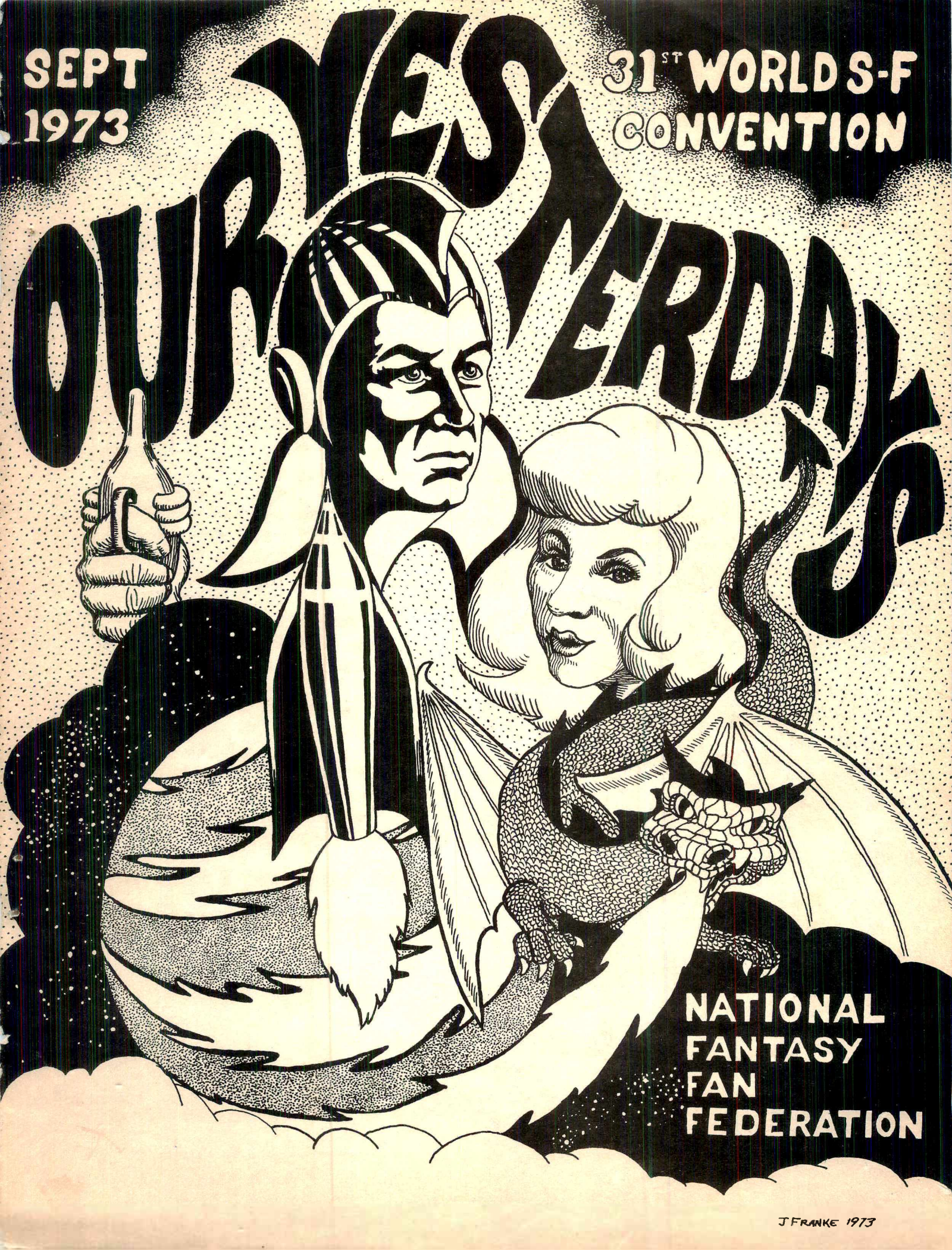


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All art work by Jackie Franke. Published by Joanne Burger.

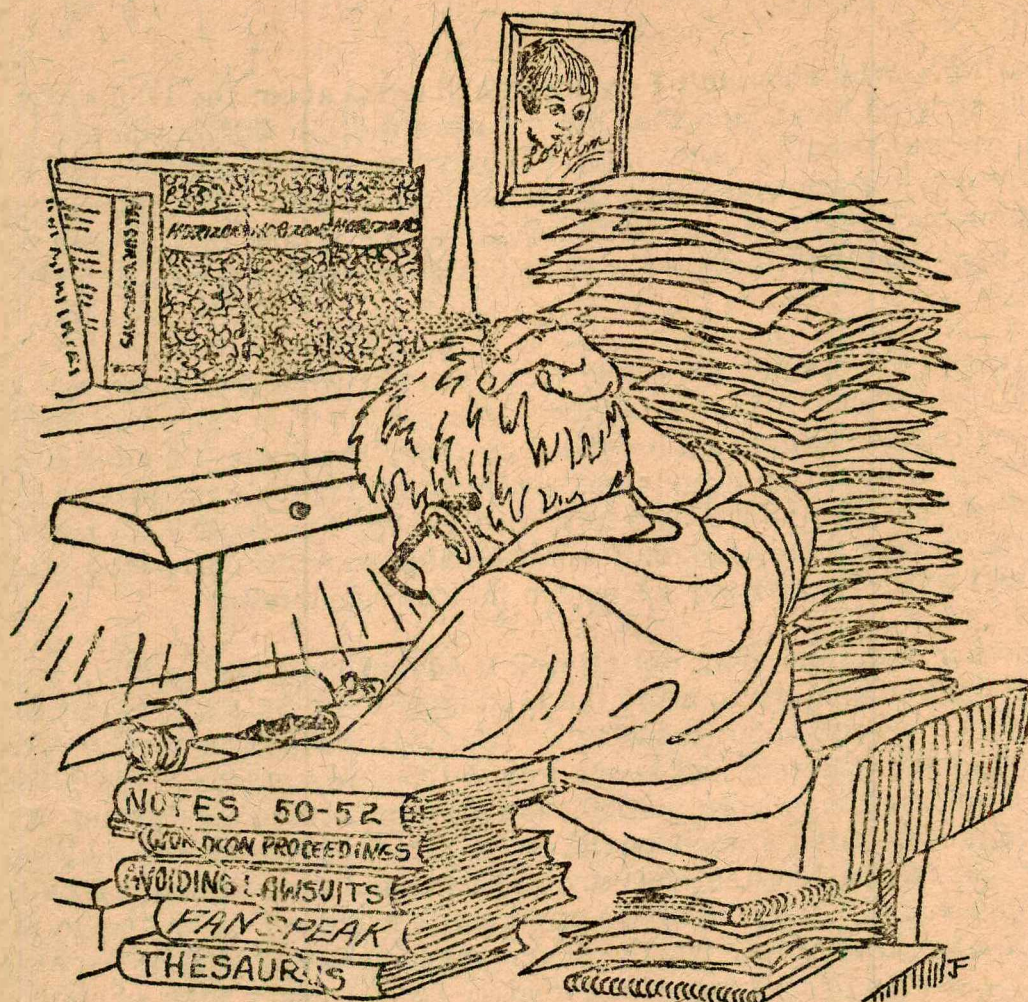
According to Bob Tucker, Harry Warner ran across SF in 1933. As with so many fans, that marked a turning point to Harry-- and so, this man's world shifted subtly. He became a rather shy reporter (providing that mundane reality is sometimes incredible but true); active in publishing, writing in the field of SF and fandom, and encouraging many fan editors through letters commenting on their early publication efforts in a way displaying humanity and a realization that from whatever beginnings, a fan might become something better. His interest didn't wane in fandom, even as a writer in the pro field. I imagine Harry found fandom was something of an oasis for him--a place to live with others, even if as a hermit he might be miles from others of similar interests.

Whatever fans do, you might expect them to be imaginative, creative and involved. It is not necessary to be a critic--but many fans are. They achieve a distinction over many other critics if, like too few in the pro ranks, they remember you do not have to tear something to pieces to be a critic. By being critical, Harry Warner and others became known as discerning, thoughtful fans. Like other writers of SF, he didn't forget that an interest in SF and fantasy was behind his inclination to write.

FANDOM IS A WAY OF GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL (FIAWOGAFIA)

ALL FANS ARE CREATED EXTRODINARY (AFACE)

Stan Woolston



SOME MORE OF OUR YESTERDAYS

One evening in May, it happened. I decided to do something about that history of fandom in the 1950's, which I'd been thinking about for several years.

Understand, I didn't do anything drastic, like putting paper in the typewriter and starting on the manuscript. But I did reach several decisions. I hope they don't cause me as much grief as came to Jenny on those occasions when she would make up her mind.

One thing that had caused my thoughts of writing more fan history to run pretty much along the lines of "Ugh!" was the ordeal of more fact-gathering which will be involved in a continuation of All Our Yesterdays. It's a tedious task and I couldn't bring myself to tackle it until I received word from Advent: Publishers that they're ready for a new manuscript. Finally, on that May evening, I had the inspiration that anyone else would have thought of a couple

of years earlier. Why shouldn't I go ahead and write about the 1950's, using the notes already on hand, and then dig out more facts to fill in whatever holes show up in the manuscript? That way, I'll avoid time I might waste in accumulating more new information than will be needed. I might also discover that my present supply of notes is almost adequate already, and that my subconscious has been arguing otherwise to supply a good excuse for putting off the whole matter.

I think I know when I'm going to try to start writing the new manuscript: late this autumn. Some problems involved in a switch from one assignment to another on my regular job should be ended by then, there won't be any more baseball games to watch on television, my vacation for the year will be used up, and that schedule will give me time to spread the word through fandom about a major cutback in most of my fanac. I won't be able to write daily logs, columns, and such stuff while I'm writing a long fan history manuscript.

Another decision might get altered if Advent feels differently. But tentatively, I'm going to try to make the history of the 1950's just about the same length as the book about the 1940's. This will cause the new book to be somewhat different in pattern and scope from All Our Yesterdays. The 1950's produced about five times more stuff for fan historians than the 1940's. The number of cons multiplied stupendously, so did the apa movement, real fandoms began to appear in non-English speaking nations, and the number of fans increased prodigiously. There won't be anything in a history of fandom in the 1950's about a world conflict, but the space saved that way will be more than gobbled up by the fine flowering of the fandom-for-fandom's sake which created such things as the Quandry group, Irish Fandom, and so many other marvels.

A book about fandom in the 1950's would run to two or three times the length of All Our Yesterdays, if I repeated such procedures as mentioning something about every municipal club, giving blow by blow descriptions of each FAPA crisis, and summarizing every major worldcon speech. Such a book might cost three or four times as much as All Our Yesterdays, making allowance for the constant increase in publishing costs. That would put it out of the purchasing power of too many fans.

So this time, I'm going to try to emphasize the most important and most entertaining things that happened in fandom, even if it cuts in half the number of persons who find themselves in the index. Someone else can write a book about the 1950' meant primarily for reference purposes.

I don't know how long it will take to finish the task, mainly because I'm not sure how much of my work will be finished when I've completed the first draft. If I don't encounter another hospital stay or other unforeseen problems, I might get that first draft done by early next spring. And I haven't the slightest idea when the book might appear. I've not heard anything from Advent for more than a year, but I assume that the situation is unchanged: production of the Tuck encyclopedia takes precedence over everything else. I don't know

where another volume of fan history will fit into the firm's production schedule after the Tuck set finally is in print.

For the time being, I'm not going to ask many people for help, until I determine where my information is in short supply. But I would like to hear from anyone who has good-sized gobs of facts about any particular aspect of fandom in the 1950's which never found its way into fanzines or otherwise came into general knowledge. Don't send me any original documents through the mails, because I had a very unhappy experience with loss of one valuable parcel in the mails when I was borrowing stuff for use in *All Our Yesterdays* and this time I'd rather work from Xerox copies or hand delivery or other methods. Eventually I'll need lots of photographs from the 1950's, both portraits of important fans and pictures of groups or action shots at cons.

It's going to be harder to write about the 1950's than about the previous decade for two reasons. I wasn't as all-out in fandom in the 1950's, and didn't have the insider's view of many events that simplifies the historian's task. Moreover, memories of what happened in the 1950's are clearer and there are more fans surviving from that era, so inadequacies and inaccuracies in the new book will be more readily spotted. On the other hand, fandom was more exciting in the 1950's, and there are more events of intrinsic interest to write about.

What happens if I survive to complete the new manuscript and people start to ask about a history of the 1960's? Right now, I feel inclined to disavow any intention in that direction. I seriously doubt if anyone could write a history of fandom in the 1960's in one volume of manageable size, because fandom continued to grow in the 1960's, and underwent such severe fragmentation into subfandoms. Star Trek fandom, fandom's connection with underground publications, the sword & sorcery fad, comics fandom, Tolkien, each of those and a half-dozen other phenomena could become topic of a book of its own.

Of course, by the time I finish a book about the 1950's and someone takes care of the 1960's, it'll be time to write a history of fandom in the 1970's. If you want to tackle that job, start taking lots of notes about what happens at Torcon II.

Harry Warner, Jr.

GAMES FANS PLAY

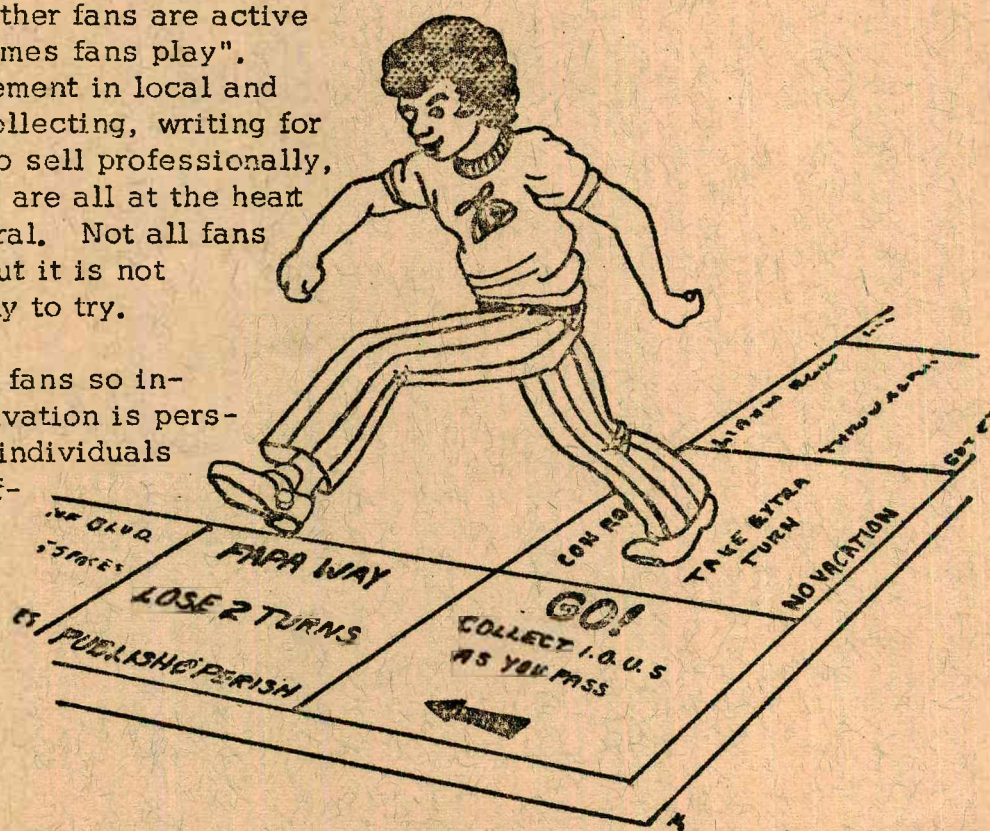
If someone mentions the "games fans play", it might bring up thoughts of Don Miller, who has been providing leadership in the N3F Games Bureau for fans, using the mails for ready access to fellow-lovers of all sorts of game-playing. From his Wheaton, Maryland address he has published much information on many games, and this includes many SF and fantasy-oriented games suitable for playing at conventions or by mail. His publications schedule is a heavy one and he is not limited to this area of activity. He is also active in Washington (D. C.) fandom, publishing their Journal. This takes on many of the aspects of a newszine, being informative in contents and fits the need of fans to know what is happening.

Like Don, other fans are active in quite a few "games fans play". Publishing involvement in local and national clubs, collecting, writing for fanzines, trying to sell professionally, and corresponding are all at the heart of fandom in general. Not all fans do all of these, but it is not uncommon for many to try.

But why are fans so involved? The motivation is personal, for fans are individuals with their own definite temperments and outlooks.

Before Harlan Ellison started selling his words, and afterwards, he was part of fandom. Ray Bradbury as a young fan published his own

fanzine, went to Los Angeles SF Society Thursday nights, and tried to write professionally for years before developing his writing technique and style. Bob Silverberg still publishes a fanzine--in the oldest SF amateur press association, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association.



So fandom's yesterday and fandom's today are interlinked not only with many fans (and groups) that were active in the past, but the borderline between fan and pro is not really clear. Harry Warner, who has published HORIZONS

in FAPA regularly (24 pages an issue for many years) was an early member of that group--and still is. If you read Wilson Tucker's introduction to ALL OUR YESTERDAYS, the Harry Warner fanhistory book up to the fifties, you will see Harry followed the fanpubbing, collecting, corresponding route that is so useful today in involving fans regardless of distance--using the mails as the high-road. Harry could also write a book on how to be a fan--how to write letters of comment, for instance, to just about every fanzine published over all these years. And you may have seen Harry's name in the prozines too; over the years he has sold fiction to the pulps and modern zines while continuing with a job and involvements in other activities. He has been an officer in at least one club for quite a few years--as teller each election time.

And Tucker -- yes, I know his name is Wilson, but I'm inclined to call him Bob--has followed somewhat the same fan-to-pro route, though much of his fanzine material in Le Zombi was noted for his humor. His Neo Fan's Guide was both informative and humorous--and I hope it will be republished soon. It is something which does not age, and I do not believe it is currently "in print". I'll ask him.

To many at conventions for the first time, the intermingling of fan and pro may be a surprise. New fans may look up to the "name on the book jacket" as more than mere human; talking with Aismov for the first time can be overwhelming. I've heard such comments and received letters to that effect. From girls. Aismov believes in getting involved at a convention.

But many a pro at a convention is as much a volunteer worker as those on the planning committee--who are usually fans. This is contrary to most conventions, which are run by pros, for pros. It reflects the position fans occupy in the field, not so much because SF fandom differs in interest-level compared with other fandoms, but because SF fans are more apt to group together, publish, and correspond.

Many fans are involved in writing and it's possible to find friends by mail or in person thru local fanclubs to read manuscripts and point out ways a story can be improved. If published in a fanzine, it is likely that others will comment, which may help. And of course some find the N3F's Writers' Exchange (created by Alma Hill of Boston) useful, for there all involved are trying to improve their writing skills. Everyone sends in manuscripts for others to read--which means all criticisms are sympathetic and mutual. Local clubs for writers might help, but most don't cover SF and fantasy.

Alma has managed the annual SF-Fantasy Short Story Contest, too. This activity is open to any writers who sold no more than two SF or fantasy stories. This year Howard DeVore of Michigan is in charge, and stories up to 5,000 words are eligible. Stories must be new, unpublished fiction. Awards are in cash. The competition is meant to encourage newcomers in the imaginative-fiction field, so the award is not to buy publishing rights; any manuscript sold brings the author

all the money involved. In last year's contest Gayle van Achtoven of Los Angeles won, but since then she has sold several more stories and is not eligible this year. DeVore handles entry forms, that includes the rules. One form for each story is required as the author's name and address is left off the manuscript to insure impartiality in judging. The contest ends around Halloween each year--manuscripts must be in DeVore's hands by that date.

In the earlier years of fandom, ladies were not unknown, but it seems that there are more of them involved in recent years. Besides those mentioned already, there is Joanne Burger, who has kept the Tape Bureau as a viable fan activity as well as being active in the N3F as director--and this year she also publishes the official magazine of club news and information. Janie Lamb, who has been hostess of an "oasis" room at conventions (where fans drop in to relax, talk, play games, and read between more strenuous convention activities), remains active--as Secretary-Treasurer, and (as this year) at times an elective officer (as one of the 5 Directors). Star-Trek fandom has active ladies leading groups, and ladies are present in local club groups and convention committees. And, of course, Bjo Trimble remains the queen of worldcon artshows--managing the biggest and most widespread example of artwork, including many items by fandom's ladies. Local conventions also have artshows handled by ladies, and other special effects that enliven conventions--such as fashion shows, parts of Mythopoeic and Creative Anachronism activities, etc.

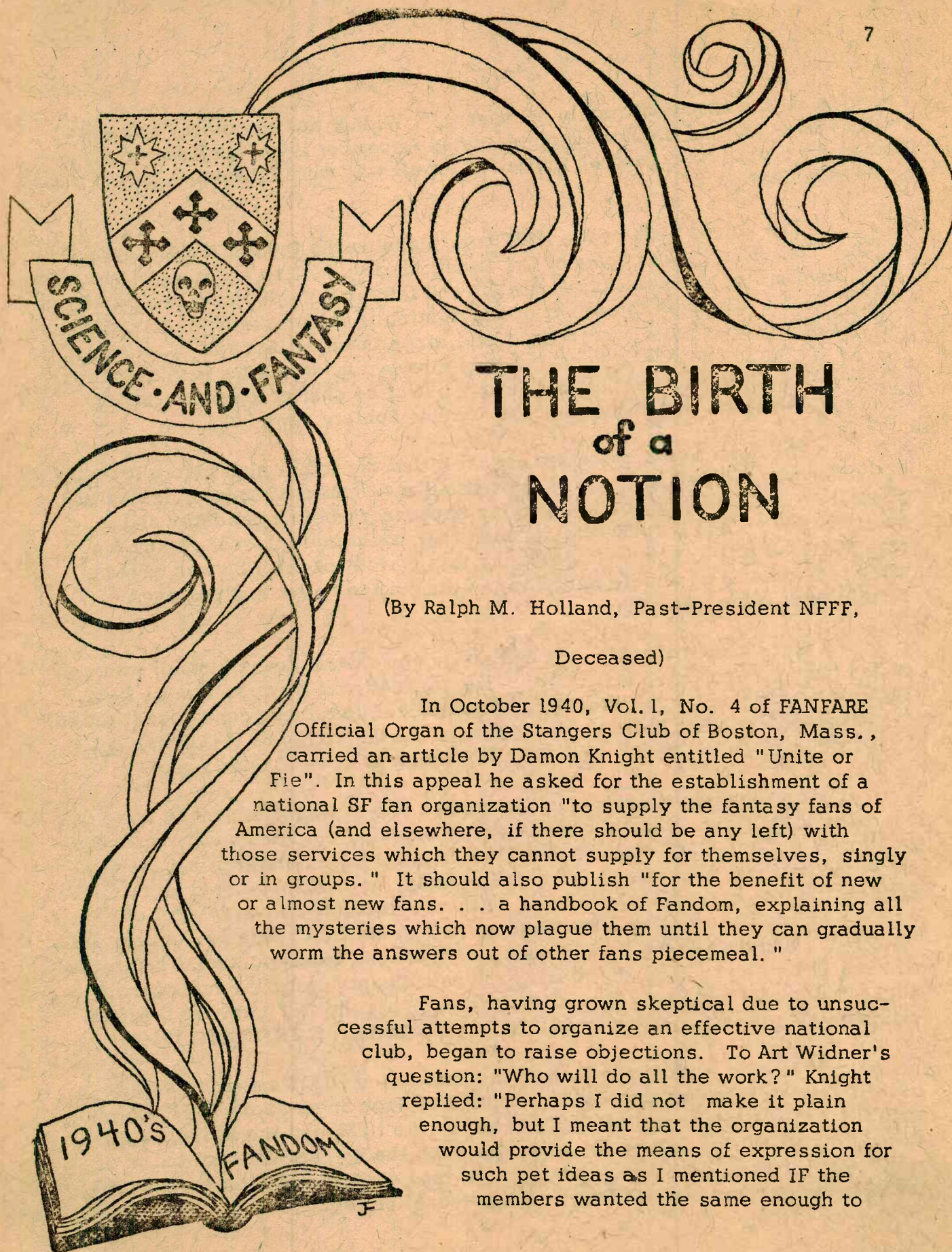
Until recently turned over to Ed Ludwig, the Overseas Bureau was managed (if that's the proper term) by Dorothy Jones of Bakersfield, California (as there are two Dorothy Jones in California, I had to mention the city). Ed was involved when the Story contest was started in 1960, and was also managing the NSF's Manuscript Bureau. This bureau is still in existence, with changes of management over the years.

In taking on the Overseas Bureau, Ed will contact fans and fanclubs abroad, seek to trade news, and otherwise stimulate an exchange of information about individuals or groups in fandom. He is still interested in writing, and may announce a project related to this and overseas fans some time soon.

Fandom is a way of reacting, and acting. Working mental muscles helps fans remain flexible and young--and may help us avoid some future shock and rigidity of mind and body. Being asked to write something for this publication showed me I have not succeeded in the latter!

Cons are good ways to meet others. There is also the matter of how fans are attracted to being active, or even what in SF and fantasy triggers interest. It may be that SF helps stimulate the imagination--or it may be that there are types of people who do not forget childlike flexibility and insights over the years. And many fans remain, after all the years. Forry Ackerman, Rick Sneary, Len Moffatt, Harry Warner, Bob Tucker--and many more. Gameplayers---Hello.

Stan Woolston



THE BIRTH of a NOTION

(By Ralph M. Holland, Past-President NFFF,
Deceased)

In October 1940, Vol. 1, No. 4 of FANFARE Official Organ of the Stangers Club of Boston, Mass., carried an article by Damon Knight entitled "Unite or Fie". In this appeal he asked for the establishment of a national SF fan organization "to supply the fantasy fans of America (and elsewhere, if there should be any left) with those services which they cannot supply for themselves, singly or in groups." It should also publish "for the benefit of new or almost new fans. . . a handbook of Fandom, explaining all the mysteries which now plague them until they can gradually worm the answers out of other fans piecemeal."

Fans, having grown skeptical due to unsuccessful attempts to organize an effective national club, began to raise objections. To Art Widner's question: "Who will do all the work?" Knight replied: "Perhaps I did not make it plain enough, but I meant that the organization would provide the means of expression for such pet ideas as I mentioned IF the members wanted the same enough to

provide all the time and trouble necessary." Widner and the other "strangers" were won over, and the next Fanfare, dated December 1940, published the proposed constitution, and an invitation for all who were interested to join the new organization.

The actual birth of the NFFF took place during the April 1941 meeting of the "Strangers" at the home of Dr. Robert D. Swisher, in suburban Winchester. Nine members of the New York Futurians and the fan notables from nearby states attended and, although the report of the meeting is rather sketchy, it is obvious that all the details were agreed upon here, since the first issue of "Bonfire", official organ of the NFFF, appeared less than two months later with a revised constitution, the first NFFF ballot, and a list of 64 charter members, mainly from the Strangers, the Futurians, the Frontier Society, and FAPA.

The Selective Service Act almost killed the infant club before it really got under way. When the term of first President Chauvenet expired, it was impossible to hold an election to name his successor--both candidates and publishers were being drafted faster than they could be replaced. Many fan organizations fell by the wayside during this period but the NFF was saved when presidential candidate E. E. Evans sent out the ballot and proposed certain emergency measures.

Many feared that the end had really come when Evans himself was called back for war duty, and the club lay dormant from Nov. 1942 until Dec. 1943, at which time acting President Al Ashley set up an emergency constitution "for duration" in order to break the impasse. In the spring of 1944 President Evans returned to the helm, and the NFFF began to move forward again.

The founding fathers revealed a great fear of entanglement in some of the many local fights which were constantly breaking out, and were unanimous in stating that the NFFF must remain aloof from all such, and from all the mundane things which separate fans as individuals, so that they could unite all fans on the only thing upon which all of them agreed, the advancement of science and fantasy fiction. Art Widner, Jr., in the first issue of Bonfire, said "Fan feuds and bulldozing by minorities more or less came together. Fan feuds can easily be stopped. . . by picking the participants up by the ruff of their necks and gently but firmly depositing them outside the NFFF, where they can squabble all they wish." (reprinted by KAYMAR from TNFF April 1969)

1944 also marked the date of the first of the NFFF's many projects to benefit Fandom, the "Fanclopedia", compiled by Jack Speer as an NFFF project, with the publication being jointly financed by the NFFF and the LASFS. A proposed second edition fell by the wayside when the Korean War resulted in a manpower shortage for all projects but a revised edition was later brought out under the editorship of Dick Eney, as a personal project.

Other notable NFFF projects were the Richardson Indexes, a monumental index of Science Fiction and Fantasy prozines, plus a listing of the works of various sf authors, compiled by NFFF member Darrell C. Richardson in 1947, and various other indexes and checklists of value to collectors. Other publications included a dictionary of Fan language, lists of fanzines and fan clubs and, perhaps the most ambitious project of all, the publications in 1948 of the American edition of Life member David H. Keller's book: "The Sign of The Burning Heart".

The first decade of the NFFF's history was relatively free from feuds, although there were a number of minor clashes, some due to personality conflicts, but most seemingly caused by a feeling of frustration because the club had failed to grow into what its more enthusiastic members thought it could and should be. The most serious of these was in 1946, between President Walter Dunelberger and Directorate member Francis T. Laney, TNFF reported that "nothing much else was discussed at the World Con in Los Angeles (Pacificon), but the matter was finally resolved without major damage to the club.

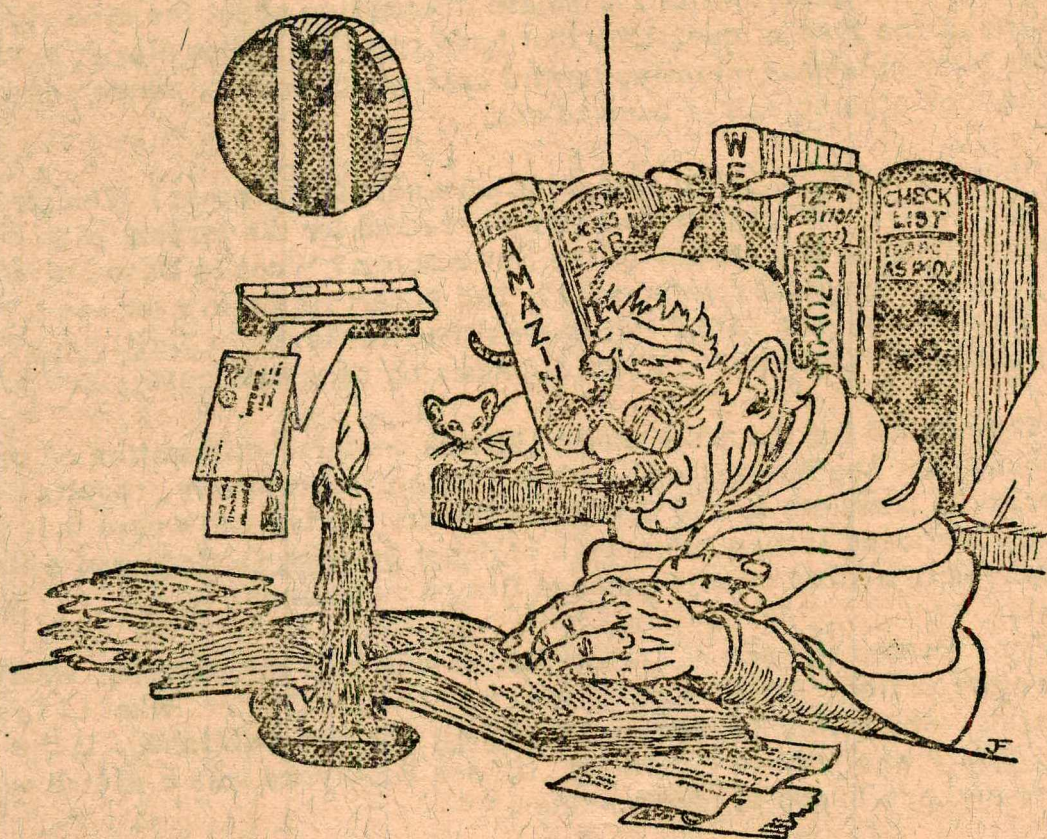
Despite these distractions, the club grew steadily until 1951-1952, reaching a high point of more than 400 members. Then it began a rapid decline. The reasons given are many--too much bickering--failure of promised "benefits" to appear--lack of contact with officers and other members--irregular publication of the Official Organ--etc. In about three years the membership had dropped to 100.

In 1955 the bitterest feud of the club's history broke out between President Don Susan and Directorate member Orville Mosher. Practically the entire year was devoted to it, and very little club business of any sort was transacted. Late in the summer of 1955, Proxy Susan presented a petition to dissolve the NFFF, and ordered the Treasurer to "freeze" the club funds pending a membership vote on the proposal. The petition lacked sufficient signatures, and legal advice was that an organization such as ours can only be dissolved by unanimous vote, but the vote was held to obtain an expression of membership opinion. It was almost unanimous against dissolving the NFFF, but many members quit in disgust at all the feuding and 1956 saw the club at a new low of 79.

The road back was a long and hard one, made harder by loss of our funds, but loyal members dug down into their pockets to finance the Official Organ until the club was solvent again. There was a small flurry in 1957-58 when a crusade was spearheaded against Communism. This was rejected for the same reason that Fandom rejected Michelism in 1937--because our purpose is the advancement of science and fantasy fiction and other things directly pertaining to them. Any other matters are outside our domain. They may be very important problems, but they should be dealt with in other forums. In the latter part of 1960, this decision was upheld by a membership vote with only a handful of dissenters, and the matter has now faded out.

The NFFP has not yet attained the glory and prestige of the 1951-2 period, but is definitely once more on the way up to the point where it can be of real service to its membership in helping them attain the maximum enjoyment from their hobby, and, in so doing, strengthen Fandom in general.

K. Martin Carlson



A DECADE OF INFORMATION BUREAU

Any member of the National Fantasy Fan Federation may write to any other member -- this is in essence a correspondence club. We publish an up-to-date roster of members' addresses, we have a wide-open letter fanzine, Tightbeam, coming out bi-monthly, and the officers and bureau heads are always available for questions.

Yet often a new member (usually a new fan) doesn't quite know who to write to, if he wants a specific question answered, about the club or about science fiction fandom in general. So the N3F Information Bureau was set up, to answer specific questions about the N3F and fandom. (The word "specific" is emphasized to discourage general questions like "What is fandom?" and "Tell me everything about the N3F.")

Soon the categories were expanded to include questions on science fiction and fantasy as well. Those four subjects scarcely limit the variety of questions that have been asked (and answered) in the Information Bureau column and by mail since 1962, when the column first appeared in Art Hayes' N3F-slanted Thru the Haze, and later in The National Fantasy Fan, the club's bi-monthly official magazine, alternating with Tightbeam.

Aside from questions of immediate information about the club, here's a sampling of the type of questions that have come in, taken almost randomly from over forty columns--slanting toward brevity, of course, since some of the questions took a paragraph or more to ask.

In what issue of Weird Tales did Lovecraft first appear? The real name of George Orwell? What fanzine holds the record for the largest page count in one issue? What is the history of the N3F emblem? What is Dean Drive and how is John W. Campbell related to it? Did Robert Heinlein ever use a pen name? How do you join FAPA? When was the first issue of Thrill Book? How do you pronounce "Cthulhu?" When did Amazing become digest-size?

They asked for the addresses of British dealers, information on copyright, info about artist Lee Bown Coye, on J. G. Ballard's first story, results of the Fanac polls, a complete list of Dominick Flandry stories and where they first appeared, how many issues there were of Super Science Fiction, and a list of the addresses of all the current science fiction magazines.

They wanted to know if Arkham House was still in business, where to locate a story called "Tangle Hold," who was Claude Degler, what is Creative Anachronism, where was Bradbury's Fahrenheit 451 first published, if the Fortean Society was still in existence, if Ross Rocklynne was a pseudonym, and the names and addresses of new fanzines.

Reporter-like, they asked who was the editor of Super Science Stories' postwar issues, what convention was first to have Labor Day instead of July 4th as Worldcon time, where did the beanie as a fan symbol originate, when was Roger Zelazny's first pro story published, why was the ending changed on Tucker's Long Loud Silence, and how to get the go-ahead to start a new N3F bureau.

They posed questions like, "What was the issue of Astounding with titles and authors complete, published in reply to a letter by a reader, about a year after the letter?" "What can you tell me about Wm. Timlin's The Ship That Sailed to Mars?" "What HC books has Bok illustrated?" "When and what was the very first fanzine?" "How many 'Retief' stories has Keith Laumer written?" "In what issues of Fantastic Adeventures did Robert Bloch's 'Lefty Feep' stories appear?"

They needed information on The Neo-Fan's Guide to SF Fandom, the Westercon, E. E. Smith's "Tedric" stories, the radio programs "Dimension X" and "X minus 1", Forry Ackerman's magazine Spacemen, Arthur Leo Zagat, numerical fandoms, N3F Presidents, biographies of SF authors, fannish slang Hugo nominations, the International Fantasy Awards, pseudonyms, history of If magazine, all of which was supplied them... eventually.

Though questions are (or should be) brief, the answers are often long and detailed. Example: "What is First Fandom?" Originally, "first fandom" was just the first group of fans to attain national prominence through fanzines.

When a second group of fans began to take over, some fans considered this "second fandom." This went on through "sixth fandom," when the whole system of numbering was discredited by the doubtful claims of "seventh fandom." There have been no numbered fandoms as such in the last two decades.

On the other hand, the club, "First Fandom" has an actual existence. It contains most of the old-time fans who are still around who entered fandom before 1938. First Fandom is not an active club, but it has meetings at conventions and an occasional publication, and sponsors the "Hall of Fame" awards.

Here's an example of how the column feedback operates. "Can you identify the story and author in the enclosed clipping? I wrote to the San Diego Union but never received a reply." The clipping goes: "Dr. R. R. Browne, a British physicist, has suggested that our universe is but an atomic particle in a 'super-universe.' Science fiction authors beat Dr. Browne to his theory by several years. There was the story, for instance, of a man who drank a potion which caused him to shrink, first into the molecular, then into the atomic world, where he discovered a whole new universe. He shrank into smaller and smaller worlds, as a huge creature at entrance and a tiny one on departure. He finally shrank into the tiniest particle of all, winding up knee deep in a pool of water near a miniature city. The body of water was Lake Erie, the city Cleveland." I didn't know the answer offhand (though I should have) so I published the question in the column. Readers wrote in that it was "He Who Shrank" by Henry Hasse, in Amazing Stories, August 1936, reprinted in Healy and McComas' Adventures in Time and Space. (Then someone asked, "Whatever happened to Henry Hasse?")

And here is how delving among indexes and my collection brings out fascinating results: "In F&SF, Nov '55, there appears a story, 'Youth, Anybody?' by Cleve Cartmill, about another story by Cartmill. This story is supposed to have a title something like, but not exactly, 'Nor Custom Stale.' The story is said to reveal the secret of eternal youth, and four SF magazines to which it was submitted folded before this story could be published, supposedly due to some supernatural influence. Anthony Boucher, then the editor of F&SF, in a postscript to 'Youth, Anybody?' claims that at the time that Cartmill sold F&SF this story, another SF magazine finally published the other story whose title is not quite 'Nor Custom Stale,' and that the issue containing that story was the last that magazine ever published. What I want to know is, was Boucher telling the truth, and if so, what is the real name of the story, and the name of the magazine (which must have folded in 1955)?"

The trail led from "Youth, Anybody?" which I read (a story about the author's inability to place for keeps this story due to devilish influence) to Boucher's postscript, then to the Labowitz index for 1955-56, where under Cleve Cartmill are two stories: "Youth, Anybody?" and "Age Cannot Wither."

"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale, her infinite variety, "-- Shakespeare. The magazine was Beyond "10, and the story, "Age Cannot Wither" is also about dealings with minor devils, and a movie queen who couldn't be

made to look old when they wanted to... #10 was the last issue of Beyond.

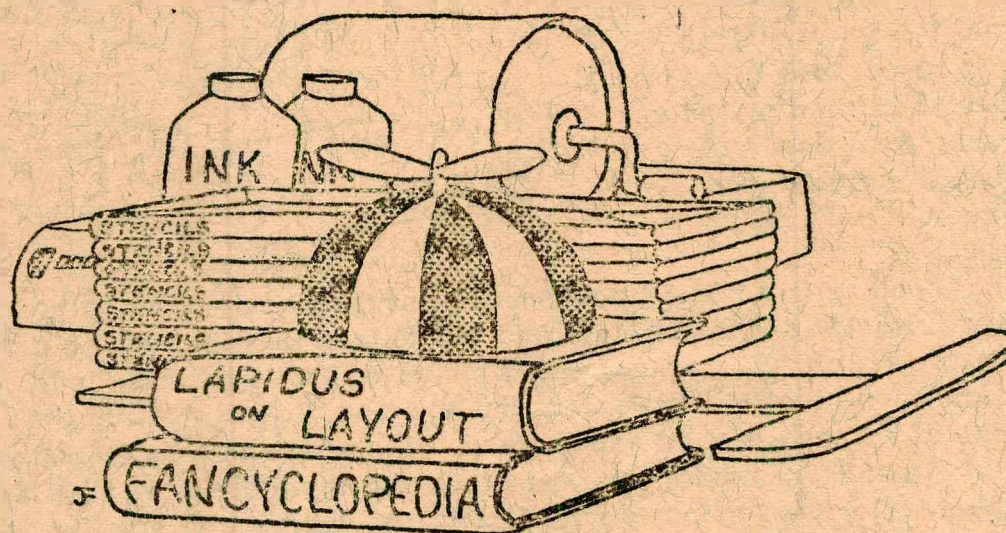
Sometimes I can't find the answer anywhere, nor can the readers of the column. But I don't give up on any question. Maybe you know the answer to the following. If so, contact the N3F Information Bureau, which can use answers as well as questions.

Who was T. P. Caravan, who wrote the Evil Old Professor tales in Other Worlds? Why was Baron Munchausen called Baron Prasil in the Czech motion picture? Is there such a thing as a science fiction (not fandom) dictionary? And what is the origin of the fan coinage "Weetongs?" I'll give 100,000 weetongs for the answer to that question....

Donald Franson

FIAWOL, NO; SOWIAWOL, YES

Those mentally active people of FANDOM (are there any other kind?) are never satisfied with mundane expressions or words to describe pithily, if esoterically, those actions and attitudes peculiar to themselves. You have bumped heads--if you are a neofan or nufan-- against some of these already. FIAWOL is such an expression of somewhat ancient coinage to represent the state of complete obsession in which Fandom Is A Way Of Life.



This state of complete dedication of time, love, money, and sweat is one that has undergone championing by the possessed and condemnation by the fans who are immune to the totally consuming virus of mimeograph ink and all that goes with it. Much of the anti-feeling is expressed by a distraught wife or a grumpy husband; but their sentiments rarely see print. What FIAWOL-fan is going to stop cranking the mimeo to fix a leaky faucet? Or, if the fan is a woman, will she waste a labor of love over a roast and trimmings, or will she free her left hand from the mimeo long enough to pop a TV-dinner into the oven?

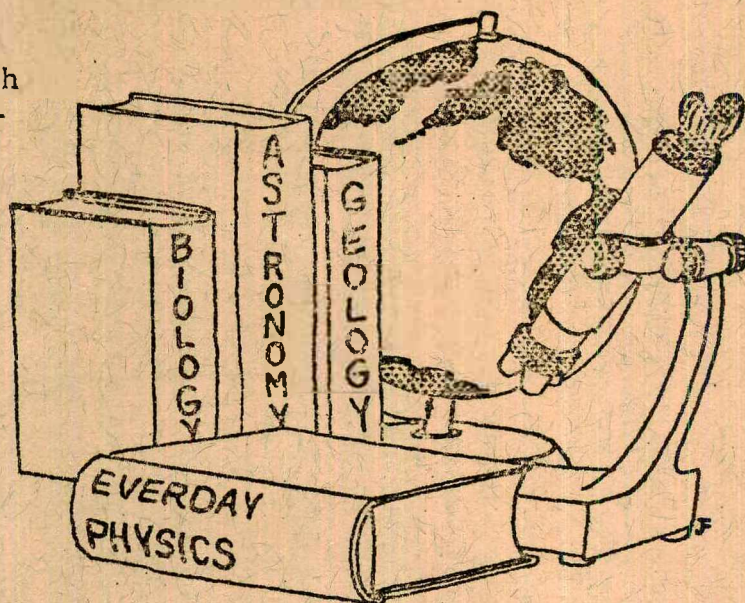
This writer is far enough into FIAWOL, and with a loose grip still on reality, to realize the danger of total commitment. If you are still in school, it would be foolhardy to your future and your complete development as a "coping" individual to neglect everything but Fandom. If you are out of school, unmarried, and working, there are still long periods of the day when your mind had better be on the business at hand. And, if you're married, watch out!

Thus, I propose SOWIAWOL. This life-style will never get you in trouble--well, not much anyway-- and it will keep you in touch with reality on a level of constant enjoyment in Fandom, science-fiction and fantasy, and the whole universe.

What is SOWIAWOL? Simply, Sense Of Wonder Is A Way Of Life.

I am indebted to Bill Marsh, long-time fan, for this quote from Albert Einstein which Bill sent for printing in my fanzine, TITLE:

"I do not know what I may appear to the world; but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst that great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."



Mundane life could be this way, but rarely is. Thus, a youngster, born with curiosity about the stars and clouds and the ticking of a clock, soon discovers, perhaps, that school and the kids on the block are, let's face it, clods! And then he or she discovers the amazing, the fantastic, the wonderful weirdness of science-fiction and fantasy. The sense of wonder is nourished. And when the solitary reader/dreamer discovers there are more like him scattered around the world, tied together with typewriter ribbons and smudgy mimeograph paper, he is "hooked" into fandom. Now he can share his sense of wonder, along with a lot of other things.

It's when these other things loom strong that SOWIAWOL may succumb to FIAWOL. Graphic layout games may be played in which he struggles for the HUGO; he may develop chronic con-itis, finding enjoyment only in partying at conventions; he may enter the fray of ego gratification to the exclusion of all else.

Instead of discussing the potential meaning of a "black hole" he may concern himself only with the number of staples to tack a 30-page fanzine together.

He may disappear into his lair to enjoy the company of his mimeograph machine, never to see the sun again!

Would you believe this . . . ?

He may never read another science-fiction book again.

Donn Brazier