neat, readable contribution. I was interested in your remarks about the nature of the apa, this being the first mailing I've seen. Fans dogmatic and intolerant? Surely not! And I'm amazed to see you claim to be "the only person in APA45 who has differing values." I hope you'll be contributing more regularly in the future; I liked what you had to say.

 DOMAIN AND RANGE
 Mike Wood

Aha, a mathematical type person. I am not alone. I see a few comment hooks in the margins of your LACon report. One thing that struck me about the running of that convention was that they unabashedly tried to make as much money as possible for their clubhouse -- as with the LACon cookies, and LACon money, and LACon broaches, etc, which I found a bit overly-commercial -- and yet on something like WABBIT TWACKS they spent far, far more than they needed to. I also seem to recall that they approached only one printer for a quotation for the program book, instead of shopping around for the best value. A strangely contradictory way of running the con.

It's unfortunate that so many people sleep through the business session, since some quite important things are decided there. Regretfully, I too missed much of that famous session since I had a noon plane to catch. One advantage of the convention being in Toronto this year is that I'll finally be able to attend the close-of-convention party without fear of not being able to get in to school on time the next morning.

Being new to the apa, and not being familiar with your egoboo poll, I cannot make any specific comments, but in general I see nothing wrong with allowing voting for oneself. We have to trust the members not to abuse this privilege, but surely there will be times when a member honestly believes that he or she has done the best job in a particular category?

I'd comment at length on whether or not "fans who discuss Hugos in zines...necessarily represent the mainstream of Hugo voters" but it's surely self-evident that they don't? Think back to LACon, and you'll find that not one of what you might call the 'fannish' nominees won. Not Rotsler, not Carr, not White, not Silverberg, not Effinger, not...er...isn't there one more...um...well, couldn't be important. What we think of as "fandom", that small group of active convention-goers and fanzine-publishers-contributors, is perhaps a third, or no more than a half, of those who vote for the awards.

I'm not all that familiar with drum mimeos, but from what I've seen and heard, they give greater flexibility for colour usage but can't handle solid areas as well as a silk-screen type mimeo. I'll take Gestetner for quality repro any day.

 An aircraft company had a door with the sign, "Emergency Exit --- Not to be Used Under Any Circumstances."



 And here endeth the contribution of Michael. For now.

The cover is by Tim Kirk, the drawing on page 2 by Bjo Trimble, page 4 by Grant Canfield, page 5 by Randy Bathurst, page 7 by Bill Rotsler and also page 8, page 10 is another fine Tim Kirk, while the little fellow to my left is another Canfield critter. That dazzling yellow sheet separating me from my wife is by Randy Bathurst. The interlineations are from various sources and some may well be apocryphal.



"Spring is here, spring is here,
Life is skittles, life is beer!"

No, I haven't been poisoning pigeons in the park, though I have been feeding the ducks in High Park. Spring has definitely come to Toronto, though; last night, I heard the warbling tones, not of the First Robin, but of the First Icecream Truck. And today, everyone on the entire University of Toronto campus seemed to be eating an ice-cream cone, or throwing a frisbee. Sometimes both.

And with Spring comes XENOGAMY, Susan's contribution to XENIUM. How can you tell it's hers? Because it's short, and badly proofread. I can spell, and I can use the English language, but these gifts (increasingly rare today) pale beside my total inability to avoid typing errors--or catch them, once made. Forgetting the carbon in this stencil isn't going to make error-hunting easier, either.

Someday, Nice People, I am going to contribute properly to this APA-45 zine. Just like I'm going to put out the last ASPIDISTRA, and do articles for STARLING, GRANFALLOON and OUTWORLDS. Post-thesis, post-TORCON someday (Over the rainbow...) Being married to the Harry Warner of Canadian Fandom doesn't help, either. What is there left to say about the mailing?--not much, except a random reaction to Johnson's RADIOPHONE MUTTERINGS (I'm a Leo-Virgo cusp woman, and nobody seems able to relate to me, Steve; yeah, coincidence, randomness, lines of occurrence is/are interesting to speculate on) to the effect of--KWESKIN?!? Oh wow, as we used to say, back in '67. I've just been starting on what my friend and folk-heroine Elizabeth refers to as "the Old Folky Trip"; going back to when everyone had little pointy beards (male) or amazing long hair, acoustic guitars (with the odd lute, dulcimer or whatever) and did Child ballads, interspersed with "Where Have All the Flowers Gone." And some of us of the APA-45 generation (August 22, 1948) thought we could save the world, between poignant-lost-love songs... Malvina Reynolds is a-comin' to town in May. My Ghod, Kweskin. Back down nostalgia alley.

Speaking of Kweskin: the remark was addressed to the Luttrells, and my big disappointment of the mailing was no Luttrellzine. And no STARLING in a long time? Or did it just not get here? Moving, the breakup of a fancircle with all the stimulus-to-pub, horrible winters, grad school-- fight it, people! The genuine fanzines are dying around us... Cheerful note to Lesleigh: grad school gets worse. Enjoy. I've decided to finish because I have to prove to myself I can; then I'll take a typing course, because there are no jobs for over-educated female Canadian literature specialists. Or I'll finish if my damn advisor ever gets my theory chapter back to me, and if he ever stops telling me "fine, but read these 20 obscure 19th-century Québec novels, too." Bitch, bitch.

Speaking of Lesleigh: thank you for doing so, Bruce Gillespie. I hope it didn't embarrass Lesleigh--I think I'd be embarrassed to find myself unwittingly so important to a fan I'd just met briefly. For three years now, I've guiltily known I should be writing scholarly, serious locs to SFC, but--apart from a growing reluctance to do anything remotely scholarly if I didn't have to-- I was overawed by that impersonal brain, intelligent but a bit, um, supercilious, a bit too adept at cutting down People like Sandra Miesel who disagreed with it, a bit too over-awing. Suddenly, though, the brain is a real person. Hello, Bruce.

APA-45 seems to be a good place to be. Hello, everybody. I enjoyed the mailing. I'll try to write for you, and give you feedback/egoboo on your writing, Real Soon. Fandom is for meeting people and sharing ideas; XENIUM should be for that, and I should do my part. Real Soon. Bear with me.

In the meantime, I give you a plea-- will you help me meet a friend? It's followed by some good writing, to introduce you to that friend; I hope you'll like her as much as I do.

THE

MAE STRELKOV'S FRIENDS

FUND

SF conventions, for me, exist mainly as places to meet other fans: people whom I only know on paper, people whom I have never met, who are my friends. One of those friends is Mae Strelkov.

Whether you remember Mae from the lettercolumns of CRY, or have met her more recently through letters and articles in ENERGUMEN, OUTWORLDS, TOMORROW AND..., ASPIDISTRA, PLACEBO, and a growing number of other fanzines from Canada, Australia and the United States, you know she's a fascinating person.

Raised in China, Mae has lived most of her life in Argentina, where she and her husband Vadim share a ranch with children, cattle, crazy goats, pumas-- a whole world she'll create for you with skill and zest. A talented author, and an artist too, Mae is equally at home, and equally fascinating, writing about her lively family--or the world's problems; about linguistics, and the strange pattern of words and symbols she finds repeating themselves through the oriental, western and Amerindian cultures she knows so well--or the antics of her pet skunk; about the Catholic Church, and its effects on the world as she sees it--or your latest fanzine.

"Fun awaits you in the little things of life continually, and laughter, at our bizarre estate as 'monkey-men aping God'.... Chinese... Hebrews... my favourite peoples. Next? Indians and natives and our local self-styles crillos. Mobby English, if not too-too English! Next? Oh, anyone. (Dolphins, I think, would be my next selection for 'favourites.' Also cats, skunks, and goats under the age of 3 years)...."

"I like knowing nice people well--how they think and feel, even the "flaws" they think they may have. (As if we aren't all similarly 'flawed')...."

"I take to heart things like religion and local politics, and the enslavement and crushing of natives and bygone Indians, and their vanishing myths, customs, languages. If someone wants to upset me, tackle them!"

-- Mae Strelkov, from TOMORROW AND...9

Mae is one of fandom's Good People. Mae is the sort of person fans go to conventions to meet: an interesting personality on paper, who promises to be a warm friend in person. Mae's friends--and I hope you, reading this, are one of them-- would like to meet her. At DISCON II, in Washington, in 1974.

But we need your help.

Mae Strelkov lives isolated in the hills of Cordoba province, Argentina. DISCON II is in Washington. The plane fare that would bridge that gap costs, at the moment, US\$ 616, Buenos Aires-New York return. Mae cannot afford the fare; and neither can her friends, as individuals. Perhaps, though, Mae Strelkov's Friends can raise it.

Mae Strelkov's Friends is a fundraising organization chaired by Joan Bowers and me, Susan Glicksohn. What we need is your support, in the form of:

- +cash donations, obviously. One dollar from every Friend would get Mae to North America, at least!
- +material for a fan auction, to be run through the pages of the Bowers' INWORLDS and possibly at TORCON 2; fanzines, art, books, anything you can donate
- +material, both articles and art, for a fannish first: a Bowers-Glicksohn (or Glicksohn-Bowers) Strelkovzine, to appear after TORCON, with all proceeds going to the Friend Fund
- +moral support. Spread the word through your letters and fanzines.
- +encouragement to Mae herself. Write to her at:

Casilla de Correo 55
Jesus Maria
Cordoba, Argentina

and discover a new friend. Oh, write airmail. The Argentinian postal system makes the North American service look perfect.

What we need is your help: NOW. By May 1, 1974, Mae Strelkov's Friends need at least \$700 in the Fund's special account so they, and Mae, can make plans to fly her to DISCON. Accounts will be kept, and money refunded if we can't raise the plane fare. But we will. If you'll help. A dollar, and your support: TODAY.



Please? Help us; and meet a new friend. Write to:

Mae Strelkov's Friends
c/o Joan Bowers
P.O. Box 148
Wadsworth, Ohio 44281

Mae's article which follows introduces her far better than I can. The art credits belong to:

Bill Rotsler (this page)
C. Lee Healy (twice)
and Connie Reich Faddis, in that order.



A silly person wrote recently that when you've passed the age of forty, you've had it, you've reached and passed your peak and the rest of the way will be downwards. I have passed that peak, I'm way beyond fifty, and I would say there are peaks of experience galore in a lifetime. It is silly to select one from the others as the peak above which none other towers.

Actually, I suspect the peak experience we each will feel will be death. An intoxicating feeling when the human at last selfishly (this is the old Chinese interpretation) turns his back and curls up in the cocoon of "unfeeling" as does the little silk worm.

Each morning should be a new "peak" as the sun bursts forth in the east in the archaic pak term for new births and beginnings:



- elongated sun at
dawn on horizon

(Pakar, pakarini, from China to the Andes, linking Dawn Ancestors and newborn babies with the sun emerging elongated like the head of a babe from the birth canal after its "night in the womb of darkness."

Nevertheless, there are some peaks sweeter than others, and I am remembering today a moment that seemed exquisite at the time; and yet I did not value it then above all the other pakarini "dawns."

It was beside the storied lake of Hangchow back in China, and I was not yet quite eighteen (which is a lovely age, when one's focus is sharper on everything around, and one's reactions are keen to the point sometimes of pain.)

My mother had for years been talking about my Chinese aunt and cousins with whom she corresponded, saying that I must see them before I left China to go to a university in the U.S.A. (Plan that was changed to a trip to South America, when I met and married my husband, Vadim.)

As a girl of seven I had met them... little girls my own age, in Chinese clothes in

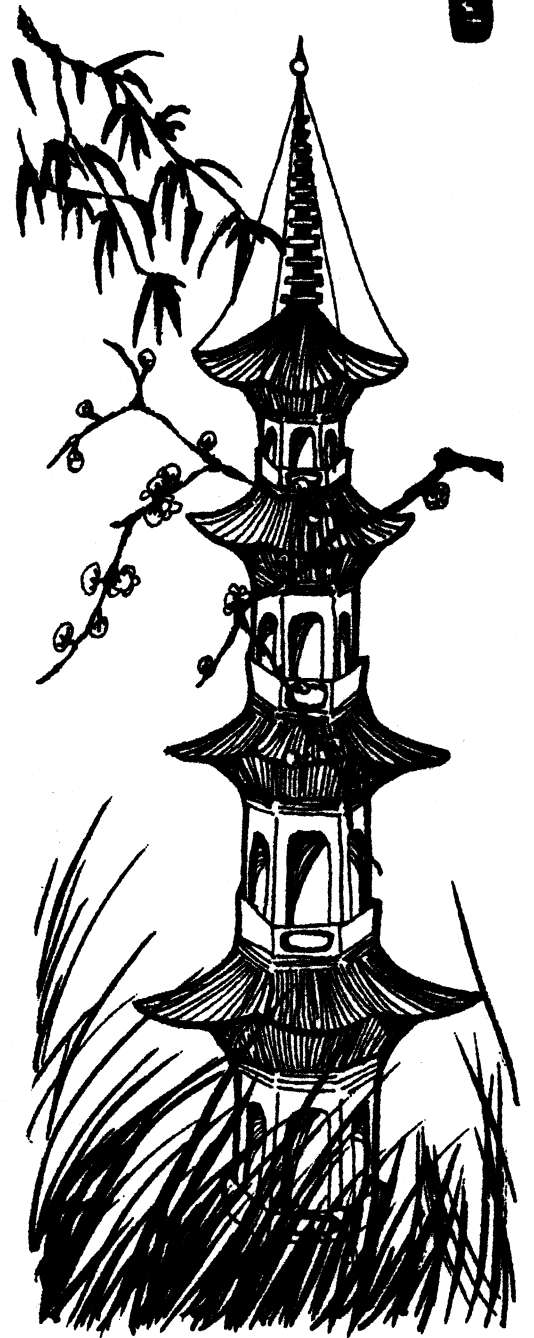
a Chinese home. They were the daughters of a baby girl thrown away in the ancient fashion to keep the population down (isn't birth control kinder?) in Huchow, mother's childhood home. (Her parents, George and Emma Mason, were Baptist missionaries, first white folks allowed in.) So the baby was rescued--still squalling-- from its normal fate, which would have been to become a little "ghost soldier" as its tiny skeleton mouldered in a baby-tower of the city wall. (This custom of making walls with the "bricks" of immolated babies was apparently a world-wide old idea. Folks thought this strengthened and protected such defences, even as heroes' heads were buried at city entrances.)

Well, that baby was rescued, and grew up as my mother's adopted sister in Huchow. She duly married a Chinese merchant of reasonable affluence, and they had a lovely biggish home overlooking a creek full of boats, near the famous lake.

The first time we visited them, we went by Chinese houseboat, a whole string of boats pulled by a horridly belching old tug, down endless waterways between fields and old pagodas and countless little toens overhanging the streams. This time I'd been sent off by prosaic train, and was met at the station. It had all been so nicely arranged, and I not even paying attention until I got packed off on schedule.

The heat was already terrific, as Chinese summers can be. The house, though, was cool and breezy, with open windows and a courtyard full of prized flowers and shrubs. The "uncle" was a little old gentleman in silken robes, and I didn't quite approve of him, in my childish innocence, because he watered his favourite plants regularly in his own way, politely peeing at them in a discreet fashion. As he varied his attentions from bloom to bloom, I imagine the roots profited, rather than were scorched. Anyway, I didn't approve, but pretended not to notice, to the great relief of my modern young cousins who wished Daddy wouldn't be old-fashioned like that. And I must say, it was a beautiful courtyard.

My girl-cousins were studying art at a famous academy on the lake-shore. How I envied them. My own father, inclined to take the Bible always literally, worried about that Old Testament command about not making a graven image, and was terribly strict towards my tendency to want to draw and write and paint. "Whoever loveth and maketh a lie shall have his part in the lake of brimstone," he also quoted, as I'd attempt a little story for our school magazine. Even poems worried him... "Worshipping Nature instead of God," he phrased it! But mother had been a painter almost from birth, and was famed for her paintings,



which she gave away freely until she married my dad and never painted again, so as not to unnerve him. Indeed, Mother's paintings--owned by every China missionary she knew--were never saved by her, so I own not one; only a carved wooden box, and some tiny pen-and-ink sketches. It's understandable, though, that my Chinese aunt, who'd adored her "oldest sister" encouraged her daughters to follow in their English/American aunt's footsteps and become artists too. They also embroidered beautifully, for all forms of Chinese and Western art were taught at the Academy.

My aunt and uncle seemed to feel it was their duty to show me every temple on every hill, every pagoda on every peak, for miles in all directions. It was really heroic of them for they were so little and middle-aged. I will not say "old"--not of them! But "quaint"? And "Old School"? Oh yes, indeed...

So each morning, when my five cousins went off to their schools, my aunt would put on her neatest black long skirt over the black trousers, under which peeped forth her unbound little feet in neat black satin shoes, and a light Chinese jacket-top, and with her shining black hair tightly bound up in a bun, she'd take up her black umbrella--looking so brave and ready for the trek. And the little old man in his grey watered silk scholar's gown would lead the way off into our Wild Blue Yonders.

They reached only to my shoulders, and walked with such little steps, that it was hard to accomodate my stride to their pace. Besides, we walked single file. The old man led the way, quite ignoring us until we'd reach some Point-of-Interest. Then he'd pause, turn to regard me sternly, point with his cane and expect me to know all the rest. Maybe if I got very excited and begged for more details, he'd add who got killed here when. Terrible tragedies happened there periodically, and in one rebellion the lake was so full of bodies you could walk out on them for "half-a-li" (league). The place was alive with these ghosts he evoked so casually... they quivered for me in the dazzling lights of reflected ripples everywhere. Our faces were ablaze with the knowledge of China's continuity here, as the boatman would pole us across some bright shallow to an island shrine.

Everywhere, they'd insist: "Take a photo! Make a sketch, as your mother did!" And I'd settle on an ancient slab of rock, worn with human passage... a river of protoplasm quivering with the passion of the imprisoned souls seeking a Buddha or a Laotze or "Truth" which we all desire so stubbornly, until dogma shrivels our human potential. I'd take out a blank copybook and scribble with blue ink a quick sketch of what little I could glimpse of each monument... blocked by beaming faces, as throngs of delighted Chinese pushed each other to get nearer.

"You speak the Shanghai dialect perfectly!" they'd marvel, turning to my aunt and uncle, standing by so proudly. I was their niece, came the boast at once. "Oh, wonderful! She is true Chinese," they'd cry. "She must stay with you and marry one of us and have Chinese children." Greatest honour... they wanted all my children to be theirs, members of their race.

I'd put the book away and grin and joke until my uncle would sternly pull out his ornate silver western-style watch and remind me we must proceed "on schedule" at once to the next monument. Back to our pleasure-boat we'd hurry, while the crowds followed crying Tzai-lai! "Come again!" and I swore I would. Oh yes, even as a ghost, I have to go there again!

Everything was a ritual. To honour the boatman's sagacity (and display his own), my uncle never cut a second from the daily bargaining process, while my aunt and I, as befitted "mere women" stood respectfully in the background. But it was lovely. I had adjusted myself to their rhythmic pace through life, from pak to tziak ("dusk"). My girl cousins would take me to the Academy to meet all the other students. It was my element, I belonged there, and why must I go, be sent away to my American aunts? (I'd not yet met my husband, just weeks ahead it would be, in Tsingtao.) Many of the girls were boarders. They took me to see their rooms; and I cried out with fascination

at their scroll-work on the walls. "How do you write her name in Chinese" the girls asked my cousins, who proudly replied: "She is La-mei for the la-mei-hua," a most delicate flower loved in China. And with swift exquisite strokes the brushes flew over tissue paper, creating Chinese characters like swallows in flight: "To La-mei from Pao-pei," (Precious. Or from "Moss Rose" or "Pearl"--so many names.)

And they'd cry: "When you're in Lovely Land, Beautiful Country, Mei-kwo," (America) "you'll not forget us? You'll remember me by this scroll, I, Precious?" "I'll never forget you!" I said earnestly, tears already gathering, it was so sincere. Alas for the scrolls... they were all washed away in a flood in the Argentine Delta, in 1959. But the memory stays. Will I meet them as shadows, as dreaming ghosts in the dancing lights of midday on the lake? The pavilion across from the Academy must still be there. Yes, and Chinese youth must still be seated there drinking the delicate green tea with a floating blossom of tea to grace it, and I amongst them though they know it not.

But my mind swiftly returns... and returns...

And the same quivering reflections that saw my face, see theirs, and return them to the sky again, till the whole Universe is a quiver with the light of us all.



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