

Anvil



ANVIL

HAMMER AND TONGS

An Editorial of sorts by Charlotte Proctor

4

THE OBSERVER'S FIELD GUIDE TO BIOLOGY LECTURERS

Another biological survey by Marc Ortlieb

5

FORGED FIGURES

Jane Gray tells us where our money went

6

THE OLD IRONMASTER SINGS

Buck Coulson goes to a filk-con

7

YOUNG UPWARDLY MOBILE PHEN

Harry Warner looks askance at modern fans

10

NOT-A-CON-REPORT

BSFC travels, Beauregard reports

12

TRIAL BY FIRE

Valerie McKnight is revealed to be a Trekkie

13

FORGED MINUTES

More unbelievable antics of BSFC

17

AND THANKS FOR THE FISH

A Hugo winner reviewed by Pat Gibbs,
who is no longer in exile

19

THE ANVIL CHORUS

Letters from our readers

22

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HAMMER AND TONGS

by Charlotte Proctor

This is the space where an editorial would be, if I could think of anything to say. Nevertheless...

Last November we published an issue called the 5th Annish, so this must be the 6th annish. How time flies! I wasn't going to mention it until I realized that we have all this great stuff, like a Doug Chaffee cover, a Harry Warner article, a huge letter column, as well as the regular things. Trial by Fire is even making another appearance. Will wonders never cease? So it looks as if it will be an issue deserving to be called an annish.

The big news around here is, of course, that Atlanta won the Worldcon bid for 1986, and when the were passing out jobs, the Birmingham Artists and Writers Association (BAWA) got Major Publications. We're talking about Progress Reports and the Program Book, folks. Fortunately, besides being fan artists, Bill Brown and Wade Gilbreath are professional commercial artists and know all about typesetting, budgets, graphics and all that good stuff. They have a staff of willing workers, too: Nancy Brown, Cindy Riley and Linda Riley. Of course, I'll do what I can to help.

Bill says for all you artists out there to look through previous worldcon PRs and PBs to see what kind of illos and fillos are used. Yours may be just what we are looking for. He can't promise to use everything that is submitted, but he surely can't use it if you don't send it in. He'll return unused art to you. Send art and SASE to:

ANVIL/BSFC, Attn: Bill Brown, P. O. Box 59531,
Birmingham, Alabama 35259-9531.

We've got too much good stuff in ANVIL this time for me to ramble on... Marc Ortlieb is even talking about biology again...



THE OBSERVERS FIELD GUIDE....

by Marc Ortlieb

I'm fast coming to the conclusion that there is a tendency for Teachers' College lecturers to come to resemble the subjects in which they lecture. This was first suggested to me when I met one of the lecturers in the Cell Biology unit that I was doing. He was a touch wider than he was tall, and, my reliable source of college gossip assured me that he had a lot of trouble with the college photocopiers. It seems that every time he leant over to adjust the original, his stomach made contact with at least five of the touch sensitive buttons that operated the photoconier, leading to a real jumble of papersize, number of copies, and contrast on the final copy. I was not really surprised to discover that his field was chicken gut development. (He is a research scientist, and spends much of his lecturing time going over the material that he has been researching. I now know more than I really want to about the migration of neural crest cells in chick embryos.)

Then there's our Botany lecturer. He specialized in Australian Flora, and, like the acacias and the eucalypts with which he deals, he is unobstrusive, yet well suited to surviving in his environment. He has a particularly quiet voice, and yet one that inspires confidence. He's certainly not showy, despite his facial foliage. Much as there is confusion in the classification of the Eucalypts, I'm having a hell of a time trying to classify his accent.

The most obvious example of this adaptation to suit the environment in which they teach is our evolution lecturer, who specializes in primate evolution, no doubt in an attempt to find out what he has to do in order to advance another step on the evolutionary ladder. His body language is most reminiscent of that of the orang utan, and his slightly balding red hair contributes to the image. He is loose-jointed, and one expected him to, at any moment, act out the brachiating abilities of the oranges and gibbons that he describes.

There are times when his enthusiasm tends to worry people, especially those in the front row of the lecture theatre. He was explaining to us the background to Darwin's theory of evolution, and, in the course of this, he touched on the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin's grandfather, Erasmus Darwin. Having done so, he could not resist the impulse to introduce us to one of Erasmus Darwin's less acceptable theories. There was evidently much argument at the time concerning the sex determination of human babies. Erasmus had this theory that it all had to do with the moment of conception - that, if the father was being kind and gentle in his love making, then the resulting child would be a girl, and if the male was being lecherous and lascivious in his love making, then the child would be male.

He explained twins, where one baby was male and the other was female, as a result of the father being alternatively wracked by lust and tenderness. The description of the theory was entertaining enough in itself, but our lecturer got so carried away in his explanation that he virtually acted out the process in the front row of the lecture theatre.

I will certainly attempt to examine this phenomenon further, with the final goal of being able to key out biology lecturers according to morphological and behavioural characteristics. I still need further data though, as, from my superficial observations, most lecturers appear to specialize in bovine coprology.

FORGED FIGURES

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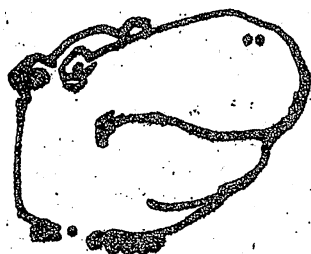
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*Padlock
the
hippos*

THE OLD IRONMASTER SINGS

by Buck Coulson

Actually, he doesn't -- by request. However Juanita and I did attend the Ohio Valley Filk Fest in late September. Since we were in fandom before filksinging existed -- well before -- we're still croggled at the idea of conventions entirely for filkers. But they're nice. OVFF, held in one of the northern suburbs of Cincinnati, attracted singers from Canada, California, eastern Pennsylvania, and probably other heathen places, as well as midwesterners. Off Centaur attended, en partial masse, to sing and make recordings. Among other things, awards were given; a mail ballot had been circulated ahead of time.

For the record, Bill Maraschiello was named Best Male Filker, Julia Ecklar was Best Female Filker, Best Original Filksong was Leslie Fish's "Hope Eyrie" (otherwise known as "The Eagle Has Landed"), Best Humorous Song was Clif Flynt's "Unreality Warp", and Best Parody was Frank Hayes' "I Like Little Fire Lizards". General awards for service to filking were presented to Gordon Dickson, Juanita Coulson, and posthumously, to Robert Cook.

Other than singing, which one can't do constantly all weekend (though a few people tried), there were a few panels and the usual round of talks and looking for places to eat, plus a small huckster room. One major difference from regular stf cons was the lack of parties; come night, everyone was in the filk room.

This seems to be a good place to insert a plug: I have for sale copies of Juanita's tape, "Rifles & Rhymes". Songs are historical rather than science-fictional, though there are a few folk fantasies -- a deal with the devil, the ingredients of philtres, and one on the ways to attract a ghost. Others concern the Brady family of colonial Indian-fighters, Cortex, Andrew Jackson, Stonewall Jackson, the Alamo, the Battle of the River Plate, a British auxiliary cruiser in WWII, Mary Todd Lincoln, Drake's raid on St. Augustine, St. Clair's Defeat, George Rogers Clark, etc. Price \$9.00 postpaid. (I also have for sale tapes by Bill Maraschiello, Julia Ecklar, Leslie Fish, and other such as Suzette Haden Elgin; write for information.)

The entire idea of filkcons is fascinating to me. That science fiction fans get together for conventions is strange enough, when you think about it; fans were the first unorganized (or disorganized) group to do it. Conventions are basically for organizations; American Legion, Elks Lodge, American Watchmakers Association, Ku Klux Klan, Class of '42, etc. Stf conventions, and their imitators in the comics, mystery, pulp collectors and media fandoms, are unusual. But the idea that filkers, a sub-genre of science fiction fandom, can get enough people together to make a convention possible, seems very unusual.

Of course, everything about fandom is much larger than it used to be. My first convention was Chicago in 1952, which boasted that it attracted 1000 people (and it has been mentioned by people who should know that figures were fudged to obtain that number). This year Juanita and I attended Okon, a regional con in Tulsa that had 1700 attendees, while the worldcon had over 8,000.

I'm not really sure that I approve of this increase; I live in the country basically because I dislike having people too close to me. But since there's not much I can do about it, I accept it. At least, it means there are new friends to be found every year or so, and I can be pleasant to vast numbers of people for a weekend, secure in the knowledge that I don't have to see them again until the next con, if ever. And fandom is a lovely relaxation from work. One can't tell a coworker to piss off without generating a lot of friction that one then has to endure for 40 hours a week. But in fandom it doesn't matter; if you can't stand someone, there are more and pleasanter friends where he came from. Dispensing with unwanted associates has no bad side effects. (Though I admit that my friends have been reproaching me for becoming mellow in my old age. Evidently I suffer fools with more amiability than I used to.)

Just to keep everyone up to date on our moving and unpacking, we now have 20 bookcases filled with science fiction; this takes care of pulps, hardcovers and paperbacks except for the hardcover and pb anthologies. Another 5 bookcases are in place, but not entirely filled.



Four or 5 more are awaiting another push to get them placed properly and loaded. Then I start building more bookcases, partly because some of the ones we do have aren't too suitable and can now be replaced by ones built specifically for this house. Couldn't do that while we were renting. Being constantly behind in our shelving, we grabbed whatever came our way, in addition to what I built. (The ones I built are 6' high and 3' wide, mostly. After I built one 6' high and 5' wide and then had to cut it in two to get it downstairs when we moved, I standardized on something more portable. Some are designed to be put against a wall; others jut into the room and are loaded from both sides, like library stacks.)

Then I acquired a group of file cabinets cheap from Overhead Door's scrap sales; currently they're holding fanzines, but once we get them all cleaned up (the dirtier and rustier ones are in the barn, awaiting cleaning) they'll be useful for other items. Four 5-drawer files are up; two more await cleaning and room to install. We just might get everything straightened out by the end of the year.

We also are obtaining estimates on the cost of having insulation blown into the walls of our house. You southerners have it easy... Autumn here is a time of sealing up the cave in preparation for winter; storm windows, weatherstripping, and so on. Especially with fuel costs soaring; we spent something like \$1200 on fuel last winter, and that house had insulation in the walls.

And of course there are the standard chores. In addition to the bi-monthly book review column for AMAZINE, I do a monthly sf-magazine review column for COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE, which also pays reasonably well, and I'm doing research for the songbook to accompany Juanita's tape; I'm to annotate the songs for people who aren't history buffs. Plus the hobbies which include writing this column, writing letters, attending conventions, etc. We might even get a YANDRO out. (If I talk enough about it, I'll get myself in the position where I have to get it done.)

It's going to be an interesting winter.



YUMPHEN

by Harry Warner, Jr.

Fandom seems cyclic, after you've spent a few decades in it. The same disputes arrive periodically in fanzines and are argued out in similar manner. This or that book is excitedly "discovered" by a fan every eight or ten years, then forgotten until its next discovery. A scandal at a convention is considered awful because it never happened in fandom before, except by those who can remember the last time it occurred a few years back.

Nevertheless, I think there have been a few genuine changes in fandom since I entered it in the later 1930s. These take the form of differences between the bulk of fandom then and now. Remember when I describe them that I'm generalizing wildly, and I'm not paying attention to the numerous exceptions to these trends which I imagine I have detected.

Fans have become more like one another in the early 1980s than they were in the late 1930s in such aspects as the way they dress, their politics, and their musical preferences. I saw a cartoon once depicting hundreds of young people clad in jeans, sandals, and the other customary apparel of today, pointing at one youngster who wore a suit, tie and dress hat, yelling in unison: "Conformist!" This mundane cartoon might apply to fandom today, when an Arthur Hlavaty creates a sensation at a convention by wearing apparel which Rotarians would prefer. Quite a few fans visited my home during my first years in fandom and I was struck by the wild dissimilarity in the way they dressed: some looked like tramps, others like civic leaders, still others had garments mixed between the two extremes.

I think a comprehensive survey of fandom today would show more than 90 percent favoring the Democratic ticket in the presidential election this year, supporting ERA, opposing prayer in public schools, and otherwise following the liberal thinking of today. Fandom was much more diverse on political and social issues when I was a neofan: proclaimed socialists and communists, obvious fascists, a thorough mix of Republicans and Democrats, anarchists, technocrats, and a sprinkling of others whose ideas were too abstruse to be catalogued.

A very young fan asked in the Holier Than Thou letter column a while back if anyone in fandom liked the kind of music that used to be called classical or serious or longhair. She might have found a handful of them. But I think musical preferences during fandom's youth were almost evenly divided among classical and the kinds of popular music that prevailed then, swing and jazz. Even the folk music enthusiasm which swept fandom a while back seems to have vanished except for its folksinging heritage.

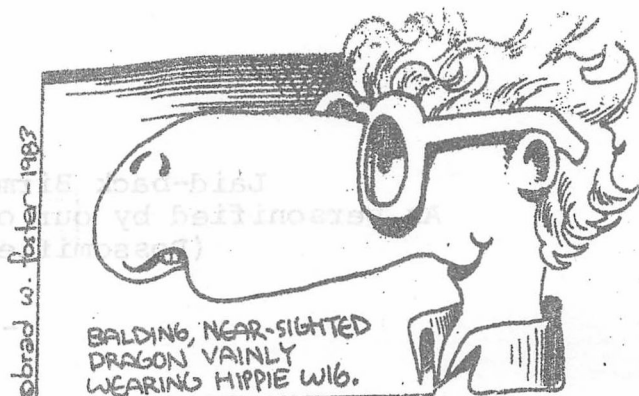
There have been several recent outbursts in fanzines about the fact that so many fans today are overweight or at least heavily built. Those early visitors to the Hermit of Hagerstown were almost uniformly skeletal in frame. Walter E. Marconette, a fine oldtime fan artist, is the only one I can remember who even approached plumpness. This, of course, could be nothing more than a reflection in fandom of a general pattern in human dimensions: there hadn't been much to eat during the Depression years before I got into fandom: food has been plentiful for the past few decades, and the US population seems to have picked up weight as a whole.

The percentage of mercenary fans to the total number of fans is much greater than it was in the late 1930s. When I entered fandom, two or three fans were publically selling books and magazines they no longer wanted; no more. It was years before I heard the first instance of a fan artist selling a drawing or painting instead of giving it away to whoever liked it. Pure amateurism was so general that even two pros, who ran Arkham House, got bawled out by fans who thought they had held back a few copies of *The Outsider* and *Others* until it was out of print, then sold them at more than cover price. The other day I saw in a fanzine an offer by a semi-pro fan of several dozen copies of a paperback she had compiled, recently out of print, for six or eight times its cover price, and nobody has remarked about this being unusual conduct today. The dream of publishing a fanzine and then converting it as circulation gains to a semiprozine or prozine rarely occurred to the more primitive fans of that unimaginably distant era.

But there's one important exception to that tendency: the conversion of fans into pros. Fandom produced many of the most important SF writers, editors and agents during its first decades of existence. In recent years, most important new pros seem to be emerging without a fannish apprenticeship and quite a few of them are reversing the old procedure by acquiring an interest in fandom as a result of their professional successes.

There are other changes which have been described in fanzines and discussed at conventions too frequently to need repeating here: the increased percentage of females to males in fandom, the emergence of many specialized subfandoms, and the drift away from the kinds of fanac which are conducted via the postal service toward face-to-face fanac. Then there's the overall question of how many of these changes in fandom are the result of trends in fandom itself and how many of them are imposed by pressures from the mundane world on fans and fandom.

And this article is so long already that I'm not going to waste more space on extending the list of changes in fandom to such minor matters as the fact that there were no superannuated fans in the late 1930s meditating about how things have changed since they were neo-fans four or five decades earlier.



NOT-A-CON-REPORT

Birmingham fandom exited en masse the weekend of October 19-21, 1984, to attend ConStellation--Ursa Major in Huntsville, Alabama. Cindy, Linda, Jane, Marie, Warren, Steve, Charlotte, Penny, Beauregard, Eric, Forrest, Adrian, Julie, Ward, Bill, Nancy, Wade, Jim, Andy, Maggie, Tim, John and James were there. There were more Birmingham club members at the convention than attend most meetings. And whom should we run into there but Jim Gilpatrick, who left Birmingham to seek fame and fortune, and who is now high muckety-muck in the Atlanta in '86 concom. It was good to see our Local Boy Who Has Made Good.

We also picked up this year's Australian -- Justin Ackroyd, who made an immediate impression. But in spite of that, we took him home with us. Picture this: a seasoned world traveller in the car with four Birmingham fans, 90 miles from their home, who can't find their way out of Huntsville. "Why don't you look at the map?" he inquired.

"Map!? Map? We don't need no stinkin' maps!!"

(The guard at Redstone Arsenal very kindly directed us to the highway.)



Laid-back Birmingham Fandom
As personified by our own Beauregard O. Possom
(Possomified, maybe?)

TRIAL BY FIRE

by Valerie McKnight

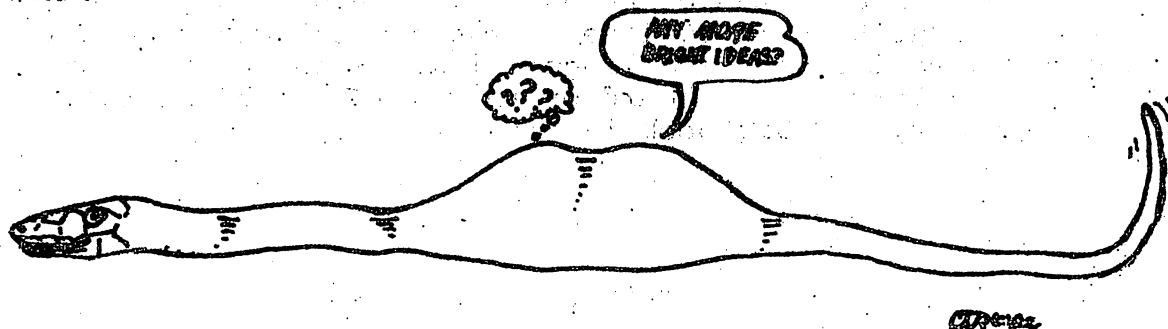
WHO NEEDS LIFE? I GET HIGH ON SCI-FI FANS FROM HELL
Tony Cvetko, 20750 Colwell #1, Farmington Hills MI 48024

A zine reviewer sees lots of different kinds of zines. You get the brilliant ones, the funny ones, the earnest ones; you get the little clubzines and newsletters that you can't say much about but are nice anyway; and you get the pretentious drivel. This last group is composed of beautifully printed zines rubbed by BNFs and would-be BNFs who think they're the gurus of some sort of fannish culture and that their feuds, backbiting and worthless natter deserve to be considered on the same level with the writing of human beings. These are often (though not always) the same people who bemoan the shrinking of fanzine fandom; they can't seem to understand why anyone would refuse to participate in an activity characterized (in their zines, anyway) by rudeness, cliqueishness and utter triviality.

The zine reviewer (me) gets very depressed by zines like this. All the smug babble about the superiority of fannish culture tends to sour one on the whole business. But then... when all seems lost... along comes SCI-FI FANS FROM HELL and all's right with the world.

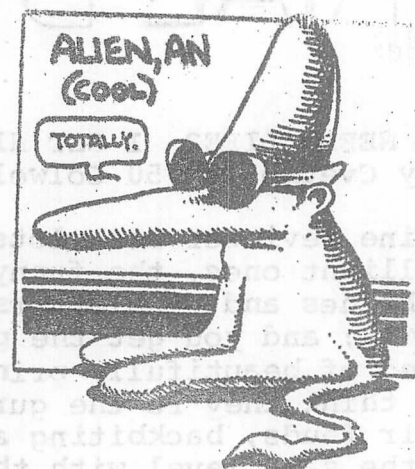
It's vicious; it's disgusting; it pokes holes in so many fannish balloons that the explosions should be audible in Australia. The contents range from "The Wrong Stuff", a hilarious account of giant conventions, to "Fanbusters", an icky tale of a band of heroes out to eliminate a slimy menace to society. My favorite is Bradford Parks' "Why I hate Sci-Fi Fans from Hell". He explains quite clearly that fans are degenerate scummy ratbags who ought to be drowned in cabbage water (actually that's my phrase, but I'm really getting into this). Of course, he may have intended the article as humorous exaggeration, but that's OK; if he didn't mean it as it reads, I'll mean it for him.

To celebrate my new freedom from trufannish idiocy, I'm going to chuck all the zines (even the ones I liked) into File 13 and spend the rest of this column reviewing STAR TREK novels.



THE FINAL REFLECTION, by John M. Ford
c. 1984, Pocket Books \$2.95

This STAR TREK novel is unusual in that with a few name changes it would pass as a (very good) regular SF novel. The story takes place about a generation before Our Heroes took off on their famous mission, and is told entirely from the Klingon point of view. It is imho the most successful creation of an alien culture since THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS.



The main character, Krenn, is the captain assigned to open diplomatic relations with the Federation and bring back a Federation ambassador. Krenn is in many ways a typical Klingon. They are a short-lived, violent race, to whom peace is not merely unthinkable but un-thought of. The only thing that keeps them in check is that few of them live long enough to understand or implement complex strategies. The handful who do are regarded with suspicion by other Klingons, who fear that those who "make things happen" will gain some unforeseen advantage in their endless powergames. Krenn was raised by the greatest of these strategists, Thought Admiral Kethas, who uses chess-type games to teach him to ruthlessly manipulate people and events. He also learns that fighting can have more purpose than just winning, and that there are other pleasures besides struggling to gain admission to the high tech Valhalla that constitutes the Klingon afterlife.

Krenn is thus particularly susceptible to the influence of the Federation ambassador, Dr. Emmanuel Tagore. Tagore is a complete pacifist, but also an expert on Klingons who understands that in order to achieve peace with the Klingons he will have to persuade them that peace has advantages. He keeps the Klingons continually off balance with his open refusal to carry weapons and his continual and obvious honesty. Still, none of his tactics would be of any use in the face of the Klingon's vast cynicism if it weren't that Krenn decides that Tagore's objectives coincide with his own and sets out to achieve them - Klingon style.

The book's theme is expressed in gaming metaphors. Klingons see both society and war as parts of an eternal game with no object but power. Krenn's education in stylized wargames reflects the endless and subtle moves in the game of Klingon life. Krenn is a master, and his games, whether on the board or in reality, are elegant. The author is a master, and his book is elegant.

MY ENEMY, MY ALLY, by Diane Duane
c. 1984, Pocket Books \$2.95

I'm doubtless not the only Trekkie to wish that Diane Duane had been writing in the sixties. A STAR TREK script with her style, humor, and technical ability would have been great as few of them were. But since that couldn't be, I'm glad we have her books. And anyway, the special effects of the imagination are still cheaper than the ones on the screen, and you don't have to fear some screwball studio chopping out the plot in favor of the fireworks.

Not that Duane skimps on the fireworks. Her vivid descriptions of action and technology warm the heart of this old Hornblower fan.

He was doing something Jim had seen done in starships in warp, but always at slower speeds; deforming the warpfield itself, broadening and flattening it forward, tightening it to the rear. And the ship was responding in the only way she could - slowly, gracefully nosing downward as she flashed through the Helm's remains, then nosing down faster, harder, pitching forward until she was literally flying vertically, nacelles and the broad side of the disk forward... (Sulu) kept the Enterprise rolling forward - a slow somersault through other-space at seven hundred twenty times the speed of light, while behind her, seeing nothing but the unchanged shape of her defensive screens, Wildfire came charging in - right into the teeth of her forward phasers...

You will note that none of Duane's action sequences owe anything to fighter planes of any vintage. She uses the technical jargon of STAR TREK to create an original and logical set of tactics for FTL craft.

But, you ask, is there a story? Is there a story! Ael, another of those formidable Romulan Commanders, discovers a Romulan plot so monstrous and far-reaching that it threatens to destroy the integrity of her culture even while allowing the conquest of the Klingons and Federation. She doesn't think that victory is worth the sacrifice of the good old Romulan virtues, so she crosses the border to form an alliance with Kirk. The fascination of the plot lies in the carefully detailed descriptions of a starship at work. There are no button-pushing mannequins on this Enterprise. Everybody from the captain to the rec chief fills a useful (and interesting) position. And the characterizations are just as good. The author's trick of leaving the Romulans' conversations untranslated for the first few chapters gives an interesting impression of alienness, and she manages it so well that the meaning is perfectly apparent.

Altogether, this book gives one the feeling of having died and gone to Trekkie heaven. Though of course everybody gets to go to Trekkie heaven in Duane's book THE WOUNDED SKY, which owes a lot to both C.S. Lewis and the Tao and is at once very beautiful and a sort of theological joke... I think. In any case, it can only be appreciated by people who don't take themselves too seriously.

TRADEZINES//TRADEZINES//TRADEZINES//TRADEZINES//TRADEZINES//TRADEZINES

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IRON MOUNTAIN NEWSLETTER: Valerie McKnight, 8325 7th Ave. So.,
Birmingham, AL 35206
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Branch PO, Cambridge MA 02139
MEMPHEN 75; Memphis SF Association, P.O. Box 12534, Memphis, TN 38182
THE NASFA SHUTTLE, July-Oct. 1984; P.O.Box 4857, Huntsville, AL 35815
NEOLOGY Vol.9, #3,4; ESFCAS, Box 4071, Edmonton, AB Canada T6E 4S8
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WANFFULL 14, Jack R. Herman (see: Eyetracks Over America)
WAIT FOR THE RICOCHET #6, Pascal J. Thomas, Box 351293, LA, CA 90035
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(Concluded on bacover)

FORGED MINUTES

Beauregard O. Possom

((Minutes of the September meeting are from a letter Beau wrote to his uncle, Colonel Stonewall O. Possom. -- cp))

The old oak tree really seems empty after your visit. Wish you could have stayed longer... you really missed a good club meeting. The program was an artists' panel, and although prophets are reputed to have no honor in their own country, that doesn't hold true for Birmingham artists. Bill Brown, Wade Gilbreath and Cindy Riley comprised the panel and the audience, while friendly, was also familiar. By that I mean that they asked all the impertinent questions that you would like to ask at a regular convention artists' panel, but don't have the nerve.

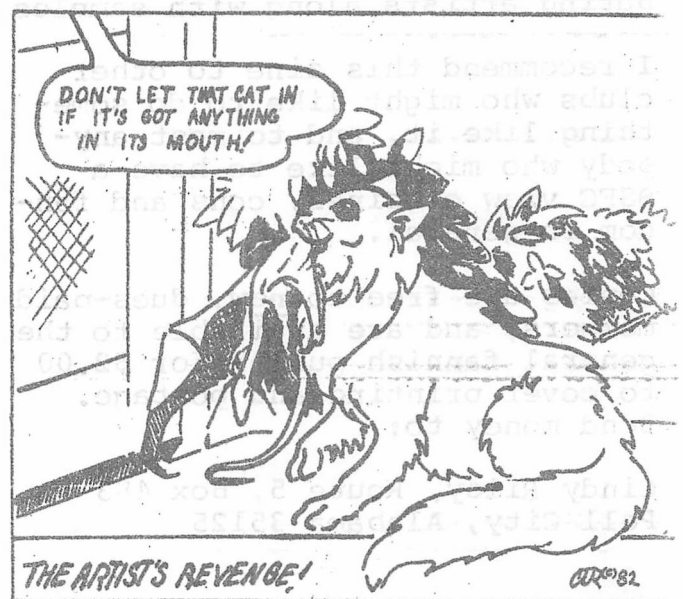
What do you do in real life? Wade and Bill answered by saying that they are incorporated as Bread & Butter Graphics and do free lance illustrating, ads, etc. When Cindy said that she worked for the IRS, Wade immediately scooted his chair away from her. Her assurances that he had nothing to fear so long as his tax returns were unimpeachable only caused him to move further away.

Bill declared that he was not an artist at all, but a designer. This came as a surprise to some of us who have paid good money for his "art". He went on to say that he creates an interesting design with lines, circles and dots, using various mediums, and then puts a space ship at the end of one of the lines, and voila!, it's a piece of SF art, complete with planets, suns, fiery trails across the heavens, stars and constellations.

Wade's forte is illustration -- specifically faces. He announced that he was going to put his famous "Dracula" up for sale at ConStellation in Huntsville, and brisk bidding started immediately.

Cindy draws animals well, probably due to her close association with horses. Her program book cover for ConStellation features a bear-Ursa Major. No, the bear doesn't look like a horse.

The panelists had, in a moment of madness, brought their portfolios and what started out as a panel ended up as an art show.



More Forged Minutes.....

October 13, 1984. The meeting was called to order by President Linda Riley who, after telling us what conventions to attend, and harrassing Penny Frierson about the new club t-shirts (Penny said "But you haven't given me the list of sizes and colors!" and Linda said that was no excuse), then announced that this was the club anniversary.... the first meeting, according to ANVIL 1, was held on October 14, 1978. (Close enough)

Reading further from the minutes, it was discovered that eleven people attended the first meeting. Looking around the room, we seem to have doubled in size in six years. At the first meeting plans for by-laws and a constitution were tabled. Linda tabled them again. (An aside here: Jim Phillips later said that he was at that first meeting and he distinctly remembered that the president was given absolute power, but that the membership reserved the right to impeach the president at the drop of a hat.) The program was a guest speaker who talked to us about astrology. It was... interesting.

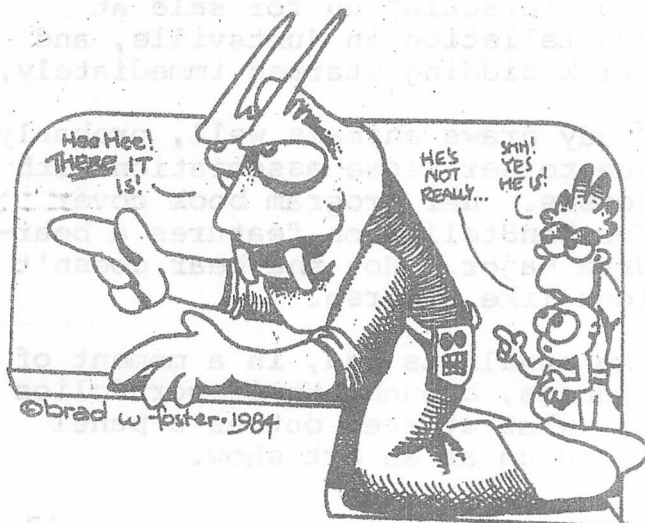
ANVIL - THE SPECIAL EDITION

Proof copies of ANVIL - THE SPECIAL EDITION were in evidence at the October meeting. Editors Cindy & Linda Riley compiled information for this special edition especially aimed at the neofan, but it turned out to be of interest to most any fan. It contains articles on "what is a fanzine?", "what is a con, and how to get the most out of one", the history of the club, as well as bios of our contributing artists along with samples of their work, and other info.

I recommend this zine to other clubs who might like to do something like it, and to most anybody who might like to have a BSFC view of zines, cons and fandom in general.

Copies are free to new, dues-naid members, and are available to the general fannish public for \$2.00 to cover printing and postage. Send money to:

Cindy Riley, Route 5, Box 483
Pell City, Alabama 35125



AND THANKS FOR THE FISH

STARTIDE RISING by David Brin (Bantam, 1983) \$3.50, 462 pp.

Quality won out this year in the Hugo Awards Best Novel balloting and David Brin took it with a book that has not received anything resembling the attention that the latest Asimov or Clarke novel would attract. STARTIDE RISING was honored because it recaptured that sense of wonder that the best science fiction always stimulates. Now I must confess that I did not read this novel until after it had received the Hugo nomination. If it also escaped your attention, the Hugo Award is a good excuse to go down to the library or bookstore and get a copy.

The story takes place in the far future, several centuries hence, when mankind has started reaching out to the stars, only to encounter a galactic civilization that is as far advanced, technologically, as we are over primitive man. As if that idea is not enough, there is the added complication that Humanity has raised chimpanzees and dolphins to sentience through genetic manipulation. That makes Terra unique in the galaxy because there is no known counterpart responsible for the "uplifting" of Man to intelligence. That renders humanity an upstart (and orphaned) "Patron" race, without the genealogy of its own Patron race.

At the outset of the story we meet the crew of the starship, STREAKER. It is made up of 150 dolphins, seven humans and a chimpanzee. There are no pets on board; these are all crewmembers. The composition of the STREAKER's complement is an experiment. The Captain is a dolphin named Creideiki and the humans on board have technician-scientist roles. This is revolutionary in Galactic civilization because the practice had always been to keep an "uplifted" species in indentured service for centuries as payment for the Patron's services. In some situations the Patron actually practiced slavery in relations with the client species. The reception the Terrans receive is about as warm as that given to the Napoleonic government by the various European empires. Democratic ideals are dangerous in both such environments and viewed with great hostility by adherents of the status quo.

To make life even more difficult, the STREAKER discovered a derelict fleet of fifty thousand Moon-sized starships in a small "gravitational tidepool", fifty thousand parsecs above the galactic plane. The fleet is suspected to be that of the long-departed, and possibly extinct, Progenitors, the race that started galactic civilization several billion years ago. The discovery is of such historical importance to the other galactic races that it provokes religious passions when the news leaks during an open holographic transmission back to Terra of a picture of a Progenitor's (?) body. As a consequence the STREAKER is ambushed, wounded and then chased into hiding on the uncharted water-world of Kithrup by the warships of half the galactic races.

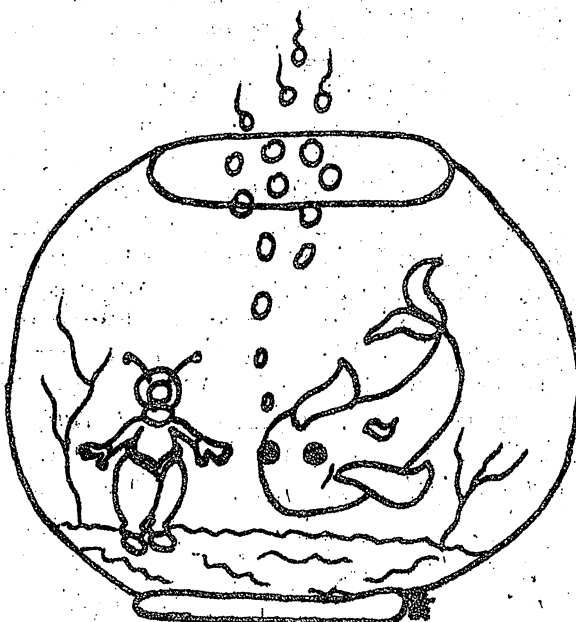
They are determined to capture and/or destroy the STREAKER. The only thing operating in the Terrans' favor is that they are hidden beneath the surface of the ocean while the competing fleets battle it out above them for the "right" to capture them.

There are two point-of-view characters predominating in the book, Gillian Baskin, a physician and secret agent for the Terragens Council, who is herself a product of genetic engineering and Creideiki, the dolphin captain of the STREAKER. Although the plot is attention-grabbing and suspenseful, the principal characters are well drawn and easy to identify with. That does not mean that the dolphin characters are andromorphic. They still retain a hint of otherness that is intriguing. There is a love interest between Gillian and Tom Orley, a fellow agent and, generally speaking, the standard issue heroic type. Equal time is given by way of a love interest between Creideiki and Hikahi, a female neo-dolphin who is third in command. The cast is much larger than that and the author kindly provided a Glossary and Cast of Characters at the front of the book.

One of the exciting aspects of this book for me was the importance attached to language in the narrative. The neo-dolphins are able to communicate in three different languages: Anglic, Trinary and Primal. To represent Trinary, Brin uses a haiku-like verse. Here is a sample:

* Some scheme may work --
 If fate buys it
* We'll make a gamble --
 And simply try it *

It succeeds in conveying another way of looking at reality that would be likely in a sentient race like the neo-dolphins which had arisen in an environment without tools or any of the other products that we associate with civilization. The effort in the matter of languages is carried over into all of the other aspects of alternate universe creation.



This universe was used in Brin's earlier novel SUNDIVER, which recounts events occurring about 50 years before the STREAKER's mission. I have picked up the earlier novel and started it, but it is just not as attention-grabbing as STARTIDE. That should be good news to anyone who was disappointed in the first book and hesitant about getting into this novel.

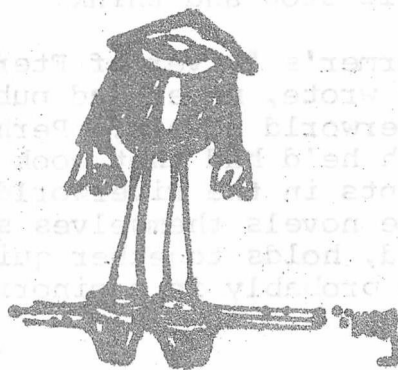
I could not resist the temptation to tie this book review in with one of my other favorite books, THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY by Douglas Adams. That is the wherefore of the title of this review. There is the following passage at the beginning of Chapter 23, which I have always loved:

Curiously enough the dolphins had long known of the impending destruction of the planet Earth and had made many attempts to alert mankind to the danger; but most of their communications were misinterpreted as amusing attempts to punch footballs or whistle for tidbits, so they eventually gave up and left the Earth by their own means shortly before the Vogons arrived.

The last ever dolphin message was misinterpreted as a surprisingly sophisticated attempt to do a double backward somersault through a hoop while whistling the "Star-Spangled Banner", but in fact the message was this: So long and thanks for the fish.

I can heartily recommend this novel as a "good read" which expands your consciousness. It just cries out for a sequel and I do not think that Brin is going to let all of his universe-building go to waste. It passed my "Keep you awake into the Early Morning Hours" test of suspense and readability with flying colors. I have not gotten into many of the plot details because there are several subplots hidden away onboard ship and on the planet Kithrup, the unfolding of which I would leave to the reader. Additionally, the novel represents the modern trend in SF towards well-written books with sound science. They may be a minority of the books published each year, but they are an advancement for the genre and it might be said represent the step up from the adolescence of SF.

Patrick J. Gibbs
Critic-in-Residence



THE ANVIL CHORUS

by Charlotte Proctor

Well, Wade finally ran out of fannish steam. "I just can't do it anymore, Charlotte. The creative wells have dried up." So I have become the Compleat Editor now. But that's all right. Wade was there when I needed him, doing this part of ANVIL while I was struggling with stencils, mimeos, mailing lists and the post office. I can handle it now (I think), so let's jump right in.

=====

Mike Glicksohn I enjoy being kept on your mailing list: it helps
508 Windermere Av. me keep a little bit in touch with the southern
Toronto, Ontario fandom I expect to encounter at Worldcon '86.
M6S 3L6 Canada (I voted for Atlanta by mail, just recently: the
first time I've had to use a mail ballot since
they were first introduced.

Must say, though, that you folks are in desperate need of a proof-reader. The number of errors, mis-spellings and dropped out words in this issue is far, far too high. Doesn't anybody look at the stencils before they get printed? ((no.))

Only in a fanzine could one find a five page article on foreign toilets: that's probably one of the reasons I enjoy fanzines as much as I do! Enjoyed Marc's advice and instruction even though, as a former resident of England and a visitor to Australia, it wasn't all that new to me. Marc's good a (sic) readable style and he managed to write far longer than I would have thought possible without getting tedious.

I suppose everyone is used to those cutesy ways that some restaurants designate their toilets but it must confuse not only some tourists but also a few not-so-bright locals. Perhaps the cleverest way I've seen of differentiating the toilets was in a Florida sea-food restaurant somewhere down on the Keys where the Haldemans and I stopped for lunch some years ago. Their restrooms were designated INBOARD and OUTBOARD. Made a few people stop and think!

I just finished reading Farmer's "River of Eternity" which is the single novel he originally wrote, never had published, and eventually expanded into the five Riverworld novels. Perhaps it's blasphemous to say so, but I kinda wish he'd had that book published as it was. As marvellous as the concepts in the Riverworld series were, I didn't really feel Farmer made the novels themselves successful. The original book, on the other hand, holds together quite well as a single short novel. However, I'm probably in a minority on that one.

Bob Shaw

66Knutsford Road

Grappenhall, Warrington

Cheshire WA4 2PB U.K.

I heard that Atlanta had got the Worldcon,

but the news took quite a time to filter

through. I had double insurance, because

New York had also invited me to be toast-

master if they got it. Jim Gilpatrick turned

the screws on me a bit harder in this respect, intentionally or not.

He wrote to me from Smyrna and promised to phone me from the con if

Atlanta won -- and no call came! Looking back at his letter, he said

"We may phone" so my expectations were too high, but when no call

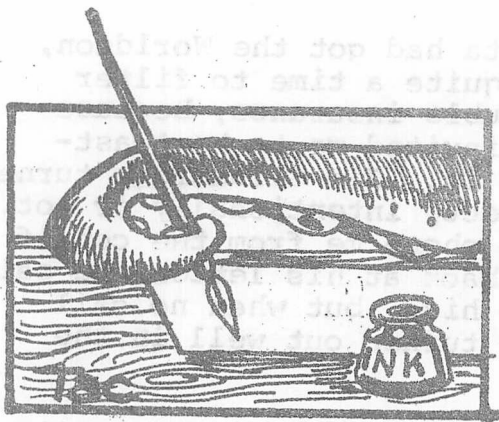
came I got a sinking feeling. But all has turned out well in the

end. I can't wait for '86.

Britain's economic recession has hit the publishing business pretty hard, which also means it has hit me pretty hard, so when we moved house last year I had to settle for a place which offered a decent amount of living space at not too great a price. I got one which has so much potential I'm thinking of naming it Battery, but the penalty is that it needs a lot of work done on it. I'm pretty good at that sort of thing, and I quite enjoy it as a change from sitting at a desk, but the snag is that it takes time. I fight this continuous battle -- should I finish a chapter or should I finish tiling the kitchen? Commonsense says finish the chapter and make enough money to pay somebody else to do the kitchen, but commonsense has never been one of my strong points. So I keep fighting this battle...

Marc Ortlieb Sorry to hear about the bastards at DSC who stole the
GPO Box 2708X flag and the t-shirts. There are some people who just
Melbourne cannot be trusted. It's sad when they turn up at
Vict 3001 conventions. The more I think about Aussiecon Two,
Australia the more I wish that it could be a tiny little conven-
tion to which only the nice people turned up, but,
when running a convention on Worldcon Scale you can't afford to be
choosy. Sigh. No more big conventions for me. (Except perhaps the
Perth National Convention in '86.)

On the home front things are as busy as ever. The college course is alternately fascinating and frustrating. (I had to get an extension on a botany essay, which I'll get to work on after I finish this letter.) I finally got the results of the cell biology course that I did, and was most pleased - I got a distinction - one of the two in the course. (Okay. I'm bragging. I figure I can afford to after that. If I do say so myself I worked bloody hard.) Unfortunately I can't see myself getting to Atlanta for the '86 convention. I am hoping to land a teaching job with the Victorian Education Department next year, and if I do, there's no way I'd be able to take off enough time to get to the Worldcon that year. (Mind you, I keep putting in a ticket in the lottery on the off chance.) ((Even if I did something like running for DUFF I wouldn't be able to get the time off. Sigh.))



Nicki Lynch
4207 Davis Lane
Chattanooga, Tennessee 37416

Thank you so much for keeping us on your ANVIL mailing list when we haven't been LOCcing or doing much in the way of fanzines. After talking with Jack Herman, Dick and I have gotten fired up about fanzines again and hope to get a second issue of MINOSA out before the flame dies.

We had a delightful afternoon conversation with Jack Herman (of Australia - he's the DUFF winner, I think) when he spent a long weekend with Atlanta Fan Mike Rogers. Jack filled us in on what happened at worldcon and explained a bit more about Australian fandom. He really made me want to attend the World Con that is going to be in his home country.

I was very pleased to see that ANVIL is becoming a fanzine of international proportions. So many people, in and out of the South, feel that the South is (a) insular or (b) has no fanzines. ANVIL is proving them wrong on both counts.

I was sorry to hear about your theft at DSC. I'll keep an eye out for the shirts around campus, but one thing, what are raglan sleeves? Are they the kind that come from the neck rather than from the shoulder? ((Yes. And thanks.))

Doing a special issue of ANVIL to "catch up" the newer members is an excellent idea. We sometimes forget that not everyone was there all the time and it is good to tell history around the campfire now and then.

Colin P. Langeveld
9, Lisle Holme Road
Liverpool L12 BRU, UK

Once again I find that I must comment on the standard of the cover artwork. GREAT STUFF! Boy, does it make me frustrated. A pity that Toni Jerman has such a low opinion of us

ANVIL artists. Well, all we can do is do our best, can't we folks? Perhaps Toni can send some examples of Finnish fannish art... but then perhaps he shouldn't. I'm feeling frustrated enough as it is.

Easter con turned out to be a whizzer. Fandom at its zaniest. See... fans in their undergarments frolicking in English waters in April (not a pleasant sight). See... the male ballet dancer all turned out in tutu and tights. As a con it was the nearest that the Brits have come to a worldcon since Seacon in '79. The organisers should be congratulated for a fine concept.

Harry Warner, Jr. The new ANVIL's prose awakened in its first lines
423 Summit Avenue my sense of wonder. Hank Reinhardt awakens awe
Hagerstown, MD 21740 because he has been in fandom a mere forty years.
What about me? By one way of reckoning, the
start of prozine-reading and prozine-collecting, I celebrated my 50th
year as a fan last summer. In another respect, I'll be able to ob-
serve my golden fanniversary around the time the 1986 worldcon is
staged in Atlanta because it was in 1936 when I began to have locs
published in prozines and acquired my first correspondents and re-
ceived my first fanzines. Hank Reinhardt is a NeoGhod of Fandom as
long as I'm around.

I congratulate you on the worldcon victory. Maybe you could interest
Ted Turner in telecasting the whole proceedings on his superstation,
which seems to be running all sorts of unusual programming nowadays.

Hagerstown isn't small enough to provide all the small town amenities
that Buck Coulson catalogs. Occasionally something happens here that
couldn't occur in a genuinely large city: during a long hospital stay,
I receive a visit from my barber who brings along the tools of his
trade, knowing it was time I needed his services; an occasional phone
call comes from someone holding a yard sale inquiring why I haven't
dropped by because there are some books for sale I'd probably like to
have, and so on. But times have changed since I was young and Hagers-
town was half its present size. I can remember my mother occasionally
getting interested in a classified ad which contained a phone number
to call, and then leafing through the phone directory until she found
the number in order to determine the identity of the advertiser, and
bus drivers who would stop for no apparent reason at a corner and wait
a while without complaints from passengers who understood that someone
always boarded this particular trip of the bus at this corner and was
a bit late today.

Buck's account of the amount of stuff he was forced to move is imores-
sive. But I think I would give him a good run for his money, either
in volume or in weight or in total number of individual items, if
calamity struck and I needed to move, with the added advantage that I
didn't have any help in accumulating so much stuff. I'll bet Buck
doesn't have almost a half-century of copies of "The Sporting News"
or two pianos or several tons of orchestrations of popular music from
the 1920s, just as samples.

I almost engaged in one of those mock feuds. One of the old timers
in fandom who resumed his activity a few years ago and I were talking
about creating a violent feud between ourselves which would attract
extra attention because neither of us has engaged in much hostility in
fandom down through the years. But I decided to abstain for fear
either he or I would drop dead in the middle of this pretended fuss.
How would the survivor convince fandom at large that the whole thing
had been a hoax, with no other living fan to back up his version of
the truth? The survivor would suffer the general belief that he'd

spoiled the last months of the other participant's enjoyment of fanaticism by such a senseless and brutal feud. It would have been something like those B movies of the 1940s in which a reporter or sociologist arranges to pose as a criminal or a lunatic to gather material on conditions in a jail or asylum and the institution's superintendent, the only person who knows the real reason for this person's confinement, dies leaving the investigator no way of getting out.

((Gee, I'm glad you took my mention of mock feuds in the spirit in which it was intended. I have never engaged in the real thing, and don't intend to, but some people really took me to task for even suggesting the idea. Or do you suppose they are taking me up on it?))

I loved Brad Foster's cover. For no particular reason, the larger individual on the left reminded me of a chess piece. Has anyone in fandom ever thought of creating chess sets with fantasy or science fiction themes? With all the money people bring to cons nowadays, I suspect that an enormous price could be obtained in the huckster's room for a well-designed, neatly executed custom-made chess set of this type.

((Bob Maurus has, I believe. Ask Pat Gibbs for details.))

Sheila Strickland There I was, expecting the dreaded "X", when ANVIL Rt. 1, Box 386B 33 comes along with an "L". To keep it that way, Baker, LA 70714 here is a long overdue Loc.

Nice review of "Tea With a Black Dragon". I read it a while back and thoroughly enjoyed it at the time. I've just finished reading McAvoy's new trilogy "Damiano", "Damiano's Lute", and "Raphael". They are "straight" fantasy, set in Renaissance Italy for the most part. I am impressed that a new writer can write so well. The last line of the second book made me cry ((me, too)) and the end of the last book infuriated me because I was left in the dark just as much as the characters who remained. Oh, and there is a black dragon who becomes a major character in the last book. Now I have to re-read Tea to see if the two dragons might be one and the same.

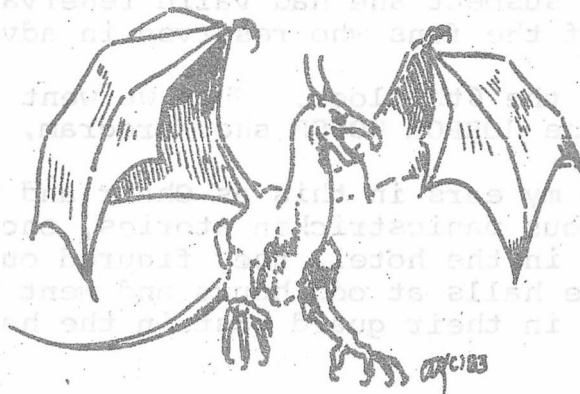
There should be some significance in the fact that ANVIL has so many tradezines from Australia, but I've no idea what it is. I know I've developed a yen to see Australia, if for no other reason than to see a sky full of different constellations. Australia in '85 is out for financial reasons, but I'll hope to see a report by Beau as he looks for his cousins.

((I guess it all started when Marc Ortlieb came to Bhamacon II in 81, and we started trading- and other Aussies came to see us and sent zines, and it grew into a monster before our very eyes. I like it.))

I'm looking forward to BACHcon. I may be changing jobs about then, but it's on my calendar. I've gotten tired of big cons, a nice little friendly one will be just the thing. ((See BACHcon flyer enclosed.))

Colin Fine I am pleased to see the interest being shown in 205 Coldham's Lane Mervyn Peake. I regard him as one of the greatest Cambridge CBI #MY writers of fantasy (note that like most of the best, United Kingdom he was not writing in a genre: it is only after the fact that you can make any attempt at classifying his work, and even then it does not sit well on the same shelf as, say, with Lin Carter). There are only the four novels (three Gormenghast and Mr. Pye) but there are lots of shorter pieces and poems, not to mention illustrations to many books. (I'm particularly fond of his illustrations to the "Hunting of the Snark".) As Diane Fox says, there's a wealth of his work in "Peake's Progress", including a very early draft for what later became "Titus Groan". I am particularly glad that Dalvan Coger quotes part of The Rhyme of the Flying Bomb: it's a fairly long and very moving narrative poem. But what I find even more moving is the illustrations. In his last few years Peake suffered from Parkinson's disease, and progressively lost control of his body. (This is one of the reasons why Titus Alone is so incoherent). Sometime about 1961 he was for a while able to hold a pen, and he then illustrated The Flying Bomb: but he was not able to produce the fine line and detail of his earlier work. The pictures to the Flying Bomb were done in thick felt-tip pen: very bold and impressionistic, with a chiaroscuro that fits the poem superbly. I don't know whether they would move me as much if I didn't know the circumstances of their composition, but as it is I really feel the genius bursting through his physical handicaps in them.

I ought to say, for those who are interested, that there is a Mervyn Peake Society. Last time I had contact with it, it was run by his widow Maevie Gilmore and his biographer John Watney, but I don't know what is happening now. (I believe I heard that Maevie had died some months ago.) I left the society in annoyance about two years ago, because the only thing members were getting for their money was an (admittedly very worth-while) journal twice yearly, and a cocktail party at Maevie's expense once a year for those who could attend it. I and a couple of others tried to make it do something, tried to arrange social events, but we got little response and no help from the organisers. But if anybody's really keen, I'm sure I could find the address. The Mervyn Peake Review used to be very good (it's changed editors now, so I don't know what it's like), but at the time I didn't feel it was worth what it was costing me.



Irvin Koch There is something I can LoC on from
835 Chattanooga Bank Bldg. ANVIL 33 -- the "ghost floor".
Chattanooga, TN 37402

((See ANVIL 33. page 15, where Beauregard discovers from a man in a gray suit that he doesn't have access to all areas of the convention (DSC) hotel. Herein follows Irvin's account of what really happened, and why. Read it and weep.))

You see, the 3rd floor of the Read House was not TEMPORARILY non-existent. It is semipermanently nonexistent and has been for about three years; the last time anyone tried to use it for anything but the hotel's "dead storage" was ChattaCon 7. That huckster floor and consuite fiasco was enough to decide even THEM into not doing THAT again.

Before that a movie crew had once used it for temporary dressing rooms. Before that and going back many years it had been a dead storage area since in one of the periodic remodlings they'd decided they didn't have enough business and didn't really need the floor -- so they left it a junkpile. The elevators are programmed not to stop there and in recent times the buttons have been replaced with blanks instead of "3". The doors from the stairs are padlocked and the stairs simply bypass the floor.



If all concerned had really been on the ball they would have painted the walls of two rooms, put down some cheap carpet and hauled in some extra furniture. I know from when ChattaCon tried to use the floor that there are at least enough rooms in decent enough shape they could have been quickly renovated for the MRS VicePres Bush and SecretService Party. The padlocks could have been removed and the elevator turned off and on at will. Then the guards could have stood at the stairs vs the door and not had to worry about a hotel full of people traipsing by.

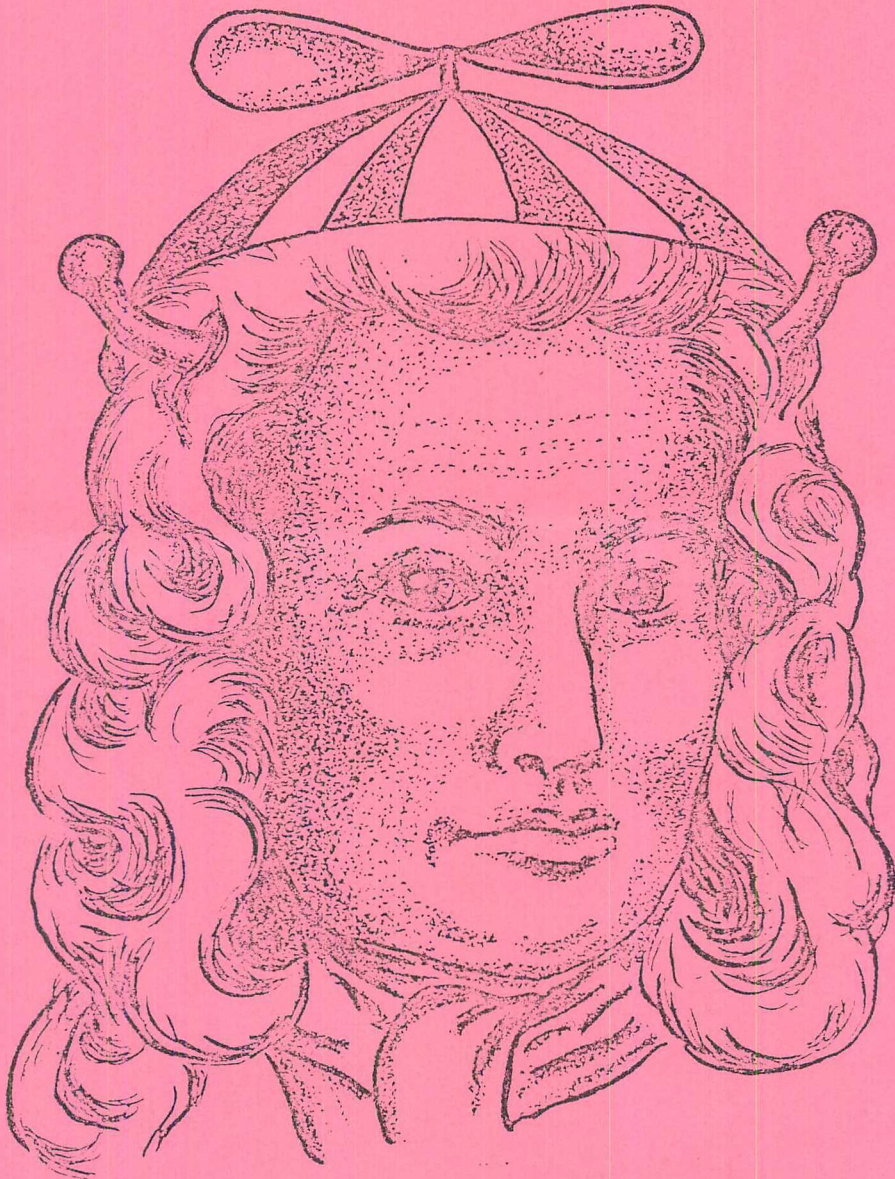
But that's not what they did. They didn't put her in a corner of the top floor either. Nor any corner easy to guard. She wasn't on the 5th floor where people claimed they were being bumped from on account of her either -- that was the late staying tour group. I suspect she had valid reservations just like about a third to 45% of the fans who reserved in advance.

She and guards were on the 6th floor. When we went down to the final rehearsal/staging for the HORROR HOUSE show/program, I saw them.

I'd already been up to my ears in this as Chair and taken a quick look earlier. Despite various panicstricken stories, once they realized there WAS a convention in the hotel, they figured out why people were walking up and down the halls at odd hours and went back to "parade rest" from "attention" in their guard post in the hall. NO action was

BachCon

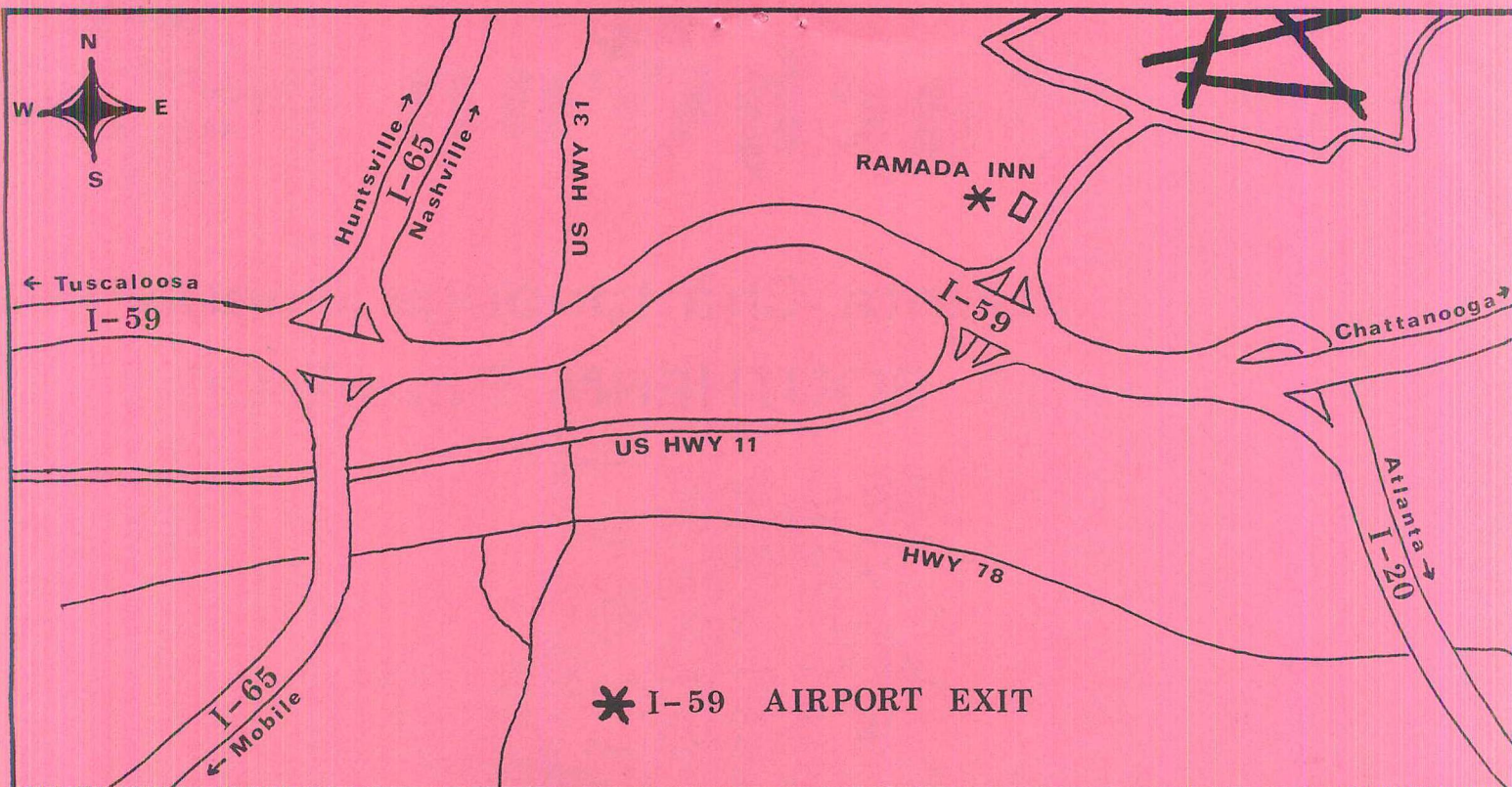
Birmingham Atlanta Chattanooga Huntsville
THE CLASSIC SOUTHERN RELAXICON



FEBRUARY 15 - 17, 1985

BIRMINGHAM , ALABAMA

(Son of ABC Cen)



HOTEL: RAMADA INN AIRPORT
5216 Airport Highway
Birmingham AL. 35212
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ROOM RATES: Single \$ 44
Double \$ 50

BachCon will feature a fully stocked ConSuite, Video Room, Hearts Tourney, Trivia Quiz, Dancing, Computers, Hucksters, and of course, Room Parties! There will be no official programming and no official GOH....but, Robert R. McCarmon, (author of Baal, They Thirst, Mystery Walk, Bethany's Sin and Night Boat) has agreed to not be our GOH and will give a non-GOH speech on Saturday night.

MEMBERSHIPS:

Before Jan. 31 - \$ 8.00
After Jan. 31 - \$ 10.00

PREREGISTRATION:

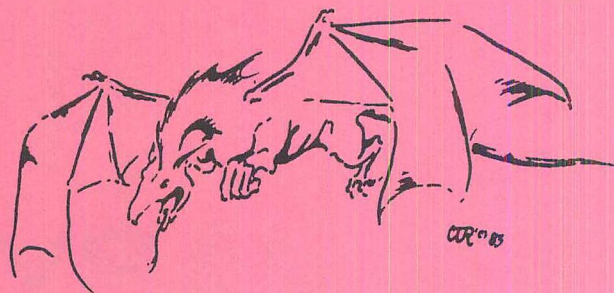
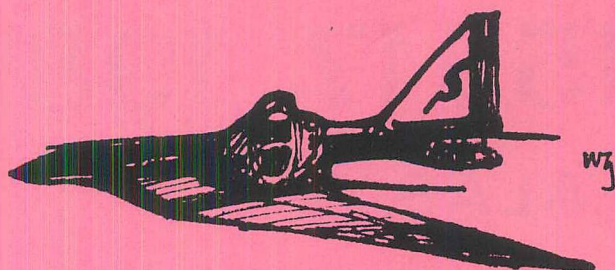
BSFC
P. O. Box 59531
Birmingham, AL 35209

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Julie Ackermann
1115 Grace Street
Birmingham, AL 35209

HUCKSTER INFORMATION:

Tim Gatewood
P. O. Box 55003
Birmingham, AL 35209



BEWARE OF LOW FLYING AIR TRAFFIC

Besides the tour group, we'd ALREADY been wiped out when the City of Chattanooga moved TWO festivals on top of our date and done national advertising resulting in approximately 10 times the attendance of any tourist draw the city had ever pulled before. Thus no rooms. We didn't really NEED the "tour group" or the "Bush party" to blow fans out for miles around.

I really wish we COULD have put people on the third/ghost floor...

((Yeah, Irv, it was a real trip. Jim Cobb had paid-in-advance reservations and ended up on the floor of Julie's and my ~~closet~~ room. Jane and Marie were going to stay with us, but they went to Linda's room which was a little bigger. The thing is, you could have been stuck with a bunch of surly fans, but once they found out everyone was in the same boat they were pretty good-natured about it. People opened their rooms to their friends, except for one who shall remain nameless ~~but/who/televs/books/for/ANYL~~. (No, no, I didn't mean that! Please don't hit me... aauhhhh.) And Penny Frierson stayed with Joe Celko. Of course, she had her son, Eric, along for chaperone. Joe always gets two keys to his room, in hope that something will turn up, so when Penny found there were no rooms to be had and asked Joe if he had any spare room, he was able to, with a grand and sweeping questure, produce a room key for a damsel in distress. Ah, yes, Irv, it may have been a hassle, but we had a good time.))

Pascal J. Thomas I did enjoy ANVIL 33:
P.O. Box 351293 especially the Beaure-
Los Angeles, CA 90035 gard cartoons and the
 lettercol, which has a
really remarkable international flavor.

Very interesting letter from Krsto Mazuranic, although I am not very convinced by what he says about people working for NATO forces being prevented to go (sic) to Yugoslavia. Well, that maybe, but as for people working for NATO governments... hogwash! In countries like France or Britain, more than 10% of the workforce works for the government in one way or another. You can not impose travel restrictions on such a large group of people. Specifics, please.



Bjo Trimble
696 S. Bronson Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90005

Some pieces of news, for your seemingly international fanzine (and here I thought it was just a little local newslatter!).

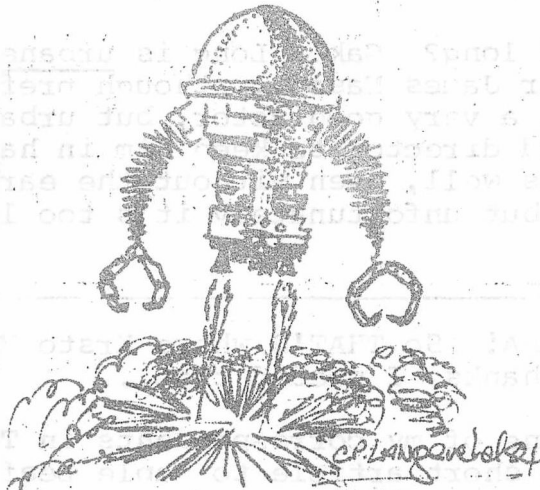
((Bjo thereupon provided me with some SCA material which was immediately scarfed up by the SCA contingent at my house, as well as some L-5 membership forms and newsletter. Since the local L-5 group is (are) also members of the club, and in fact, Warren Overton is the National Telephone Tree Coordinator, we have all that stuff. Warren, who has met Bjo, says that she and I are somewhat alike. He didn't specify, so I can only assume we share certain endearing qualities!))

Also, I am rewriting, updating, revising and including the 3 movies. the Star Trek Concordance. I need artwork, and would like to reach as many interested artists in your area as possible. ((Send SASE to Bjo, or me, for art guidelines.))

The deepest South I've been so far, to a con, is Ft. Lauderdale, FL for an Omnicon a couple of years ago, and to Ark-Con II in Little Rock, AR this month. Any way I can let conventions in your area know that I am available for a guest appearance? As fans who've seen me at cons can testify, I'm a good guest: I arrive early for talk shows and interviews, I work hard at judging art shows and masquerades, I will MC, auction, arrive on time to programs, fill in where needed, and be "on the floor" and available to fans as much as possible. I also arrive with assorted films, slide shows, videos, and other amusements. (I realize that I fall in the classification of Interesting Person, rather than Big Name Anything, but sometimes a convention has to fill in with other people than Big Names, nu?)

((You sound like the perfect guest, and don't sell yourself short. In certain circles, you are one of the Biggest Names of all. How much do you cost?)) ((And thanks for the art.))





Buck Coulson
2677 W - 500 N
Hartford City, IN 47348
to improve, right?

I liked Keith Asay's letter if ANVIL 33.
"With Buck Coulson as a contributor, the
best is yet to come." Or in other words,
my first column was rotten, but I'm bound

"Friend" as a euphemism for "mistress" seems to have originated in the TV talk show, though it spread rapidly to other media. It started out as "warm friend" (as in "Are you and Rock Macho planning marriage in the near future?" She giggles, and responds, "Oh, no; we're just warm friends".) Even the mundanes caught on to what "warm" meant in that context, though, so now it's just "friend".

I never lived in a big city like Hagerstown, but smaller towns that happened to be county seats used to have public rest rooms in their courthouses, usually with an outside entrance that was never locked. Drugs and vandalism put a stop to that, in the 1960s. Now you have to look for a gas station, and there aren't many of those downtown anymore, either.

((The Birmingham (Jefferson Co.) courthouse has public restrooms, but you have to know where to look. // Ever since a disgruntled spouse shot up a courtroom and injured a judge several months ago, they have "security". By that I mean one of those doors like the airport has, you walk through and hope a bell doesn't ring. They also search your purse. This is just at the entrance to Equity ... you can be armed to the teeth elsewhere in the courthouse. Once the bell kept ringing and a little old lady and myself were spread-eagled on the wall and body-searched!! As much as I go over there to file papers, you'd think they'd get to know me, but they keep changing the deputies.))

James Coburn as Mayland long? Gak! Long is urbane... you need someone like Rex Harrison or James Mason... though preferably someone still alive. Coburn is a very good actor, but urbane he's not. Nimoy could do it, with a good director to keep him in hand -- and he has a vaguely alien look, as well, even without the ears. Michael Rennie would have been ideal, but unfortunately it's too late to get him.

Garth Spencer AHA! So THAT'S where Krsto Mazuranic lives!
1296 Richardson St. Thanks, I needed that...
Victoria, B.C.
Canada V8V 3E1

One of my correspondents in Toronto submitted a short article to Maple Leaf Rag, my Canadian SF newszine, listing current bid committees for upcoming Worldcons. Somewhere or other I had the idea that Krsto was heading the YU in '88 bid, but I didn't have the address.

The way Krsto and Colin Fine talk up the Atlanta and British worldcon bids makes me wonder if there isn't something to the Worldcon -- so would you please explain to me what it is, what makes people want to do/see a big con?

Recent experiences have given me the prejudice that big cons attract airheads, and defeat the purpose of cons, which is for SF fans and fanzine fans to meet each other and have some fun. My idea of fun is incompatible with people in numbers approaching 6,000, including Cattlecar Exlaxica fans, gun nuts and kids playing "Logan's Run". I gather that Canadian and British cons both tend to be smaller than American ones... to which I say, "a good thing, too".

If there's something wrong with my attitude, I invite your enlightenment. Seriously.

((Garth, that is a really big question, and I invite loccers to respond to this one. But since you asked, I'll throw out a few comments. To begin with, the larger the con, the smaller the ratio of people there you know, and you tend to run with them. At a worldcon, for instance, you go hang out at the fanzine room or the daily newszine room and meet people you've only corresponded with before. You are not thrown with the airheads. Worldcon art shows and masquerades are the best. Worldcons are in a class by themselves. I, too, would rather attend small cons, but you should try a worldcon before dismissing them entirely.))

Charlotte, your comment about "the proper way to conduct a fanfued" threw me. I have this strange idea that a feud is a humorless, vicious dispute between two people, without anything positive about it. If I was in error, please enlighten me.

((See: Harry Warner, Jr. Loc, and comment.))

Mike Glickshon ((Mike evidently forgot he wrote in July, and his September letter begins on a decidedly disgruntled note.)) Say, howcum I don't get a big X on my ANVIL? You prejudiced against Canadians or something? And after I sent in my mail ballot to LA supporting Atlanta too! I fail to respond to ANVIL with at least as great a regularity as anyone else on your mailing list and yet I get ignored when the Xs are being bandied about. Surely all those years building up a fannish reputation haven't gone for nothing? Surely I deserve a big X along with the rest of the deadwood on your files? How about it?

((Mike encloses for my delight and edification a copy of his zine.)) Once you glance through XENIUM you'll probably be able to figure out whose side I'd have been on in the arguments/exchanges between you and Jim. To me, anyone who says "It's only a fanzine..." shouldn't bother to publish in the first place because that sort of viewpoint is invariably used to excuse sloppy inadequate work. If you don't care enough to do the very best job you can then I don't see how you can possibly have enough pride in what results to actually send it to someone else. (I'm not saying that this isn't done, just that I don't understand that sort of attitude. Obviously it's not something that all fans are concerned about and that's probably just as well. But I like to think that most fans at least try to do a good job.) I gather, from your last remark, that you've come to appreciate Jim's views and I'm glad if that's the case. I wouldn't say that fandom was the last bastion of pride in one's work but that particular feeling does seem to be steadily disappearing.

Krsto is right, of course, but he's also wrong. Nobody lets the fuggheads nominate and vote, we just can't stop them. I always nominate and vote on the fan Hugos and I have for many years, but for a great many years my informed vote has been swamped by the masses of uneducated voters who wouldn't know a fanzine from a fandango but proceed to vote anyway. About eleven years ago I made a motion at a worldcon business meeting suggesting that the Hugo ballots carry a message to the effect VOTERS NEED NOT VOTE IN CATEGORIES THEY ARE UNFAMILIAR WITH and it was soundly defeated. So for years we've had the farce of watching Dick Geis and Charlie Brown winning awards they don't deserve while more talented and deserving fans have been constantly overlooked. That was one reason for the recent change in the Fanzine category, obviously, but unless fanzine fans get off their lazy and/or impoverished butts and get out and vote, things aren't going to change.

Please don't try to promote feuds just for their possible entertainment value! I like a nice quiet oasis like ANVIL to relax in and retreat from the vitriol and venom which seems far too prevalent in fandom today.

Resnick's books were about the Galactic Midway, of course. After reading those and the hardcover of the first of his "Tales of the Velvet Comet" series I went back and dug out copies of the rest of his recently-published SF. And I agree, Mike is probably the best story-teller currently writing science fiction.

Joy Hibbert
11 Rutland St., Hanley
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
ST1 5JG Britain

Marc's article reminds me of a zine called "Egeo Sextarius" put out just before SeaCon 79 by two British fancouples. But all their advice was deliberately, obviously, inaccurate. "Ignore 'Keep Left' signs: these are just political slogans" is one example.

Speaking of 'things that shouldn't be there', a former friend used to keep a troll-doll, with enormous, amused, eyes, on top of the cistern behind her toilet. When Dave used the facilities, he would turn it around, as he didn't like being watched.

Don't quite know what to make of Patrick Gibbs letter. True, being called a sexist isn't very nice, but that shouldn't mean the word shouldn't be used where relevant. He certainly seems to speak a different language from me. Viking is a neuter word, usually used of males, but then isn't that true of all words (except 'nurse'). In the language I speak, women are widowed, men are widowed. ((In the language I speak, women are widows, men are widowers, but both, to obtain that status, are widowed.)) I haven't actually read the books, but Dave mentions that Felice is a sort of non-sexual, non-consenting sadist, which I wasn't aware was considered part of the character of Diana, who I always thought avoided men out of lack of interest or desire to remain independant, not out of anger or hate. It is true that most nouns have become masculine with usage, but creating a female form of what is really a neuter noun only encourages the view that men are people and women are a special case. It's simple enough really, if Patrick doesn't like being called a sexist, he shouldn't be one. I would recommend Miller and Swift's "Handbook of Nonsexist writing for writer, editors and speakers".

Usually I have no problems understand the Possum cartoons, which I still think are great, but can you please explain the June one?

((It wasn't meant to be funny, much, just descriptive. See: Page 10, 'a paleontologist... a few bones...'. His speciality is whales, you see. These things always lose something in translation, I guess.))

It's just occurred to me that Patrick was probably trying to be deliberately outrageous. I mean. All those obvious factual mistakes in his letter, the sort of thing that everyone knows. Can't have meant it, surely?

How about explaining this about the new rating system to us damned foreigners, eh? ((I would, but I just ran out of space.))

October 29, 1984...

Well, here we are at the end of another ANVIL. The ultimate last stencils are being typed today. Stuart Herring is coming by to pick up the mailing list for updating and printing labels: the collating party is set for Thursday, so with a little bit of luck this should be in the mail RealSoonNow.

If we stick to our present schedule, and I certainly don't see any chance of getting ahead of it, the next issue, ANVIL 35, will be out the first of February, 1985.

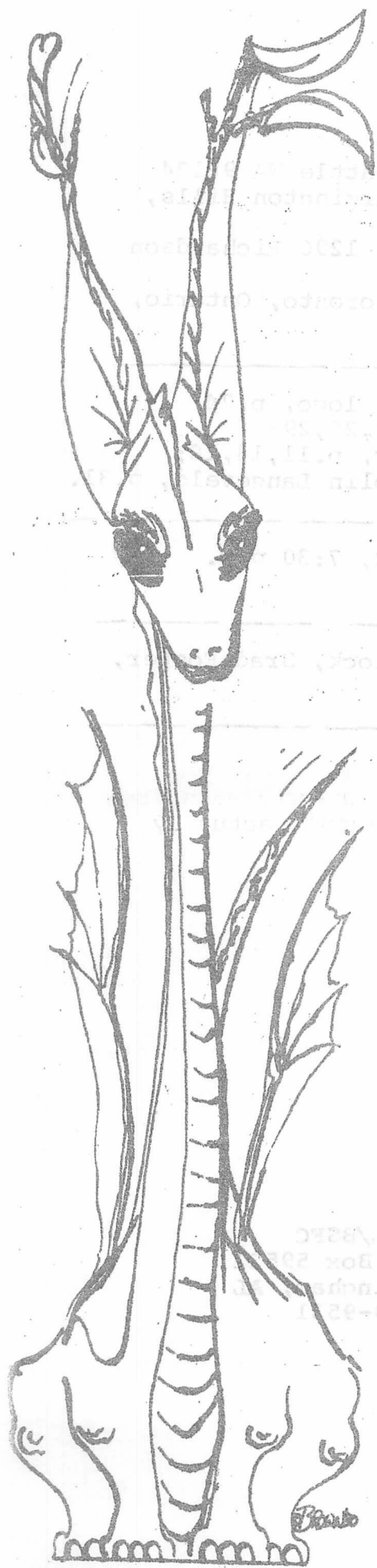
News of interest to club members: Linda Riley is getting still yet another apartment! This means that we have a place to have the Christmas Party, and instead of renting a parlor in a hotel, we can put our club money towards refreshments.

(The Halloween party at Jane's place was a great success, by the way. Thanks, Jane.) Well, now that I've announced the Xmas party at Linda's house, I realize that I don't know when it will be. You'll just have to come to the meetings to find out.

We really would like for our friends in Atlanta, Chattanooga, Huntsville and points inbetween to come visit us on meeting weekends (or party weekends). If you live so far away you want to stay over, I'm sure we can find crash space. (Crash space = place to sleep, not necessarily a bed. Bring pillow & blanket.)

Thanks for all the help in producing ANVIL, especially to Stuart, Cindy and Linda.

Mailing label codes: M=Member;
S=Subscriber; C=contributor; L=loccer;
E=Egoscan thish; W=Editorial whim;
H=Hope we hear from you; X=Last Chance.



TRADEZINES WE HAVE RECEIVED, continued:

WESTWIND #83-86; Northwest SF Soc., Box 24207, Seattle WA 98124
WHO NEED LIFE:, Tony Cvetko, 20750 Colwell #1, Farmington Hills,
MI 48024
WORLD ACCORDING TO GARTH, THE #10, Garth Spencer, 1296 Richardson
St., Victoria B.C. Canada V8V 3E1
XENIUM #13, Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Av., Toronto, Ontario,
Canada M6S 3L6

ART CREDITS: Doug Chaffee, cover; Tim A. Cooper, logo, p.24;
Bill Brown, p.4,35; Wade Gilbreath, n.6,9,28,29;
Cindy Riley, p.8,12,13,17,27; Brad Foster, p.11,14,18;
Sandye McCaw, p.20; Bjo Trimble, p.30; Colin Langeveld, n.31.

MEETINGS: November 10, December 8 and January 12, 7:30 p.m.
Homewood Public Library.

WAHF: Margaret Bish, Harry Andrushak, Steve Bullock, Brad Foster,
Bill Zilkie, Tim A. Cooper, Diane Fox.

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