

## BLOOMINGTON

June 1949

## NEWS LETTER

## SPOTLIGHT

Ten years ago in New York City met the first science-fiction fan convention with more than 200 in attendance, plus three or four others on the outside who were denied admittance because, quote: "some communists attempted to break in with a stack of communistic and anti-convention booklets. It was finally necessary to call the police to keep them out." With this merry beginning, the fantasy conventions have continued annually except for the war years, and never again did the communist boogy rear its ugly head; in fact, the exiles of 1939 were in happy attendance the following year with the explanation that they were members of a rival New York fantasy faction, and their ouster had been rather a personal matter.

Chicago played host to the fans in 1940 and Denver in 1941. Los Angeles was to have the show in 1942 but the war intervened, forcing postponement until 1946. In 1947 it swung back to Philadelphia, and Toronto was the first "foreign" city to capture the event, in 1948. This year the location is Cincinnati, Ohio; and already Portland, Oregon and Washington DC have announced intentions of seeking it for 1950.

Fantasy fans are by reputation notoriously poor and as yet there is no national organization with a treasury sufficiently large and stable to sponsor annual conventions. As a result, each chosen city-group works out its own financial backing, usually by selling memberships in the "Convention Committee", by selling advertisements in a program booklet, and by auctioning off stacks of original magazine drawings & paintings donated by the science-fiction publications. Remaining profit, if any, goes to the club treasury of the city-group sponsoring the convention.

This year the convention site is the Hotel Metropole, Cincinnati, and the dates are September 3, 4, and 5. Probable attendance will be near 300 fans, editors, agents and publishers, with the fans making up the larger bulk. Any science-fiction or fantasy reader is welcome to attend. The central location will draw swarms from the Atlantic seaboard.



The Cincinnati Fantasy Group

(seated left to right:) Duke Henslee, Don Ford, Bill Funk, Stanley Skirvin, Roy Lavender, Fred Rothfuss.

(standing, 1 to r:) Warren Voorhis, Floyd McClure, Phil Stevenson, Darrell Richardson, Geo. Early, Chas. Tanner, Lou Tabkow, Dale Tarr, Jim McNally.

Opening session is at 1 pm, Sept. 3rd, followed by evening session. The next two days will have morning, afternoon and evening sessions encompassing two auctions, business, entertainment, banquet and much wind by speakers of the day. Lloyd Arthur Eshbach of Fantasy Press, and NEW WORLDS editor Ted Carnell from London will be the guests of honor; Dr D.H. Keller presides at the banquet; Erle Korshak auctioneers. 12 authors have promised their appearance, 165 fantasy enthusiasts have bought memberships (cost is \$1, from Don Ford, P.O. Box 116, Sharonville, Ohio).

Keynote of the confab will be humor, as distinct from the "world-saving" themes of previous years. Fan clubs of various cities are providing the entertainment. Why not join the motley horde?



## BOOK SHOP

THE SIGN OF THE BURNING HART by David H. Keller. (National Fantasy Fan Federation, c/o K.M. Carlson, Moorhead, Minnesota. 1948, \$1.75).

This is the first American edition (limited to 250 copies) of a short and off - trail novel which borders on the fantasy in theme and the lyrical in execution. The original 1938 edition in France saw only 100 copies; the American volume sold out before publication.

In Arcadia, which is on the road between Paris and Madrid, Philip Buzzard changes his name to Christopher Wren and opens a small bookshop bearing the name of this book's title. He has on the shelves many copies of his own books for sale---completely bound books which have blank pages, because he has not yet written the stories. He expects a heavy sale on "The Passionate Lover" and has laid in 50 copies---all blank. If you can get this volume, do so for the further doings of Wren in Arcadia.

PLANETS OF ADVENTURE by Basil Wells (Fantasy Publishing Co., 8318 Avalon Blvd, Los Angeles 3, Cal. 1949, \$3.)

Fifteen novelettes and short yarns, some published before and some not, in the action school appealing to younger readers of the Planet Stories class; 3 of these yarns were first published in that magazine, others could have been. Because of the pulp quality of this collection, we feel that it might have better chances if it were priced in the range of younger readers. Mr. Wells should aim higher with his talents.

Jacket designed by Jack Gaughan, the volume is well put together.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOON, selected by August Derleth. (Pellegrini & Cudahy, New York City, 1949, \$3.75.)

Twenty stories of a calibre which puts this volume in your basic library alongside Groff Conklin's books, van Vogt's "Out Of the Unknown," and the 1946 Healy & McComas anthology. In other words, 20 of the best.

For example, there are included Bradbury's "Pillar of Fire" & "The Earth Men," Miller's "Thing on the Outer Shoal," van Vogt's "Vault of the Beast" and "Resurrection," Jenkin's "Symbiosis," Kersh's "The Monster," Padgett's "The Cure" ---remember the man who smelled dead flies on the window pane? Try to forget a Padgett story! Also included are: Beresford, HG Wells, EF Russell, Dunsany, Lovecraft, CA Smith, FB Long, Sturgeon, Leinster, Bond, Wandrei, & others.

Get this volume to add to a steadily growing collection of science-fiction anthologies encompassing the best.



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-courtesy, Gnome Press

THE SOLITARY HUNTERS and THE ABYSS by David H. Keller. (New Era Publishers, 1366 east Columbia, Philadelphia, 25. 1948, \$3)

Dr. Keller, a favored fantasy writer of many years ago is currently enjoying a renaissance, thanks to the smaller fantasy houses such as New Era, Avalon, and NFF. Some of the revived material is worthwhile, some is not. This volume lies just over the borderline on the credit side.

"The Solitary Hunters" deals with condemned men who are sentenced to exile inside the crater of an extinct volcano, what they found and how they built their kingdom there. We personally prefer "The Abyss," a recital of events in New York City when the eight million people there are isolated from the rest of the nation by presidential order, and their swift reversion to savage, feudal systems of living.



## BOOKS AND WRITERS

Cut down to half a pack of cigarets per day and eliminate the beer, gasoline and women altogether--you'll need your money to keep abreast of the deluge of books coming the next few months. As Confucius might have said had he not died of dissipation: "When you sleepy, a book in bed will wait until tomorrow."

The Frederick Fell anthology (page 1, last issue) was the finger removed from the dike. Bleiler and Dikty's collection of 12 stories will appear in July, at \$2.95, with the title changed to THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION STORIES: 1949. Virgil Finlay did the jacket, Korshak wrote the introduction. Hard on the heels of the anthology comes four novels from Fell:

THE LAST SPACESHIP (Murray Leinster), July.

CARSTAIRS: SPACE DETECTIVE (Frank Belknap Long), August.

THE KID FROM MARS (Oscar J. Friend), September.

THE STAR KINGS (Edmond Hamilton), October. All \$2.50 each.

Walter I. Bradbury, managing editor at Doubleday and Company, informs that his company is planning a series of science-fiction books and the first will appear in September. Titles and information on them will be published here as soon as known.

Another new fantasy press specializing in limited editions is Merlin Press, 507 Fifth Ave., NYC. Abe Klein is head man. Their first volume is an anthology of "Hall of Fame" classics, edited by Oscar J Friend and Joseph Margolies. Probable title: FROM OFF THIS WORLD.

Contents: The Last Woman (Thos. Gardner), The Man Who Evolved (Ed Hamilton), The World Without (Benson Herbert), The Green Torture (AR Hilliard), The Literary Corkscrew (DH Keller), The Man From Mars (PS Miller), The Ancient Brain (AG Strangland), The City of Singing Flame, Beyond the Singing Flame (CA Smith), The Eternal Man (DD Sharp), Hornets of Space (RF Starzl), Martian Odyssey, The Valley of Dreams (Stan Weinbaum), Through the Purple Cloud (Jack Williamson), Microscopic Giants (Paul Ernst), When The Earth Lived (Henry Kuttner), Conquest of Life (Eando Binder). Price \$2.95, publication in June.

Martin Greenberg will follow it up by editing an anthology of rocket yarns. Details later.

FIRST LENSMAN by EE Smith, interplanetary sequel to "Triplanetary" soon to be available from Fantasy Press (PO Box 159, Reading, Pa.) Coming first are A MARTIAN ODYSSEY by Weinbaum and SEVEN OUT OF TIME by Arthur Leo Zagat. Each title at \$3.

Robert Heinlein's fantasy has spanned the Atlantic; the firm of Moussault's Uitgeverij in Amsterdam will shortly bring out Dutch language edition of SLAVES OF SLEEP.

The Unicorn Mystery Book Club selected for this month ATOMSK by Carmichael Smith. ATOMSK is a spy thriller concerning the Russian atom bomb factory and Carmichael Smith is a phony name for somebody else.

Gnome Press (1421 Claremont Parkway, NYC) has delayed George O. Smith's PATTERN FOR CONQUEST until June, and Nelson Bond's recent illness delayed his THE 31st OF FEBRUARY until about the same time.

Since last issue, Shasta Publishers of Chicago have changed the line-up of Robert Heinlein's "future history" series somewhat and the five volumes now making up the set are as follows, in order:

THE MAN WHO SOLD THE MOON, containing: Life - Line, And He Built A Crooked House, Let There Be Light, The Roads Must Roll, Blowups Happen, Requiem, and title story.

THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH, to contain The Long Watch, Delilah & the Space Rigger, Gentlemen Be Seated, Space Jockey, Black Pits of Luna, It's Great To Be Back, Logic of Empire, Ordeal in Space, We Also Walk Dogs, and SatEvePost title story.

IF THIS GOES ON plus Coventry and Misfit.

METHUSELAH'S CHILDREN, book length.

THE ENDLESS FRONTIER, containing Universe, Common Sense, and Da Capo. \$3 each.

Also announced by Shasta: THE CLOAK OF AESIR by John W. Campbell (Don A. Stuart), which will include: Out of Night, Escape, The Machine, The Invaders, Rebellion, Forgetfulness, and the title story.

SIDEWISE IN TIME (Murray Leinster) includes: Proxima Centauri, The Power, De Profundis, A Logic Named Joe, The Fourth Dimensional Demonstrator, plus title story. Both volumes at \$3. (5525 S. Blackstone Ave., Chicago, 37, Ill.)

Fantasy Publishing Co., Inc. (8318-20 Avalon Blvd., Los Angeles 3) announce without the publishing dates: TRITON, by L. Ron Hubbard, WORLDS OF WONDER by Olaf Stapledon, and THE RADIUM POOL by Ed Earl Repp.

### FANTASTIC FICTION FOR SALE

Brand new, cloth-bound,

library size sample: \$ 1.00

Catalogs 10% (refunded)

### HOUSE of STONE

Lunenburg, 20, Massachusetts

# BNL Bulletin Board

Two new bookshops recently opened are those of LA Eshbach, 120 N. 9th, Reading, Penna.; and Steve Takacs, 45 4th Ave, New York City. Both peddle new and used books, specializing in science and fantasy.

Murray Leinster has signed with FPCI (Los Angeles) for the publication of MURDER MADNESS, the first serial to appear in the old Astounding Stories nearly 17 years ago.

Sam Peebles will have first novel, THE DREAM ENDS IN FURY, coming from Harper this autumn.

Manly Bannister publishing 70-page mimeographed booklet on bookbinding (1905 Spruce Ave, Kansas City, Mo.)

Fourth issue of the revived NEW WORLDS went to the mail bag April 10th. (25 Stoke Newington Road, London, N16, England.)

News of the month (?) is the appearance of frivolous fanzine calling itself WILD HAIR ("The Fanzine That Tickles") from Charles Burbee, 1057 S. Normandie, Los Angeles 6. Selling at 15¢, the booklet whams away at everything that walks talks and breathes in the Los Angeles area. Prompt retaliation under the title of GLOM was issued by FJ Ackerman, which whammed away at everything that walked, talked and breathed on the WILD HAIR staff. GLOM is free at Box 6151, Metropolitan Station, Los Angeles, 55.

The University of Chicago Bookstore featured a science-fiction window display in mid-May, using promotion material from Shasta Publishers and News Letter. News Letter is also distributed at Takacs bookshop mentioned above.

Raymond Van Houten cancelled on April 14 the organizational meeting in Paterson, NJ, to form a fantasy awards committee. Also cancelled was the awards project itself, due to lack of interest. Project was intended to bestow prize awards on fantasy "bests" each year, similar to Hollywood "Oscars".

The July issue of Startling Stories lists 31 fantasy clubs operating (or making a stab at operating) in the United States and Canada. In addition, there are at least four more new ones formed too late to make the list:

Berkeley, Calif. (Boucher, Olson, Shiras, Finigan, Eaton, Fabun, McCoy, et. al.) Eugene, Oregon. (Wright, Zimmerman, Coghill, Gardner, Hartman, et. al.) Jonesboro, Arkansas. (Marsh, Marsh, Peynor, et al.) and New York City (June Kaufman).

John Millard flew to Chicago from Canada on March 24 to week-end with EE Smith and Ed Counts in Windy City. Bob Bloch (Milwaukee) flew to New Orleans April 1 for 'vacation'. His short, "Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper" (BNL, November 48) reprinted in Mexican magazine and broadcast over Scranton, Penna., station April 10th.

## to the Editor

Everett Bleiler (Chicago): "I am not a part owner of Shasta Publishers, but merely a friend. If you could run a correction of this, I'd appreciate it a lot." (( Done. ))

Richard Sanders (Wytheville, Va.): "In travel information you suggest the California Zephyr from San Francisco to Chicago (62 hours), and the James Whitcomb Riley from Chicago to Cincinnati. If the Zephyr leaves Frisco at 9am and arrives in Chicago 62 hours later, how in hell does it connect with the Riley at 4:40 pm?" (( Our error-- we failed to doublecheck running times furnished by a railroad magazine. The Zephyr reaches Chicago in 52½ hours, not 62. ))

DH Keller (Stroudsburg, Pa.): "By this time you have no doubt ordered a copy (of his yarn, THE FINAL WAR). It was a lot of fun to write and I hope no one will think I was over serious in doing so. At the same time it has one or two very fine lines in it, which no doubt you, as an expert in fine literature, will detect and rave over. I think that never has the love life of the sexes been so accurately and shortly described." (( Oh no? Try Krafft-Ebing. ))

Ray Nelson (Cadillac, Mich.): "I find it hard to believe that your "Miss Kendy" won the fan popularity contest. Up to now I never heard of her. (is this a) HOAX?" (( Think nothing of it, Kendy never heard of you, either. ))



Julian Laumer (Columbia, Mo.): "Due to unforeseen printing difficulties, only one issue of Select Science Fiction was published, but in the near future when the publication is resumed, all those receiving the Sept. mimeographed issue will receive the new, printed slick edition with the best wishes of the editors."

Murray Leinster (Beechhurst, NY): "The big (NYC) publishers are looking around for science-fiction books .. the general public can enjoy. Detective books have slowed up in their sales, and they tried westerns to take their place, but it didn't work. Science-fiction will be the next field from which best-sellers are drawn if somebody starts writing (it) for the public."

AM Weitzenhoffer (Oklahoma City): "Was glad to notice quite a few anthologies are listed for the near future, but why so much emphasis on recent material? Lots of good stuff came out awhile back which I'd like to see in anthologies -- something like 'Science-Fiction, The Best of 1936' or some earlier dates." (( Ditto here. ))

Joe Schaumburger (Fort Dix, NJ): "I have recently become editor of Tilton Talk, the hospital magazine. It has absolutely nothing to do with science-fiction."



### Can You Use a Wolf Boy?

How about a fish girl---need one about the house? Perhaps you might be interested in a shrunken head, or a devil's child, a jungle giant or a pin-headed cannibal--all nicely reduced and preserved of course. If you are scientific minded you might desire to tinker with a missing link, a snow-faced ape, a gorilla boy or a two-headed baby.

Scores of curious readers demanded to know where we obtained the photographs used on page one last issue; they found it hard to believe we were publishing the pictures of the most popular fans. Oddly enough, Josie Kendy didn't object to being compared to a fan. We must admit to shamelessly lifting the pictures from a circular advertising circus sideshow freaks--the freaks being manufactured by an Arizona company. This will come as a shock to science--- to discover that "missing links" are made, not born.



The circular advises: "We send you a lecture with each of our shrunken heads, telling all about the cannibal tribe that shrinks heads. We give you their names, tell you where they live and the method they use in shrinking. You will hold your audience spellbound with our lectures." The price on the head is \$7, but any economy-minded showman can save this by learning the secret and shrinking his own.

You can have your own missing link for \$20, or the gorilla boy for \$30. Imagine the fun of mystifying your friends at your next party with a fish-girl, when you "pass it out among them, everyone will say it's real, even the wise guys." The dried mermaid is yours to pass out for only \$15, a real bargain for boring parties. Two-headed babies available at ten dollars the head.

A genuine missing link edits this sheet.

### Letters to the Editor (continued)

Richard Sair (Editor, Fireside Pubs., Toronto, Ontario): "I am working on one or two monthly magazines containing probably a goulash dish of science-fiction, fantasy, weird, horror, etc. Actual titles are still in embryo, though they may be run under existing pulp titles. Size will probably be digest --- more practical from a production standpoint. I will also come out with a number of pocket books along this line. I have bought quite a number of Tom Kelly's titles and may start off with them." (135 Yonge St., Toronto, 1, Ont.)

Walter Olson (Berkeley): "Our new club in the East Bay Area is now called: Elves, Gnomes and Little Men's Science-Fiction Chowder and Marching Society. We have about forty members so far." (2046-A University Ave., Berkeley, 4, Calif.)

### Science Marches On!

During the middle ages a person took no more than 3 baths in his lifetime. However, since the day Sir Walter Ralieggh got his feet wet garnering ego-boo at the expense of his cloak and discovered how refreshing water can be if used externally, the bath has met with increasing favor thru the years. Only a few years ago one argument against the bath--that it was a time-waster, occupying an hour which could more profitably be devoted to something else--- was removed when the ball point pen was invented, enabling the bather to use the time for writing novels in the tub. In 1948 another mighty stride was made! It is possible now to soothe jangled nerves, cure throat-irritation, and generally to enjoy the multitudinous benefits of chain-smoking WHILE IN THE SHOWER! Life, the waterproof cigaret, provides this boon to mankind! I've soap in my eyes at the moment, but when I find the towel I'll be staring ahead, wondering: what is next? -Redd Boggs (reprinted from SkyHook)

Our "OH, COME NOW!" Dept: the following blurb appears on the rear jacket of August Derleth's new Pellegrini anthology, "The Other Side of the Moon" (reviewed elsewhere in this issue:)

"August Derleth has been a foremost specialist and writer of weird tales for more than 20 years. His first story, written at the age of 14 and titled "Bat's Belfry" (clearly derived, he says, from "Dracula"), was published in Weird Tales for May, 1926; since then he has appeared in over 225 publications from one end of the country to the other. An incredibly prolific writer with talents ranging from fiction to criticism to first-rate poetry, his output to date is said to exceed that of Dante and Shakespeare combined and, he admits, "the end does not seem yet to be in sight." Among the many activities for which he finds time is that of heading the only publishing firm in the world devoted exclusively to the publication of supernatural fiction." End quote.

Tempest: About April 9th the UP wires carried a New York dispatch stating Street & Smith publications had abandoned all its pulp and comic magazines in favor of slick women's magazines. Time magazine the next week carried a fuller story, stating that all pulps except Astounding Science Fiction had indeed been killed. Astounding was destined to live for only so long as it made money, a S&S official declared. This may be the handwriting on the wall.

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There is no monetary charge for News Letter, it being a labor of love and sent free to those who request it in writing after every issue.



Bell Gardens, Calif.

6766 Hanover st.

Len Moffatt



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## what's going on

The First Northwest Fantasy Conference on April 23 marked the 2nd anniversary of the Portland Science-Fantasy Socy. Twenty-four attendees from Washington, Oregon and California went thru the usual from 1 p.m. Saturday to 6 a.m. Sunday at Don Day's home in Portland. Ackerman was longest-distance runner from Los Angeles, copping a 500 word news story in the Portland OREGONIAN April 26; agent Ackerman told reporter the state of science-fiction today compared to what it was Before The Bomb. Good treatment.

Meanwhile, William Knapheide, P.O. Box 868, San Francisco, hearing of the session too late to attend (and perhaps not having heard of the annual Los Angeles affair) has announced his intention of organizing an all-westcoast conference.

New York City will hold its annual conclave over the 4th of July week-end, with the Queens Science-Fiction League playing host. Information obtainable from James Taurasi, 137-03 32nd Ave, Flushing, NY.

Frederick Shroyer, serving a hitch in the English Dept. at U of So. California, is engaged in collecting critical and biographical material on Le Fanu preparatory to publishing a study on the fantasy novelist.

Prime Press (Box 2019, Philadelphia, 3, Pa.) has just issued their new catalog listing 6 books in print and 11 in preparation for early publication. The big story coming is George O. Smith's NOMAD.

Our apologies, but "crowded out of this issue" and upcoming next time is the story of FPCI, second in a series on fantasy publishers; our Washington investigator's report on "ruten," the supposed antidote to radioactivity; and the 1949 fanzine survey requested by a librarian; Poul Anderson's review of Scandinavian fantasy is a must.



A late fanzine definitely worth mention is SCIENTIFANTASY, a 32-page planographed job issued quarterly by Bill Kroll and John Grossman, 1031 (and 1037) west 13th St, Des Moines, Iowa. Peddling at 20¢, the (above) winter issue sported 2 fiction pieces, 2 articles, a book review, 3 poems, 3 departments, 25 illustrations and one (1) comic strip which we assume has its readers. Extremely well laid out, the fanzine is worth your investigation.

RENT DODGERS Dept: TransRadio Press reporter Dick Wilson has been transferred to New York. Larry Shaw likewise shifted to NYC and now employed by Scott Meredith author's agency there.