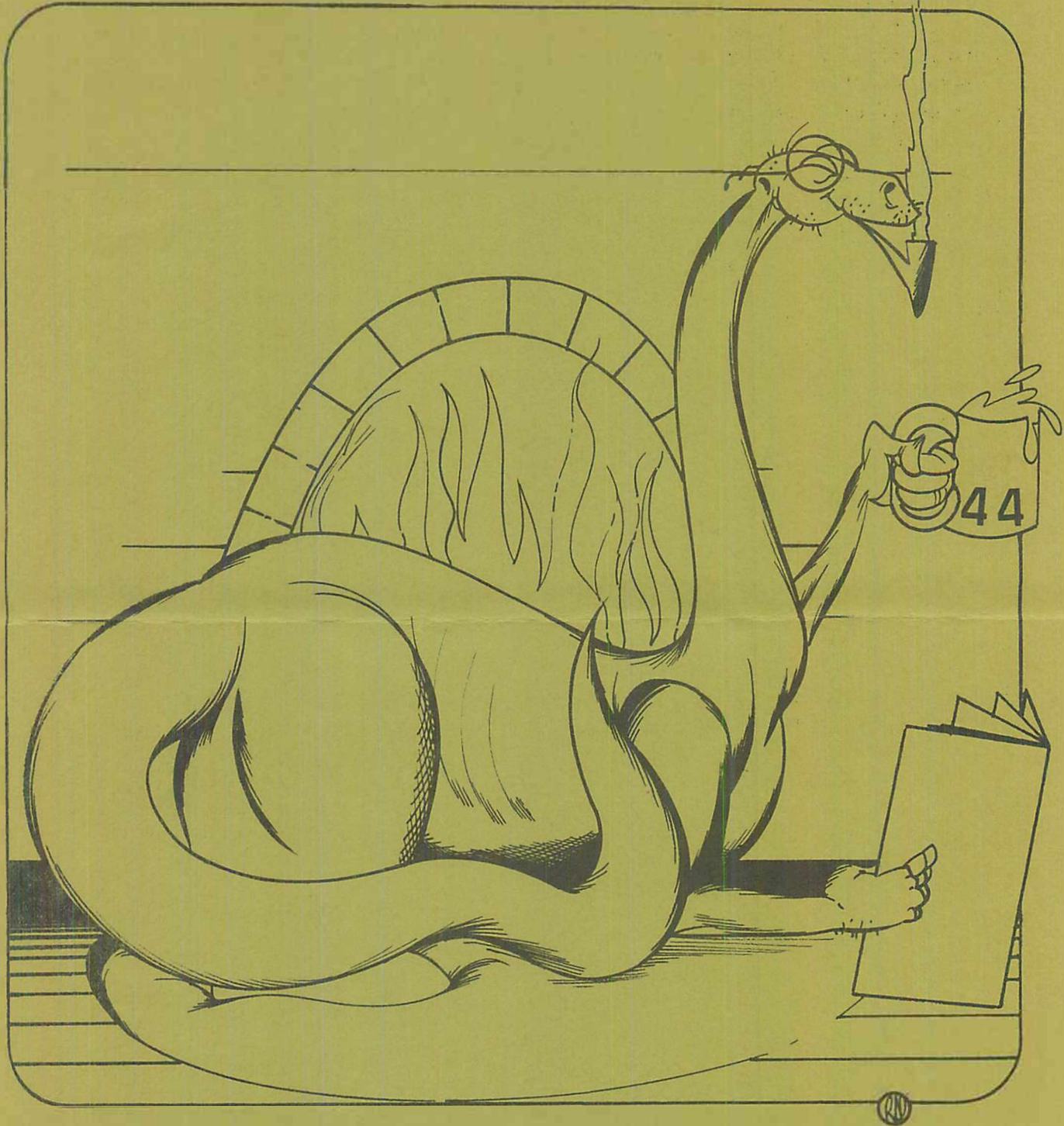


# Don-o-Saur



This is the 44th issue of *D O N - o - S A U R*, a personal-type SF fanzine published either bi-monthly, quarterly or irregularly (actually the latter, it seems) by Don C. Thompson of 7498 Canosa Ct., Westminster, CO 80030; phone (303) 429-6562. Available for the usual, which is to say trade, letters of comment or promises of same, artwork or even money. Official price is 35¢ per single issue, six-issue subscription for \$2, 12-issue subscription for \$3.50.

BACK ISSUES: Limited supplies of the following issues are available at the uniform exorbitant price of 35¢, even the very early cruddy ones: 22, 23, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 42 and 43. I NEED copies of issues 39 and 40 -- and I'll pay my own price for them.

Something I seldom do: This issue is dedicated to three JACKIES, Western, Central and Eastern standard. To *Jackie Simpson* of Glendale, Calif., for pleasant memories of Australia; to *Jackie Franke* of Beecher, Ill., for a marvelously generous and perceptive (even though unfavorable) review of *DON-o-SAUR* 43; and (especially) to *Jackie Hilles* of Richmond, Va., whom I took to Australia with me (and she didn't even know it).

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# don-o-saur

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## DECISIONS,

## DECISIONS

I'm not certain how to put this: With your help I have talked myself out of it. Or: With my help you have talked me out of it.

No matter. Regardless of how the credit (or blame) is apportioned, the conclusion is that I have definitely abandoned that idea of a giant super-special "Best of Don-o-Saur issue. That is, almost. That is, in a way. That is, I hope I have.

Actually, the response on the Don-o-Saur Bones concept was far from unanimous: about evenly divided among those who responded to it at all. And certainly some of the letters endorsing the idea were almost irresistibly eloquent and persuasive. What finally swayed me was not so much the cogency and clear-eyed sanity of those who spoke against the plan as it was a still small voice within me whispering -- (Rubbish! It was a loud, clear voice, and it was booming) --: TOO DAMN MUCH WORK!!

However, . . .

Yeah, I seem as unable to turn my back on the project entirely as I am to carry it out entirely. So, as with nearly everything I undertake, I shall attempt a compromise. And if what I have in mind works out, the compromise will take two forms. One of those, and the one most immediately evident, will be a new department (starting this issue) to be called Don-o-Saur Bones. It will consist of course of some choice item dug up from some long buried but mercilessly unforgotten issue of Don-o-Saur Coprolites. Most of these reprinted excerpts will be fairly short, if it makes a difference.

The other form of the compromise will be a giant, super-special issue.

But not exactly. Anyway, it won't be enormously giant. I hope.

Probably it will emerge as another Don-o-Saur Supplement, if it ever fully emerges into reality at all; and since it is something I do want to do, the chances are that it will get done.

It would be a sort of final tribute -- my own personal memorial -- to my sister, Polly Ryan, who died of cancer in October. It would consist of a reprint (with some editorial revisions) of the reminiscent

piece I wrote about her last spring in DoS 40, along with one or two exchanges of letters between Polly and myself that preceded the Don-o-Saur story and another exchange that followed. In addition there would be letters from DoS readers, some which have already been published but mostly those that haven't been. This special issue would probably conclude with the letter from Howard telling about Polly's death.

But this whole thing is very tentative. Your reactions and suggestions are welcome, as always.

But I think I had better start worrying about this issue now and future issues when and if I get to them. I have not been too happy with my experiment with bi-monthly publication, inasmuch as it turned out to be quarterly, and I would like to get back to a more modest size and a regular monthly schedule. But this is the issue that will determine whether that is even feasible.

So forward . . .

I have decided to introduce my new Don-o-Saur Bones feature early on so that you can see right away whether you like it or not. If you don't, you can probably talk me into dropping it; even if you do it will probably be buried further back in the zine in future issues. (Or of course I may decide that it isn't worthwhile and discontinue it all on my own).

The item that I have chosen to reprint as a starter can stand a few words of explanation, so I'll provide them:

The Christmas party is one of the more revered traditions of the Denver Area Science Fiction Association, if not one of the oldest. (Understand, these terms are purely relative; DASFA itself is still fairly young as SF clubs go, its first meeting having been held in December 1968, and it has never had much reverence for anything). To the best of my recollection, there was no party or any other kind of commemoration of DASFA's first birthday, in 1969, and I find nothing in my DASFAX to indicate otherwise. In fact the documentary evidence (and my memory) indicate quite clearly that the first Christmas party was in 1970, at the apartment of Judith Brownlee. It was a good, uninhibited party that lasted until about 4 a.m., and the only person who got sick was Judy Tockman. (An almost un-noticed tradition of DASFA Christmas parties is that someone always gets sick, but it seems to be never the same person two years in a row, and it's seldom more than one person).

Judith's apartment was a bit cramped though not uncomfortably so, but we knew that more people would show up for the party the following year. I don't recall exactly why I decided to volunteer the Thompson house for the 1971 Christmas party. I was director of the club by then and probably felt a certain sense of obligation. Anyway I had the party. It was great. There must have been twice as many people as the year before, but there was plenty of room and only one person got sick and no one got destructive.

One of the most popular aspects of the party was a room I had created from the storage area in the basement. I found a lot of red cloth and rugs and drapes and cushions and constructed a small cave-like area, all in red with low ceiling and dim lights and a record player. In that first version there wasn't room for more than six or eight people in there at a time.

The party was so successful that I decided to have it again the next year. The following is reprinted from Don-o-Saur Coprolites 15, Dec. 1972.



D O N - o - S A U R

B o n e s

Know what I've been doing? You could easily guess if you really cared, but since you probably don't, I'll just have to tell you. I've been getting ready for the Christmas party; and it's a good thing that school's out and I'm not working extra this week at The Denver Post, because otherwise I just wouldn't have time to get it done. Oh, we'd still have the party; don't worry about that, but I wouldn't have gotten ready for it. You wouldn't notice the difference.

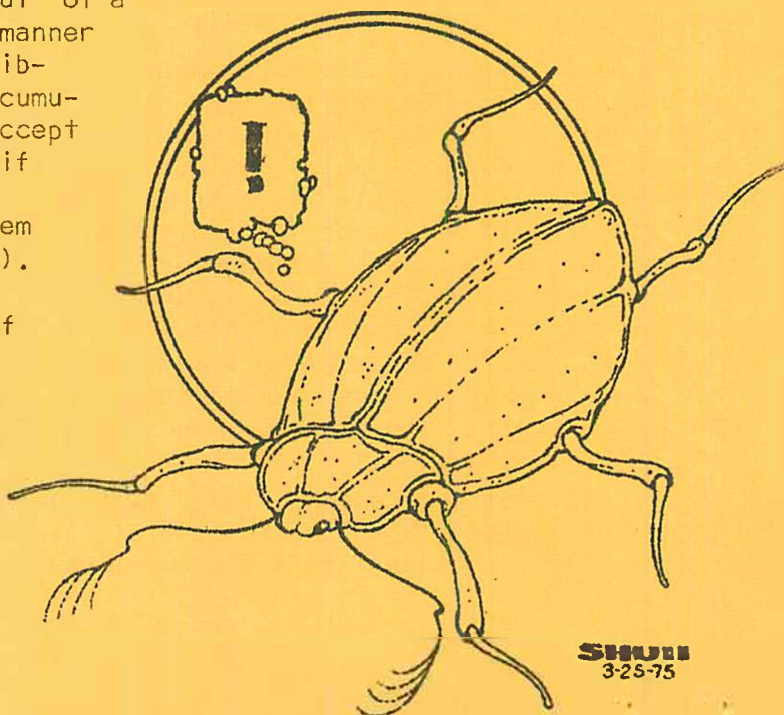
"Getting the house ready for the party" does not mean quite the same thing to me as it means to you -- or so I suspect. To you, most likely, it means vacuuming, dusting, cleaning, and then stocking up on drinks and edibles. Right? Well, that's all part of it for me too; but a very minor part, and I haven't gotten around to any of that stuff yet. (Not quite true -- I have started cleaning out the area that will be the "passion pit" or "opium den" or whatever, and that involved some use of the vacuum cleaner).

But to me what "getting ready for the party" really means is rearranging the books.

I've been involved in that task for the better part of three days now (this is Wednesday evening, Dec. 13), and I'm just in the middle of it. Complicating the job is the fact that I've set up three new bookcases in the basement. They're good-sized units; they form a six-foot-high partition between the piano room and the storage room (or passion pit or whatever). Filling the shelves is no problem; books have been piling up in my room and in my closet for more than six months. I could easily scoop up all those loose books and arrange them neatly in the new bookcases.

But despite my aversion to libraries, I have the soul of a librarian -- well, in a manner of speaking (no career librarian, inspecting my accumulation of books, would accept me into the fraternity, if for no other reason than that my cataloguing system is virtually nonexistent). But within limits I do strive for a semblance of order in arranging my books. At its simplest level this means putting them in alphabetical order according to author.

(My daughter, a supreme individualist,



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arranges her books in alphabetical order according to title -- but I'd rather not talk about that . . . or even think about it).

Anyway. My ultimate aim is to have nothing but SF, fantasy and related material in my room. With the new bookcase space, this looked like a good opportunity to get some of the history, biography, religion, poetry and such out of the room so I could display that much more science fiction.

I also decided to set up a separate fantasy section -- and that was probably my biggest mistake, because it involves some terribly sticky decisions. For example:

L. Sprague de Camp wrote a lot of fantasy; he also wrote a lot of straight science fiction. So, do I have deCamp's SF in the SF section and his fantasy in the fantasy section, or should I keep all his works together?

Notice I'm not asking what you would do; you would probably be logical. But it bothers me to split up an author's works, so I made an arbitrary decision that L. Sprague de Camp was primarily a fantasy writer, so all of his books are on the fantasy shelf. Including "A Gun for Dinosaur."

One more example:

Michael Moorcock has written much in the sword and sorcery field, and has also written a lot of science fiction, both traditional and new wave; so what do I do with him?

Notice, again, I'm not asking what you would do; you'd probably be consistent and file Moorcock in the fantasy section with de Camp. Not me. Much as it disturbs me to split up an author's work, I had to decide that Moorcock's Black Corridor, Warlord of the Air and Behold the Man, for instance, would be just too blatantly out of place with fantasy. So some of Moorcock is with fantasy and some with SF.

Ever read anything by Christopher Morley? (No, actually I'm not really changing the subject).

Morley was one of the more popular American writers during the 1930s, as well as one of the most highly acclaimed critically -- for a while. His most popular book was Kitty Foyle which was made into a tremendously popular movie. Possibly the critics became embittered by his popular success and quit talking about him, thus contributing to his slide into oblivion. One of his most critically successful books was The Haunted Bookshop. There's a scene in it where the book store owner is preparing a bedroom for his new employe, a lovely young lady (his niece?). He spends a few minutes checking such things as clean sheets, towels, closet space, etc., and then an hour or so selecting the books that will go in the bedside book shelf. The girl, of course doesn't even notice there are any books in the room.

I read that book a long, long, l-o-n-g time ago; I read it only once, and I didn't keep the book. Yet I've never been able to forget that episode, because I felt the booklover's disappointment and

chagrin so keenly, and I have found myself in so many almost identical situations since then, each time feeling the same disappointment and chagrin with undiminished keenness.

This time I'm taking a precaution: I'm telling you about all the time I've spent arranging the books. At least you won't have any excuse for not appreciating them.

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The party itself was pretty much a rerun of the year before: somewhat bigger (more people anyway), but by this time we had built an addition onto our living room, a room with a fireplace and a lot of book shelves and so there was more room for the party to spread out. The passion pit or opium den had been enlarged and again was a very popular attraction. (And people were kind enough to comment on the way I had rearranged all the books).

To tell the truth I had damn near knocked myself out getting the house ready for the party. I had spent most of my time reorganizing all my books and magazines, leaving barely enough to do everything else that needed to be done. Carolyn was working at the library and didn't have time to give me much help, and she had little enthusiasm for the project anyway. Still it was a good party, and I survived. I seem to remember playing chess with Ted Peak at around 4 a.m., and I know the sun was threatening to come up before the last guests left. I didn't get to bed; I collapsed under the canopies of the red room (possibly even before everyone was gone) and dozed fitfully for a few hours, then hopped up (not a very accurate verb) and started cleaning house. And I muddled through my regular shift at the Rocky Mountain News that post-party Sunday afternoon and evening.

Maybe I should mention something, even though people who know me already know this, as should most regular readers of DoS: I am an alcoholic, which is to say that I don't drink. (My theory is that everyone is allotted a certain amount of liquor during his lifetime -- and the theory is not altered by the fact that some people go through life drinking no liquor; their shares are apportioned among those who do -- and in my 30s I exceeded my quota and consumed the lifetime shares of seven teetotalers as well, so from the age of 39 on ((for almost exactly nine years now, in fact) I have been a teetotaler myself)). The fact that I don't drink doesn't mean I don't get intoxicated, I just do it in different ways. Since my Army days (as I mentioned at some length in DoS 43, I have been able to get drunk by walking; I have always been able to get wiped out by listening to music, but I don't let that happen very often; fatigue is always a reliable intoxicant; I've gotten mildly high on pot or hash a few times. Ordinarily at a party I don't need anything at all. If it's a good party I get drunk on the party atmosphere.

For some weird reason I volunteered to have the Christmas party (by this time it was being referred to by everyone as "the Christmas orgy") for a third year in a row. But I did remember how close I had come to obliteration through fatigue intoxication the year before and so I tried to make things a little easier on myself this time. It didn't work. My idea was to have a "party-preparation party" to which anyone who was willing would come and help me work for a few hours, after which we would all loll around and relax. I asked for volunteers. On the Thursday afternoon before the Saturday party, a swarm of volunteers showed up, most of whom, I quickly decided, had heard only the word "party" in the invitation.



Anyway we ended up having a pleasant enough party, but not enough work got done to make my idea worth while. So I was again almost exhausted before the actual Christmas party began, and in addition this time I was feeling a bit resentful for having had to do most of the work myself.

However, the party went smoothly enough except for one almost-unpleasantness that gave me an indescribable sinking feeling.

That Red Room -- the Passion Pit or Opium Den . . . well, after the first year I for one quit calling it the Opium Den because I have an aversion to names that are too descriptive. Not that there was actually any opium being smoked there, but close enough. The atmosphere of the room -- the solid reds and the dim lights and the wild music and incense and the low billowy ceiling -- might have been deliberately designed to encourage the use of mild opiates. I could deny that I had any such idea in mind when I first set up the room, but who would believe me? And it isn't important anyway. At the first two parties the use of grass and hash was cautious and discreet, and there were no complaints, if only because just a few people knew about it.

At the third party, though . . .

The dopers were among the earliest arrivals, and they headed straight for the Red Room and established residency. Which might have been no problem maybe except that naturally enough the other guests wanted to inspect the room too.

I must pause here and say a few words about Chuck Hansen.

But many of you must know who Chuck Hansen is; some of you have known him far longer than I have. Chuck is a card-carrying, patch-wearing member of First Fandom. He was one of the founders of the Colorado Fantasy Society, the sponsors of Denvention in 1941. Chuck is a professional chemist, an amateur astronomer and an accomplished scholar in many fields. He is a Sherlockian, a member of the Council of Four, publishers of *THE SCIENCE FICTIONAL SHERLOCK HOLMES*. He is a Talbot Mundy completist and authority, and the same for Sax Rohmer and I really don't know how many other authors. Chuck is a long-time member of FAPA. He is a collector of objets d'art from the far corners of the world. He is a gourmet and a connoisseur and a manufacturer of mead, beer and fine wines. Chuck was Seneschal of the Barony of Caerthe, Kingdom of Atenveldt (Society for Creative Anachronism) during the period of Caerthe's most dramatic and significant growth; and Chuck took over the post at a time when the Denver SCA unit could just as easily have shriveled and died without the unique combination of vigorous leadership and adroit diplomatic skills that Chuck was able to apply.

If the foregoing remarks tell as much about my regard for Chuck Hansen as they do about Chuck himself, it's partly because I intended it that way. Chuck is one of my dearest friends in fandom and quite apart from that he is a kind, warm, generous, gentlemanly person for whom I have the utmost respect and admiration.

My proudest achievement while I was director of DASFA was that I was accepted into membership in the Colorado Fantasy Society.

Before I started working weekends for the Rocky Mountain News I was able to attend the regular Saturday night meetings of the CFS for a while with a fair degree of regularity, which is when I really got to



know Chuck and Roy Hunt and Bob Peterson and Emile Greenleaf; and by the time I could no longer attend the CFS meetings because of my RMN schedule, most of them had become regularly-attending members of DASFA (thus ending an unfortunate rift in Denver fandom dating to Caz's founding of DASFA).

On the night of the third Christmas party at my house, Chuck was one of those whose pure, simple curiosity led him to the Red Room.

Chuck found me in my den, on a swivel chair with a beautiful girl in my lap, a cup of coffee in my hand, and the party swirling around me. Chuck stood directly in front of me. In due time I ceased nuzzling Carol Van Natta (for it was she, I'm pretty sure) and looked at him. His voice was stern.

"Don, there's something I think you should know. The people in that canopied room . . . They're smoking, and it is not just tobacco. It smells like marijuana!"

I nodded and shrugged, but couldn't think of anything to say.

Chuck said, "I think you ought to put a stop to it." And I still couldn't think of a suitable comment.

"I do not approve of marijuana smoking," Chuck said. "It is illegal and it's dangerous."

And I think I finally said something like, "Yeah, well . . ."

"If you are going to permit it in your house," Chuck went on, "I guess I'll just have to be careful about coming to your parties. Because I don't want to be here when the place gets raided."

Chuck turned and walked away, and that is when I felt that sinking feeling, because I just knew that Chuck was leaving the party and that his anger with me meant the end of a valued friendship.

My first impulse was to go throw all the dopers out of the house immediately and tell them never to come back, but I realized how unfair that was. Not only had I given my clear permission, at least by implication; under slightly different circumstances I would have been in there sharing a toke with them.

So I didn't bother the dopers. I tried to pretend that nothing had happened and that it was still a great party. I kept smiling, not too difficult as long as I could cuddle Carol Van Natta, but eventually she left my lap and from then on it was tougher.

Until, about an hour later, I happened to wander upstairs and into the living room -- and there was Chuck Hansen, in a circle of Risk players, deeply engrossed, on the very verge, it seemed, of gaining control of all Europe. Chuck saw me and turned and grabbed my hand, pumping it and greeting me as though he hadn't seen me for weeks.

Several weeks later, probably at the next DASFA meeting, I talked to Chuck about the party and in my awkward, clumsy way tried to apologize. I told him I was glad he hadn't left the party because of the pot smoking.

"I almost did," he said. "But when I got upstairs I decided I could ignore it as long as it was in the basement. It was a good party. I had a fine time."

The next year however (1974), without giving any particular reason,

I declined to serve as host for the annual orgy. I simply told DASFA it was somebody else's turn.

By doing that I almost missed out on the party entirely.

It was held at the apartment complex where Doug and Allie Bennett were living -- in the recreation building, which was detached from the living quarters so people could make all the noise they wanted, and it was equipped with kitchen facilities and in fact just about everything anybody would need for a party -- including a billiard table in the basement. There was only one drawback from my point of view, and that was that the party had to be switched to Friday night because of a conflict with some other event that had already been booked for Saturday.

As a matter of routine in my work schedule with the Rocky Mountain News, I have the third Saturday of each month off so I can attend DASFA events. So okay, as a part-time employee I can take any day off that I want to, since I don't get paid if I don't work; or I could have very easily arranged to get Friday off and work Saturday. But I don't like to take advantage of my position at the News and more than I do all the time anyway, what with taking whole months off in the middle of the vacation season to go chasing off to Australia.

So I got to the 1974 DASFA Christmas party at about midnight, but it wasn't too bad at all because I was greeted by a bevy of DASFA's most delectable females, including Carol Van Natta, Thamzine Epperson, Judy Tockman, Allie Bennett and two or three others. They had agreed to feel sorry for me and as soon as I stepped inside the door they were swarming over me with extremely passionate kisses and warm embraces. For a little while there I really thought that the fabled DASFA Christmas orgy had become a reality. However the females had not decided to be that sorry for me, and after that delightfully unexpected welcome I found myself in the midst of what was essentially just another DASFA dead dog party.

At 4 a.m. I was discussing fanzines with the Beetems.

I don't recall whether there were any members of the CFS at the Bennetts Christmas party. Chuck Hansen wasn't, I'm quite sure.

Sometime around the middle of last year (1975), one afternoon while Carolyn and I were poking around in the basement storage area, either trying to find something or trying to find a vacant square foot of space to store something. I gave a despairing glance around and made a despairing comment, and Carolyn said, "Well, we'll just have to have the Christmas party again. That's the only way we ever seem to get the house cleaned up."

And so the Christmas party was here once again. Carolyn and I spent a major portion of one day cleaning out that storage area and hauling trash to the dump. Then I spent nearly a week rearranging all my books and putting up additional shelves, and postponing all the other necessary preparations just as long as possible. Which is why I decided to reprint that thing from DoS C #15.

The party this year (last year, now) was a bit of a disappointment to me in some ways, though it should not have been.

For one thing, virtually all of the beautiful girls, including Carol Van Natta, were accompanied by protective boyfriends, and so I spent virtually no time sitting around nuzzling and cuddling nubile

maidens or voluptuous matrons. Well, maybe a little time, but not much. (Come to think of it, the most voluptuous matron present, Stevie Barnes, was not accompanied, and though I kissed and cuddled her some, I failed to take full advantage of the opportunity. Senility, I guess).

Also, though I didn't count the number of guests present and had no figures from previous years with which to make comparisons anyway, it seemed to me that there weren't quite as many people at this year's party as there had been before.

I wondered if maybe I had scared some people away who might otherwise have showed up. That was not at all what I had in mind (if anything, I was hoping for the opposite effect) but in retrospect I can see how my announcement-invitation in DASFax could have had that result. You see, I had not been able to attend the DASFA meetings for two months in a row and thus had not had an opportunity to keep reminding people in person that I was having the Christmas party, and so to make up for that lack of communication I wanted something in DASFax that would catch everyone's eye and serve as a forceful reminder of the December plans. And since I am the editor of DASFax, I am always able to implement any kind of inspired brainstorm that I come up with.

Anyway, I headed the item about the Christmas party:

O R G Y            I n s t r u c t i o n s

with the word "orgy" in letters an inch high.

There was some satisfaction in the apparent fact that everyone who did attend the party seemed to have a good time, even though it wasn't anywhere close to a real orgy.

It wasn't enough to offset the depression brought on by the fact that no one from the CFS came to the party -- neither Bob Peterson nor Emile Greenleaf nor Roy Hunt nor Chuck Hansen. Away in the back of my mind, a vicious voice was whispering: 'You see? Chuck Hansen has decided to be careful about coming to your parties after all. He knew you'd be letting people smoke dope again.'

I tried of course to shrug off the voice, to disregard it, but the feeling of mild depression that accompanied it persisted until just a few days ago. Then I received a note from Bob Peterson, a sort of loc on DoS 43, but it included this paragraph:

Was sorry not to have made your Christmas party, but a trip to Boulder was planned by the CFS group, and we did not know you were hosting the DASFA party until the day before. Wish you could make it to our Saturday night sessions occasionally -- it has been a while.

That cheered me up. So much so that I've already decided to have the Christmas party again next year (this year, I mean), and I'll try to do things a little differently. I'll keep reminding people all year about it. And then I'll try to get DASFax in the mail a little earlier so it won't get tangled up and delayed in the other Christmas mail. Maybe I'll refrain from calling it an orgy, at least in such large type.

And maybe if I ban any kind of smoking . . .



## MUSICAL INTERLUDE - - In a manner of speaking

I mentioned that I can get drunk on music, adding that I try not to let that happen too often, but in truth it has been happening more and more often lately. Is there a technical term for one who uses music as a substitute for drink, attempting to drown his sorrows and to escape harsh reality in the flow of melody instead of the flow of booze? I could easily become such a creature, anyway, whether there's a word for it or not; or perhaps I am already.

My daughter, Claudia, is attending school in Aberdeen, Scotland, this year. Two years ago, for the DASFA Christmas orgy, I bought a fairly expensive stereo record player to hook up in the Red Room; and after the party I gave the record player to Claudia as a Christmas present. (It seemed reasonable to test the thing thoroughly first). As is well known, a deadly mold grows on unused record players, so to forestall any such thing I took the phonograph from Claudia's room and moved it downstairs to my room, to replace the 25-year-old Zenith mono that I had been using. (There was nothing wrong with the Zenith except that it could no longer handle a whole stack of records, dropping them one at a time automatically; but the sound, even if not stereo and certainly not hi-fi, was quite adequate for the very limited amount of listening that I did). I've gotten accustomed to the much higher sound quality of the stereo -- it still isn't true hi-fi (it's a Radio Shack Perfection portable, if you want to know), but compared to the old Zenith it's pretty damned hi-- and Claudia may have a fight on her hands when she gets home and tries to regain possession of it.

Listen, I want to be honest: I don't want you to think that I know anything about music. All three of my children are musically talented; Bruce took violin lessons and he can play just about anything with strings; Claudia plays the guitar and has an incredibly pure and lovely voice; Doug plays piano and trombone -- but I inherited none of their talent (though come to think of it, it doesn't usually work that way anyhow, does it?)

My taste in music is just as uneducated and suspect as is my taste in art. All I know is what I like. And quite obviously, as regards musical preference, I was born into the wrong generation. Most people my age, if they are not Lawrence Walk or Guy Lumbago freaks, are devotees of Duke Ellington or any of the jazz masters, most of whose names I don't even know. OR, they dig Charlie Pride and Waylon Jennings. (I don't know those names either, but Jackie Hilles mentioned them in a recent letter; I'll have much more to say about Jackie in a little while).

So what kind of music do I like.  
Well, I like Bob Dylan, for starters.  
And I'm glad you couldn't see the scorn

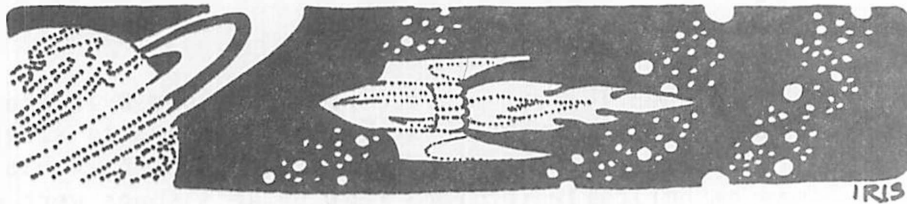


to which I was subjected when I first started bringing home Dylan records, more than ten years ago. No one objected strenuously to Odetta singing Dylan, and everyone fully approved of Joan Baez singing Dylan -- but Dylan singing Dylan? I was emphatically informed that Dylan's songs were nice but that Dylan was a rotten singer. I kept playing the records anyway, when no one else was around (though I have to admit that I have not followed Dylan faithfully through all the twists and leaps of his career. He almost lost me with JOHN WESLEY HARDING, and the albums that came after that for a while didn't do much for me. I bought both DYLAN and SELF PORTRAIT but wasn't much impressed by them, and I skipped NASHVILLE SKYLINE and NEW MORNING. I became so indifferent, in fact, that I completely missed BLONDE ON BLONDE and just recently discovered it, at about the same time that I picked up BLOOD ON THE TRACKS. That's shameful. Both of those are superb albums. To make up for my negligence I have been buying everything of Dylan's, including the albums that I consider decidedly inferior, such as A RARE BATCH OF LITTLE WHITE WONDER and the PAT GARRETT & BILLY THE KID sound track. As a result of this policy, I got DESIRE almost as soon as it became available).

DESIRE! What an incredible album! I would say it is the greatest album I have ever heard, but the word "great" has lost all meaning, what with every rock group in existence producing an album or two or its "greatest hits." DESIRE goes far beyond the merely great. Someone needs to invent a new superlative. Or perhaps Dylan has just invented a whole new category of music for himself.

But truly I am not qualified to discuss such matters on a judgemental level. As I said, all I know is what I like, and I started out merely to tell what kind of music I employ to become intoxicated on. The rest of this page will consist of a listing of some of the groups and individuals, some of the individual albums, and some of the individual songs that I have listened to most and enjoyed to most -- and have gotten highest on in the past couple of months. (These are somewhat in alphabetical order, and I'm leaving out a lot that don't come to mind immediately).

Beethoven (NINE SYMPHONIES, a seven-record set of the NBC Orchestra); Bachman-Turner-Overdrive, Haydn (the Sturm and Drang Symphonies); Holst (THE PLANETS); Joan Baez (but I don't have any of her really recent albums); Judy Collins; Jim Croce (don't have his latest yet); Crosby and Nash (WIND ON THE WATER); Neil Diamond (HOT AUGUST NIGHT, "Song Sung Blue" of course); The Doors (several albums, the latest being ABSOLUTELY LIVE, but I much prefer their earlier stuff, such as MORRISON HOTEL); The Byrds (UNTITLED grates on me, somehow; I like the early Byrds better); The Grateful Dead ("Mountains of the Moon" on AOXOMOXOA is an enduring favorite); Uriah Heep (I really like THE MAGICIAN'S BIRTHDAY and DEMONS & WIZARDS; RETURN TO FANTASY doesn't measure up); Jefferson Airplane and J. Starship (I like them all the way); Elton John; Gordon Lightfoot (GORD'S GOLD is great, and "Minstrel of the Dawn" is very nice; H.P. Lovecraft (what ever became of them? I have two of their albums, is that all they did?); Mamas & the Papas; Moody Blues; Melanie; Rolling Stones (but I've made no attempt to keep up with them, and I always liked the Beatles better, and I've made no effort to keep up with the broken-up Beatles except McCartney, a little); Linda Ronstadt; Simon & Garfunkle (and quite a bit of Paul Simon by himself); Cat Stevens; Santana; Steeleye Span; James Taylor, Jethro Tull, The Who; Wishbone Ash; Neil Young . . . That should give you the general idea.



HILLESIAN LAW NO. 1: *You don't have to be male to be kicked in the balls.*

THOMPSONIAN COROLLARY TO HILLESIAN LAW NO. 1: *You don't have to be female  
to get your tit caught in the wringer.*

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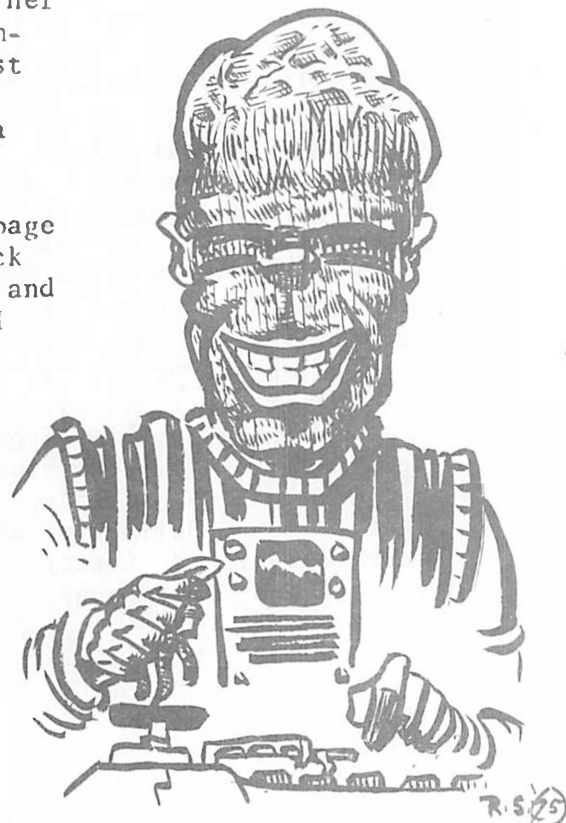
*. . . and finally when the bottom fell out,  
I became withdrawn.  
The only thing I knew how to do  
was to keep on keepin' on  
Like a bird that flew  
Tangled up in blue.*

--"Tangled Up In Blue"  
Bob Dylan (BLOOD ON THE TRACKS)

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Of course I didn't really take Jackie Hilles to Australia with me, but when I got back, in the first of many letters to Jackie, I told her about the special sense in which I had taken her along.

Early last summer Bud Webster wrote to me from Richmond, Va., announcing that Jackie Hilles was becoming or had become co-editor of his zine, LOG of the STARSHIP ANIARA and asking me to send her a copy of DON-o-SAUR. So I did, and not long afterward received a loc on DoS from that same Jackie Hilles. It was an intelligent, literate, compassionate loc with some thoughtful comments about Polly and about the death of her (Jackie's) grandmother. It was a nice letter, and I intended to use part of it in my next loc-col. But I must add that the letter didn't do anything special to me. But on the day before I left for Australia I received a copy of RAMBLINGS of the STARSHIP ANIARA, a five-page, dittoed, actually rather cruddy-looking zine, with no cover or anything. Something on that unadorned first page snagged my eye and then my attention, and I glanced back to the top of the page and started reading from there, and before I realized it, almost against my own volition, I found I had read the entire five pages and was back at the beginning, re-reading parts of it. That was an unusual sensation. I get a lot of fan-zines, and I try to at least skim all of them. There are a few, damn few, that I try to read thoroughly, but virtually none that I read every word of (not since the first couple of issues of the original REG anyway). In fact, RotSA reminded me somewhat of REG, in spite of the obvious differences between the writing





styles, life styles and general outlook of the jaded, hard-boiled 45-year-old Geis and the sweet and sensitive 20-year-old Hilles. Both zines provided vivid, startling, almost shocking glimpses into the innermost recesses of the lives and minds of their editors. When I had finished reading that first issue of REG, I really felt that I had met Geis and had gotten acquainted with him and knew him well enough to write him a long letter -- which I did. I had exactly the same feeling and the same impulse to write after I finished reading that first issue of RotSA. But I still had so many things to do in preparation for the Australian trip that it was impossible for me to write to Jackie just then.

So I took her to Australia with me.

No, but I took her RAMBLINGS with me, hoping to find time during the trip to write to her, and hoping most fervently that a lot of other people would respond to her appeal for contact with her readers. To my shame and sorrow, I did not get a letter to her written during the trip, and by the time I got home the impulse to do so had diminished considerably. But it was revived almost immediately by RotSA 2, which was among the tons of mail waiting for me when I got home from Australia. Again I unexpectedly read a zine straight through, and again I wanted to loc, but this time I was saved by the necessity of digging my way out from under all the things that had piled up in my absence; and again, with the passage of time, the pressure to write tapered off. However . . . About the middle of September, before school had started, while I was painfully, tediously trying to patch together some kind of trip and con report for DoS 43 (I had almost abandoned any hopes I'd had of making the account coherent), yet another dittoed zine arrived from Richmond, Va. This one was called HILLESIAN FIELDS No. 1. It wasn't really any more prepossessing than the two issues of RotSA that I'd seen; in fact, if anything, the purple ditto repro was more faded and uneven, making the whole thing more difficult to read. But this issue was special.

It was dedicated to: Bud Webster, David Kirby, Don C. Thompson, Tim Marion and Will Norris.

I'm glad no one was watching me when I read that dedication. I'm sure I blushed.

Needless to say, I read every word of HF 1; and I again found the writing so intelligent, meaningful, provocative, revealing and downright enjoyable that I experienced an almost physical need to respond.

And this time I actually did it. I interrupted my work on DON-o-SAUR 43 in the middle of a thought (well, so to speak) and wrote my first letter to Jackie Hilles. It was four pages long, single spaced and not only was it an extended loc on RotSA and HF, it covered (or touched upon) many other subjects as well. I found, to my great surprise, that I was able to write about things in a letter to this girl that I'd never met but nevertheless already felt that I knew well, that I was unable to write about or never seemed to get around to writing about in DON-o-SAUR, and that was strange -- a complete reversal of my normal attitude. After all, I did DoS primarily because I had at



first been able to write things in it that I never could in personal letters, no matter to whom.

Jackie's reply to my letter was very prompt and cordial. She offered to regard me as a sort of father, big brother and all-purpose friend. That letter was followed, before I had a chance to write back, by a hastily handwritten note apologizing for being presumptuous, too assuming. I wrote back just as hastily, assuring her that she was not being at all presumptuous. I offered myself as surrogate father, brother, uncle, cousin, or even grandfather. But definitely as a friend.

In my first letter to Jackie, I said "I think I love you." In the second I said, "I love you."

\* \* \* \* \*

Those asterisks represent a long pause during which I was giving thoughtful consideration to the feeling that I am on the verge of betraying confidences and invading privacies -- and trying to decide what to do about it. In her zines, Jackie is extraordinarily frank and open, totally honest, sometimes revealing intimate details of her life and thoughts. It's that quality of openness of course that attracted me so strongly to her in the first place. When I decided to write about her I was assuming that because she had held so little of herself back in her own writing, there would be no need for me to exercise any reticence in what I said about her. But I find it isn't that simple. When Jackie writes about herself, she makes the decisions about what to say and what to conceal (if anything) and in what light to present her revelations. But she has no control over what I might say, or how. It makes a difference.

Therefore I'm not going to say anything about why I happened to make a phone call to Jackie Hilles around the middle of October, except that it was made at the suggestion of Bud Webster, and I was (and still am) chagrined that I didn't think of it first. As I explained to Jackie in the letter I was writing her at the time, it is somehow contrary to my nature to even think of using a telephone as a means of communication when there is a typewriter within reach. That was true at the time. Since then I have become a full-fledged member of telephone fandom, and hour-long conversations with Jackie or Bud in Richmond have lost their novelty, and a \$50 monthly telephone bill doesn't seem nearly as outrageous as it once did.

In that first telephone conversation with Jackie, she asked how Polly was, and because I hadn't heard anything recently, I replied cheerfully, "Oh, she could go on for years yet."

But that very evening we received news that Polly was very near the end, and she died before I finished my letter to Jackie, and while I was still struggling to finish DoS 43.

Jackie Hilles and Bud Webster were the first persons in fandom to learn of Polly's death. They were also the first to see a copy of DON-o-SAUR 43.

Polly died the morning of Oct. 23 and I told about it in my letter to Jackie, at the same time mentioning that a memorial service was planned for Nov. 6, and that I was tentatively planning to attend. I also said that if I got within a hundred miles of Richmond I would make every effort to meet her and Bud.

The logical connection between my remarks was crystal clear to me and it just didn't occur to me that it might not be to Jackie. I had not said any-

thing about where the service would be, it occurred to me later, and I had mentioned Laramie in the same sentence, almost. So it was only natural that when I called Jackie very late Wednesday night (November 5) and said, "This is Don Thompson. I'm in Vienna," her reply was a prolonged pause while she wondered frantically whether I was going to explain what I was doing in Austria and why I was calling her.

Sensing her confusion (finally), I said, "Vienna, Virginia. Suburb of Washington. I'm here for my sister's memorial service. When can I see you?"

The fact that my friendship with Jackie Hilles is still firmly intact and thriving is a very touching tribute to her patience, tolerance and ability to forgive stupidity (if that is a virtue), because the series of miscues, misunderstandings and misinterpretations that I was guilty of in its early stages could have easily disillusioned a lesser mortal.

Not only had I failed to alert Jackie to the fact that I would soon be trying to meet her, I failed now, in our Wednesday night telephone conversation, to understand or properly interpret our agreement on when and how we were going to meet. Well, I got the how all right, I think. We decided that I would catch a bus to Fredericksburg, about half way between Vienna and Richmond, and she and Bud would drive there and we would meet as early in the day as possible. What I didn't get straight was what day we were talking about.

The service for Polly was Thursday night, and so I had decided long in advance that Friday would be the best day for me to spend in fannish visiting; and even though Jackie carefully explained that because of her school schedule, Friday was almost impossible for her and that therefore we should try to make it Thursday, somehow when we hung up I was still thinking Friday.

And when Jackie called me at the Wolf Trap Motel, where Carolyn and I were staying, at 10:30 the next morning, to ask how soon I would be in Fredericksburg or whether I would be able to make it at all, I was only able to stammer inarticulately. Jackie took charge.

"Bud and I will meet you at your motel at about 2 o'clock this afternoon."

I tried, weakly, to protest. "Oh, but I hate to make you do all the driving. That's not fair."

"Yes it is. You can buy us dinner if you want to."

Well, I really couldn't think of any alternative arrangement, and so I agreed.

In partial defense of my total incompetence at this time, I could mention the fact that I was very tired as a result of pushing myself to my limit in order to get that obstreperous issue of DON-o-SAUR finished and run off and a few copies collated to bring along on the trip. It's an exaggeration to say that the most sleep I'd had all week was the napping I did on the plane ride to Dulles -- but not much of an exaggeration. And even though I slept well enough in the motel, I was still feeling more or less spacey all day Thursday.

But listen, I'm not offering that as either explanation for or extenuation of my behavior Thursday afternoon. I don't think it needs it.

Really, that Thursday afternoon was perfect. There's not a thing about it I would change if I had the power; still, it's just as well that I don't have any such power because if I did I would be sorely tempted to extend the afternoon in the direction of eternity, which could conceivably cut into other enjoyable experiences.



Both Bud and Jackie have written about our meeting in their zines, so it is not as though, if the event should become a fannish legend, it would be lacking in documentation. There's no real need for me to tell about it also. But I want to. And so . . .

It was a soft, warm, gentle day, but I don't know if the sun was really as bright as I remember it (nothing is so unreal, so difficult to imagine as something that really happened, and that's why people write fiction -- it is invariable more plausible and more meaningful than fact; so this probably didn't happen, because it is too rich, too fraught with significance. But I enjoy imagining it).

I had gotten back to the motel from my brother-in-law's house in Oakton just moments before 2 o'clock, and I ran up to my third-floor room and grabbed the two copies of DON-o-SAUR that I had brought along especially for Bud and Jackie, and then charged back downstairs and leaned against the front wall, feeling warm but somehow apprehensive. Only a little. Not really worried that they might not like me or that we might not have anything much to say to each other. Just mildly apprehensive.

They were a little late. I found out later it was because of a messy car accident that Bud had witnessed and stopped for on his way to pick up Jackie.

I didn't even see their car drive up; but it was there, in the parking lot when I turned my head, and I recognized Jackie at the wheel. (Did I forget to mention that Jackie had sent me a picture of herself? Of course. Anyway, she had).

"Jackie, you're even more beautiful than your picture," I said, and then she was out of the car and in my arms and I was kissing her, holding her very tight and close; and I'm not sure I would have ever let go of her, but I was all the time aware of an enormous bear-like creature standing nearby, wearing one of the broadest, warmest grins I'd ever seen-- and a Beethoven T-shirt.

I had reasons for being glad to see Bud Webster, too, and so I released Jackie and embraced and kissed Bud with almost equal fervor.

Then, with proper formality, I presented Jackie and Bud with their copies of DoS. Jackie opened hers, glanced at Howard's letter and rolled up the zine again quickly. "I'll read it later."

Jackie was dressed casually in loose blue jeans and a blue blouse. In a letter later, she explained that blue is her color of sadness and this was her way of expressing grief for Polly. Jackie sometimes signs her letters "Lady Blue."

Where did the afternoon go? The details seem so mundane.

At my suggestion, we drove to the enormous shopping center a few miles from the motel. We strolled through the malls arm-in-arm, with Jackie between me and Bud at first; then Bud impulsively dropped Jackie's arm and trotted around to my right side and linked arms with me, and I floated along then between them, having never in my life felt more important.

We had lunch in the shopping center, at a little restaurant specializing in crepes. I had insisted that we go to the most expensive place we could find.

"What's this insistence on some place expensive?" Bud asked.

"You drove a hundred miles to see me. I owe you a good dinner."

"That's nonsense. Anyway Jackie did the driving."

"Let's find an expensive place to eat."

Bud and Jackie assured me the crepes were delicious. I had some too, but my taste in food is just as uneducated and suspect as is my taste in art and music. The crepes seemed all right to me.

After lunch we drove to Wolf Trap Park. Jackie drove; I sat in the front seat with her; Bud served as official back seat driver. I understood during that trip why Bud was letting Jackie drive his car (Jackie's had been damaged in an accident a couple of weeks previously). Being totally lost anyway, I was relaxed, enjoying the scenery as we traversed narrow roads with the foliage brushing the car windows, but both Bud and Jackie were intent on the route, neither of them quite certain of the right way.

"Left here," Bud said as we approached a junction, and I thought Jackie was going to heed the advice, but at the last second she swung the wheel sharply to the right. "I'll probably have to apologize, but I think it's this way," she said. And a minute and a half later, with perfect aplomb, she pulled into the Wolf Trap parking lot. I wanted to cheer. Bud is truly my brother; I identify fully with his unerring instinct to turn the wrong way, but my admiration for anyone with a reliable sense of direction is unbounded.

We walked down broad concrete steps to the auditorium, and Bud and Jackie told me the harrowing details of their one previous visit here (for a Virgil Fox performance, I believe) but don't expect me to relay the adventure.

We stood at the back of the building, admiring its rustic grandeur and talking of many things -- for maybe a long time, perhaps only for a few minutes. We were in temporal stasis. I didn't notice the shadows lengthening until a guard approached and told us no visitors were allowed in the amphitheatre after sunset. I was prepared to argue that it wasn't sunset yet, but neither Bud nor Jackie seemed inclined to dispute the matter, so we sauntered away but decided the banishment was not from the park itself, just the building.

The air was warm and still. We lay down on the cool grass and gazed up at the darkening sky. We were silent for a while. Jackie raised herself on an elbow and leaned over me, plucking something from her blouse and fastening it on the lapel of my shirt. It was a little silver pin in the shape of a dove. "The symbol of peace," she said. "Tonight, at the service for Polly, if things start to get too much for you, reach up and hold on to this." I think she said more than that, but that's what I heard, and then I kissed her and I held onto Jackie for a long time, but not long enough.

Then Bud half sat up and handed me something. "This isn't much. Just a weird penny that got mangled in a washing machine so the edge got turned up and made it the size of a dime. I just carry it around as a lucky piece. I'd like for you to have it." I embraced Bud, and I kissed him again.

I fished around in my pockets and came up with an old bent-out-of-shape pipe tool that I'd carried around for no reason at all ever since I quit smoking some seven or eight years ago, and I started to give it to Bud, but then I remembered that in one of her letters or maybe in a RotSA or HF, Jackie had mentioned that she occasionally smokes a meershaum, and so I gave the pipe tool to her and found a small pen knife to give to Bud.

There was a shiny fingernail sliver of moon in the sky as we walked back to the car. We stood for a while looking at it, and at each other.

The afternoon was almost over. All that remained was for Bud and Jackie to deliver me to my brother-in-law's house in Oakton so I could go to the memorial service and they could drive back to Richmond.

"Let's say our farewells here," Jackie said. She put her arms around me and pulled my face down to hers, and I held her very close and very tight and kissed her very warmly, and seeing the almost alarmed expression on Bud's face, I said, "She's my little girl, my daughter, my little sister," and Jackie whispered, "My father, my brother, my friend." It hurt me to have to release Jackie, but eventually I did and then Bud and I embraced once more and I told him, because it's true, that I love him too.

Well . . .

All that was three months ago now (or will be by the time you read this), but the memories are so clear and vivid, so rich in detail that now, at odd times I wonder if it really did happen. (It has more the feel of heroic fantasy). But it's a little more difficult to believe that Bud, Jackie and I would have all imagined essentially the same thing than it is to believe that we actually shared the experience.

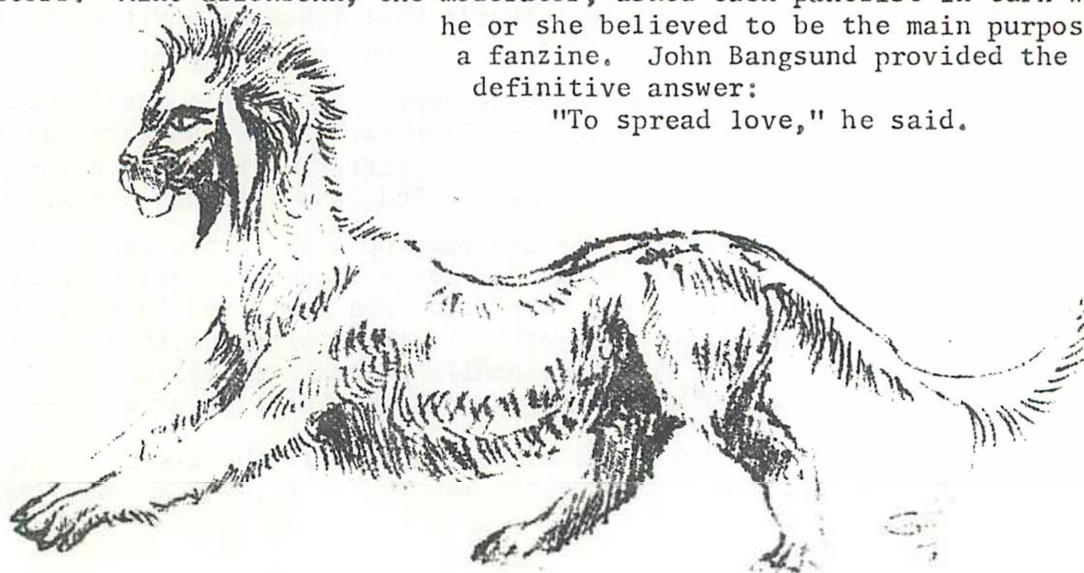
What I do believe, after extensive thought and careful analysis, is this: that while each individual does occupy essentially a separate time line, or a separate reality plane, if you'd rather think of it that way (or a separate spiritual dimension, if that's easier), there are nevertheless times and circumstances in which the time lines of individuals merge, the planes mesh, the dimensional walls crumble.

And I think that's what happened that warm November afternoon. For a few hours Bud and Jackie and I were . . . (I'm going to mix in an entirely different metaphor here with the ones already assembled, so brace yourself). We were for a short time no longer prisoners in our isolation cells of being. The barriers between us had dissolved as if by magic, and if we were captives still, at least we were together, cavorting in the courtyard, able to see each other, to touch each other -- to communicate.

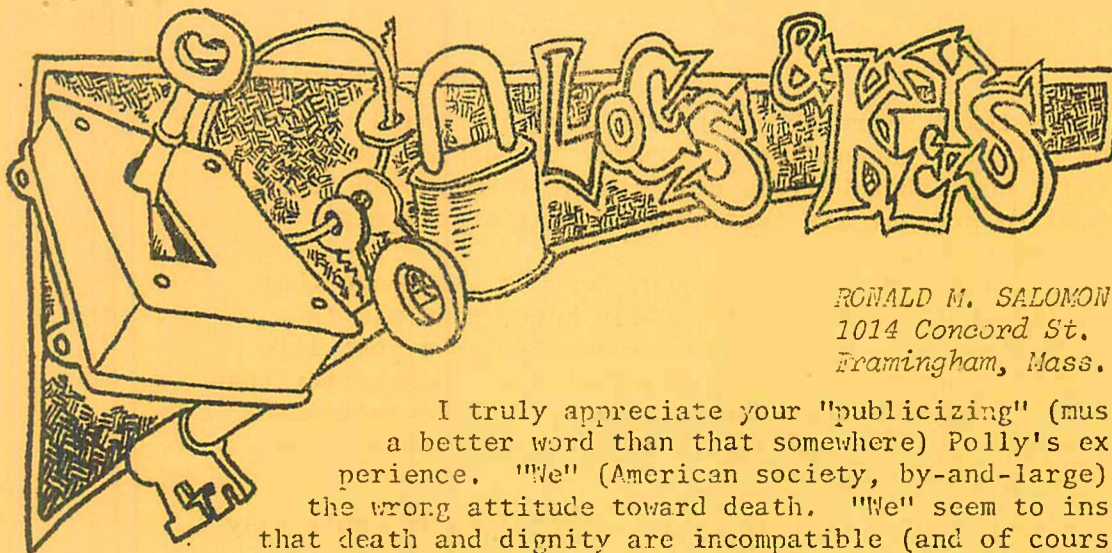
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At Aussiecon, back in August, I was on a panel with some very distinguished fan editors. Mike Glicksohn, the moderator, asked each panelist in turn what he or she believed to be the main purpose of a fanzine. John Bangsund provided the definitive answer:

"To spread love," he said.







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I truly appreciate your "publicizing" (must be a better word than that somewhere) Polly's experience. "We" (American society, by-and-large) have the wrong attitude toward death. "We" seem to insist that death and dignity are incompatible (and of course such is not the case) and seem to do our damndest to make that so. By all means stay out of hospitals unless you plan to get well in one. I feel the family has to get involved in a fatal illness and that is one case in which the family unit is in a make-or-break situation. It's way past time to take Death out of the closet.

D. GARY GRADY  
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Although I did not know Polly, and to an extent disagreed partially with her philosophy of dying, I cried when I read Howard's letter. There seems to be a -- a what? -- a spate? -- of dying in recent months. I still have not recovered from the death of Jack Benny, my favorite comedian when I was a kid. Then there was Vaughn Bode whose death George Beahm so eloquently mourns in DON-o-SAUR also. And Richard Shaver. And probably others I can't remember and don't want to go looking for. Well, Mike Bracken's mother, for one. Who'll be next? I can think of names but I won't list them. You can do the same, I'm sure. There are a lot of fans getting up there. And of course an accident or disease could take you or me or anyone without warning, without time to prepare. I'm not sure I would want time to prepare . . .

I can't resist commenting on that, though I'm sure it's unnecessary. I don't think there's any more of a spate of dying than usual, life being the only known disease with a 100 per cent mortality rate. And of course we do, always, have time to prepare for it.

SHEILA D'AMMASSA  
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I wanted to tell you how sorry I am to learn of Polly's death; I've been following her story in DON-o-SAUR (which I read and enjoy faithfully) and feel, as most of your readers seem to, that I've come to know her. I'm glad she died as she wanted to, and grieve for you and her family.

RANDALL D. LARSON  
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Though I never knew or heard of your sister until this issue, it was sad to read of her death -- as it is inevitably sad to read of the death of anyone in such an untimely fashion. And yet, it particularly pleased me to read Howard's eulogy and to learn of his feelings towards

the matter, and to learn where he and Polly stood in regard to the One who made us all. It touched me personally to know of their faith in God and I hope that Polly's death might serve as an opportunity for Howard to present his testimony so that others might come to know the true God.

All I'd really like to share with you, Don, is the peace that may come in knowing that God has called Polly home, to claim the reward He's saved for her -- the reward for her living a just life in His sight. She's gone to be in a place that's so much better than where we're at, it's hard to feel sorry for her. She doesn't need to be mourned; rather it's we who remain to be apart from her who need the love and support of others.

Death has always been a hard thing to accept, and it isn't easy to explain, especially when it comes in the inopportune times it often does. Why does a beautiful young girl have to be stricken down in the prime of her youth? Why must your beautiful sister be snatched away, or even afflicted with the disease she was? No one on earth can say. God is the author and finisher of our lives, and it is He who knows when we have fulfilled his purpose for us on earth. It has been often said that it isn't the length of one's life, but the quality of it. And I believe that.

MIKE GLICKSOHN  
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I thank you for sharing with us the serenity and beauty of your sister's death through the medium of Howard's remarkable letter. I usually have little that is positive to say about religion but when it provides the strength and courage to act as Polly and Howard did through this unfortunate time, then one cannot help but consider it worthwhile. When one is faced with inevitable tragedy, I suppose it is best to hope that it happens quickly and smoothly as seems to have been the case here, and then to go on with life rather than dwelling on death. I extend my sympathies, of course, and my admiration for you all.

Your discourse on sex and sin was, as always with you, extremely interesting, but almost totally out of my own realm of personal experience. I've never been to a strip show, despite the fact that over the past few years the main downtown Toronto street has been overrun with them and with massage parlours and other amenities of our culture. Until last New Year's Eve ['75, not '76; this letter was written in December] at the ripe old age of 28, I'd never encountered a prostitute. (And the incident in question was merely a brief verbal exchange on the streets of New York, I hasten to add). Lacking any religious upbringing, I've never thought sex was sinful, or forbidden, but I've never had an especially strong interest in it either, at least not in comparison to some others I know. I never even saw a skin flick until about two years ago, and was bored to tears by the ones they showed to the extent of going back downstairs to play darts after about fifteen minutes. It should be interesting to see what revelations the next issue's lettercol produce though. ("Sin and Sex Down Under" sounds like a great title for an Aussiecon report and I'm sorry you didn't use it!)

"Great Expectations" is an odd sort of supplement. It can't

quite seem to decide what it's supposed to be. Is it an appreciation of Ken Smith's work? An advert for his wares? A history and/or explanation of the production of limited-edition artwork. Or all of these plus a couple of other things?

Beahm seems to constantly change the focus of his article/whatever, which left me never quite sure of what direction he was wandering in. There's much useful and interesting (and infuriating!) material here, but it lacks overall coherency. I'm left with the impression that Beahm wasn't quite sure what he wanted to do, and I think the whole piece needed considerable editing and rewriting.

For example, what reader of D-o-S needed most of "Ken Smith's Primer On Conventions"? Ken Smith's thoughts on the nature of fanzines, sure; but I already know what a con is and what a hucksters' room is. Edit, edit!

Oh well, there was a lot of good stuff there and I don't feel in the mood to argue with Ken's opinions of fanzines so let's leave it.

VICTORIA VAYNE

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I always feel a little weird when reading accounts like that of your sister's death -- like I'm intruding on your family, almost. I missed the original article several issues ago, but I'd like to say I was quite moved by the letter in #43, and admire people that can face up to the loss of a loved one in that way. I could not be so strong or accepting myself, and all I can say is that I extend my sympathies.

I found it interesting to read about PHANTASMAGORIA, especially the difference in philosophy between a comics fanzine and a SF fanzine. There are fanzines I admire a lot, that I get for trade and/or letters, and that even so I could never see paying a lot of money for. I'd be interested in seeing one of these lavish comics zines, but not in paying for one; I'd like to see one just to see if they live up to the descriptions I hear. There are some fanzines in the sf field that come close to lavishing as much money on their production as the comics zines, but about these the debate rages as to whether they are actually prozines. My own zine is a strictly amateur production, I like it that way, and it's the sort of thing I like to get from others. I'm afraid my publishing philosophy and that of comics zine editors simply won't mix.

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United States of Amerika

I only saw one issue of PHANTASMAGORIA, a loan copy a couple of years ago, and may not remember it well. Some of the art was indeed striking, far above the comix fanzines I see at Collector's Book Store. But the writing was by no means comparable to the best examples in literature/writings-oriented zines. That is, without the art, the thing wouldn't come off well -- it was unexcelled only when judged on a comparison basis to balloon-wordage in the regular comic strips, not if compared to prose-wordage of a well conceived fictionzine. I can't help but wish he'd remained in professional circles, rather than tripping off on this vainglory vanity press, no matter how well he does it.

Your thoughts on sex and sin strike me as uncommonly common, for guys. I've yet to comprehend how/where/when/why the male intellect



equates burlesque houses, pornie movies, dirty books and topless dancing with sex. It fascinates me to think anyone -- you? -- could sit through this stuff with feelings of sexual gratification. At its very best, I view such things as attractive artistically. At its usual level, it is boring, occasionally sickening but usually just boring, rarely but sometimes interesting, and never-never sexy. It is ideas and words and art that portrays, in some way, romance, affection, love, that makes me horny. Is this the difference between the male and the female psyche? Sex to a woman has something to do with love, however removed circumstances may leave the two. Sex to a man has something to do with boobs and cunts, unless he's a faggot, then it has something to do with cocks. (And maybe this explains Dr. Tripp's statistics about "modern swingers," which are staggering: 70 % of the women could respond to other women positively even though not Lesbian; 1% of the men could do likewise, which is contrary to the statistics that make gay men three or four times more common than gay women. Tripp explained it by describing the negative attitudes toward homosexual men and the permissive attitudes toward homosexual women, allowing ostensibly straight women to make it with girlfriends, but not allowing ostensibly straight men to make it with manfriends. But it may not be that, I'm thinking now. If a man is turning on to boobs and cunts, then an intelligent, attractive manfriend can't trigger the right responses. If a woman is turning on to romantic inclinations, then a woman will do as well as a guy. Better).

Jessica Amanda Salmonson, editor/publisher of *FANTASY AND TERROR* (the current issue of which runs 100 pages and costs \$4.50 a copy) is doing, consciously and deliberately the same sort of thing for the subject of sexual deviation that I have been doing coincidentally for the subject of death -- bringing it out of the closet. Jessica was a male homosexual. Last summer she underwent surgery and hormone treatments and is now physiologically as well as psychically and emotionally female. The problem, she says, is that she now has definite Lesbian tendencies. She encourages frank and open discussion of sexual problems by being totally frank and open about her own.

JACKIE HILLES  
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Richmond, VA 23234

On sex and sin (heh heh heh): I  
was raised by a trio of Southern Baptists,  
but oddly enough, never got the idea from  
them that sex and sin were synonymous.

The notion of sex being sinful came when I went to church. Baptist, all right. SEX IS SIN. Nothing more, nothing less. I remained very open about it and was always very naive about sex. I'm just finding out, just beginning to figure out what the scrawled messages on bathroom walls mean.

I got something of a shock, though, when I was in London. I had never seen a prostitute on the streets, never seen a sex shop. Around Piccadilly, there are streets and streets of nothing but sex shops and strip joints. It revolted me because of the air of unnecessary lewdness that permeated the section of the city. I have never been in a topless bar, never seen a stripper (male or female) and the prospect doesn't excite me. In fact, I find it unnecessary and boring. The thought that some people get their jollies in seeing some sagging female lunge about the stage depresses me. I open a copy of *Playgirl* and the naked, erect men cavorting about make me laugh. But each to his or her own.

BEN INDICK  
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Teaneck, NJ 07666

I spent the year's end in Israel. I left home dovish and returned much more hawkish, not for war, but for a remarkable State and its determined people. Anyway, I did enjoy your splendid report on Aussiecon. I guess Israel has its redlite districts as well, but my, oh, my, the one you saw must take some sort of award. It makes Sin City NY seem tame. (New York is LOTS more prudish than most people realize. It's just that it has so much of EVERYTHING). I had my fun with Israeli money too -- except unlike Aussie gelt, it's not worth as much.

The Bode response by Beahm was moving. I imagine he is talking about my article in the Petaja Bok book [AND FLIGHTS OF ANGELS by Emil Petaja, 1968]. I can appreciate how Beahm felt when he learned suddenly that a precious friend was gone forever and that, in a sense, he had taken him for granted and not visited him in a long time. My piece is called "The Remembered Elf." I am moved that someone remembered it, and my feeling. I fear we all commit the same mistake in life.

JACKIE SIMPSON  
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I see we share a number of traits, such as people fatigue, interest in sex, sin and such experiences as Aussie strip joints and L.A. at night vs. L.A. police.

People fatigue is common I would guess, especially to shy people who function best in one-to-one situations or very small intimate groups of friends. My tendency if not in one of the above situations is to withdraw and let the conversation strike strange chords in my head till I'm adrift in a dream. Conversation is not my strong point.

Sin enhancing sex or other activities is a definite thing, provided one does not have such overwhelming guilt feelings as to inhibit the enjoyment. The only strip joint I have been to was in Australia. Definitely agree on bored girls, bored act, bored customers and boring experience. Not having been to one here, I can only speculate it might be the same.

Your experience in L.A. at night reminds me of mine. I was returning from the San Diego Comic Con and reached L.A. at midnight or thereabouts with the last bus to Glendale leaving at 12:37. I rushed out of the terminal trying to find the stop, with no luck whatsoever (I forgot where all the streets were -- and got lost). Spying a cop I rushed over to ask for help. No, he didn't help, "but this is a bad area of town for you to be running around in." Cop #2 said call the bus depot, after he decided I wasn't a candidate for arrest.

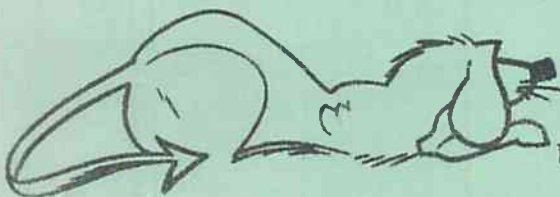
I did, and asked #3, on his way to a coffee break, where Main was. He shrugged and continued on his way. Luckily I stumbled on the right street and stop two lights ahead of the bus and made it home at 2:30 a.m.

Since then my attitude towards cops has been somewhat shaky.

"Why don't you come up a  
SEE me sometime..."



--- Big Boy?"





SAMUEL S. LONG  
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Your Aussietrip was one of the best I've read: a masterpiece of storytelling. There were strong journalistic

overtones (which is only to be expected) but these added to the atmosphere of the tale rather than detracted from it.

Time: If you were cool, or a navigator, or a weatherman, you'd keep your watch on Greenwich time, like I do, and thereby avoid time-paradoxes such as you so feelingly describe. I've never taken an airplane on quite so long a flight as you did, but I've taken a number of 10-hour flights, and I know how loooooong such flights get, just sitting there as the earth passes beneath you -- even at almost 10 miles a minute!

Your comments on eating habits bring to mind some observations my fiancée made on her recent trip to the U.S. British and Continentals don't switch hands like we do with forks and knives; nor do they shovel food with the fork nearly as much as we do. It is not common to eat your toast at the same time as you eat your morning bacon and eggs in Britain either. It's things like that that you've got to master if you're going to become a spy: if you don't eat your food according to the custom of the country you're spying in, you'll be known for a furriner and zap! they'll have you.

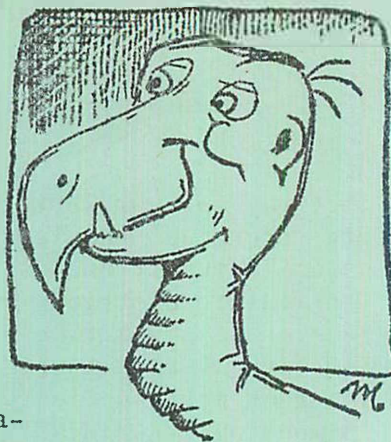
ERIC LINDSAY  
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Faulconbridge, NSW  
2776, Australia

"So Far Away, So Close to Home" was a marvelously evocative title, and one that was perfectly clear right from the start. I felt the same way myself when visiting Torcon and touring your country. And I ex-

pect that it will be similar in 1976 when I will be over there again, hopefully for a longer stay.

My feeling for the geography of L.A. is vague, but I remember going from the Trimble's home in South Brosson down to the Tar Pits, and later walking back. But it never seemed to me a place. L.A. always seemed, even from the plane, an endless expanse of homes and freeways, totally unlike, say, San Francisco. I always get lost in Sydney also, except when I spot a bookshop -- then I know where I am (at least I know how to get to a different bookshop).

Kevin Dillon never eats; don't believe anyone who says he does. Don't even believe the photo I have here of him with a cup of tea; it is part of a movie set.



I have to admit that I have never been to a strip club or topless nightclub, didn't go to a skin flick until Flesh Gordon. . . hadn't bought a piece of soft core porn until I spotted one by Dick Geis. The trouble is not that doing these things makes one feel guilty, but rather, in this vocally permissive society, that you are out of place if you haven't.

That last part, walking in L.A. has much the same tone



and feeling (and reason) as that story of Ray Bradbury's about the last pedestrian in the world, walking at night along the streets of the city, and being picked up by a police patrol car, that won't listen to him or his protests, because it is a robot.

PAULINE PALMER  
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Bellingham, WA  
98225

*'I lost all sensation of walking. It was the buildings that were moving, not me...'*  
[DoS 43 p. 30] -- Somewhere in the deep dark recesses of my sf-reading memories, this key phrase strikes a familiar note:

such is the way that someone, somewhere, entered an alternate/parallel world. And you describe such an unusual L.A.--strange, empty, silent--and seem to suggest that you also have thought of the experience as taking place on a different level. As I recall, the protagonist walked down a path/road lined with trees, watching the trees until it seemed that they and the sky were moving and he standing still, then after reaching that rather euphoric feeling he would look around & find he was in the alternate reality.

I'm very sad for the loss of Polly. Her husband's letter was truly a beautiful and loving tribute. With her death, the memorial comments on Bode, and your moodily mystical ending to the trip report, it was, over all, an issue of gentle, searching melancholy. Even, thinking about it in retrospect, the section on Ken Smith's PHANTASMAGORIA had much of this same feeling of quiet introspection.

SHAYNE McCORMACK  
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Bass Hill, NSW 2197  
Australia

It's a fine trip report, even with your disconcerting habit of jumping from the end to the middle and then back again to the beginning. Keeps the reader on guard. I really enjoyed it, and I can understand your feelings regarding the cities. I had the same kind of reaction to those I visited in the U.S. There were differences, of course (the things I noticed most, to tell the truth, were the trees -- not a gum to be found).

I wandered around San Francisco my first trip, for about two hours, and it felt very much like Sydney . . . not the same of course, but not alien, not radically different. Not like the difference I felt in London; that was like another world. Or Oxford. Manchester actually reminded me a lot of Melbourne, the same kind of working city feeling, a no-nonsense business town. I love Sydney, and could never live anywhere else. Maybe it's family ties, but I don't think that's all there is to it. I only know this is where I'm most comfortable.

HARRY WARNER JR.  
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21740

Of course I was very sorry to learn of your sister's death, but relieved to know that it wasn't attended with as many of the horrors as often accompany the disease. She must have been one of the bravest women

in the world and one of the nicest.

Your conreport is the first one of the breed in recent memory to have a suspense gimmick which really worked determining its form and retaining the reader's attention lest he lose a clue. I've never had exactly the kind of supernal sensation that you experienced in Los Angeles, and my reasons for going for long walks in strange cities are perhaps

less complicated than yours. But we have in common this particular habit, the desire to explore without any great reliance on maps or tour guides or direction-providing natives. Matter of fact, one clear memory from boyhood involves the occasional trips to Washington on which I was taken by relatives or on the bus (we didn't have a family car while I was growing up). I didn't get there often enough for the excitement of these excursions to dwindle. I enjoyed immensely the visits to Griffith Stadium and the zoo and restaurants such as I'd never seen, but I had a secret urge to do one other thing on these trips and I never had the courage to propose it to my elders. I just wanted to spend some time walking up and down some of the streets, looking in the store windows. When I grew up and began making occasional journeys to metropolises on my own, I usually managed to take a few long walks on each visit and I remember some of them with the utmost clarity. There was one in the spring of 1961 in New York City when I celebrated my recovery from a broken hip by walking, on my first day in town, from my hotel on 47th Street down to the Battery and developing a blister which evolved into a chronic callused spot which still troubles me occasionally. Then there was the time in Washington when I went to a night game at Griffith Stadium and decided to walk back to my hotel in the downtown section, a distance of only three miles, I suppose, but one that seemed like marathon distance before I'd gone far. I had been so distracted by the ball game that I'd completely forgotten the fact that this walk would take me through some of the toughest, most crime-ridden blocks in the city, and I had an expensive camera around my neck. All that saved me must have been the shock I must have inflicted on all the people who saw me striding along, perhaps the first time in months that a white man had gone strolling alone in those neighborhoods at such an hour.

Your conreport was gratifying to me for the evidence that at least one other fan allows himself to be introspective part of the time while on a con adventure and for the glimpses it gave me into happenings on the charter flight, the habits of some fans, and Australian characteristics. I still don't understand why its situation at the bottom of the planet has caused traffic to go in reverse rather than upside down, but I don't understand the international dateline either.

Incidentally, I wonder if Bruce Pelz can think dispassionately of the people who went on that charter flight. It seems members of that group are doing their best to sabotage his fanzine binding practice. First you distribute Don-o-Saur in an envelope with a drawing that really seems like part of the issue, and then Tucker publishes the first issue of Le Zombie in several generations.

DON D'AMMASSA  
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The current DoS is perhaps your best single issue. The high point was, for me, your comparisons and observations about how you can actually feel out of place in an American city.

On the way home from Nycon III several years ago, I didn't know my way around, so I gave a street map to my companion and told him to keep away from Harlem or any other slum (remember what had been happening in various cities that summer). Well, we drove along, the top down on the Grand Prix convertible, no less, when we suddenly found ourselves in a rundown district, awash in black faces. I asked my companion wherein the hell we were, and he answered: "Bedford-Stuyvesant. It sounded like a rich neighborhood." Shortly after that, a crowd of blacks had completely surrounded the car. They walked quietly alongside until we were out of the district, never letting me go faster than 5 mph, never saying a word. It was like being in another world.

ANDREW PORTER  
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10017

Here you are, a veritable phoenix arisen from the ashes, out with a new issue. It's good to see you rise again, and get off your ash and publish another issue. I think the idea of a Gala Jiant

Issue is a bad one: there's been so much precedent for a good case of overkill -- dozens of fans from Jeff Wanshel down and up who've published the One Jiant Issue and who've never been heard from again. That one issue is usually a joy to behold, but balanced against several years of interrupted or terminated fanac it's a moot point whether it's really worth the effort . . .

I found the letter from Howard Ryan really moving: having followed Polly's life in DoS, her death meant more to me than some others I've come in contact with. I'm reminded, though, of Ron Ellick's death: killed at the age of 26 on an icy Minnesota road, just two weeks before he was due to be married, and just 5 weeks after a New Year's party where he'd talked about his plans for the future . . .

And of course your trip report was fascinating, though I noticed a scarcity of details about the surroundings -- nothing about the country between cities, nor the architecture higher than 8 feet off the ground (with the exception of the opera house, which we're all familiar with). Did you notice the lace ironwork on many Victorian houses? How about the architectural styles of the older areas you walked through?

That's a valid criticism of a serious omission. About all I can say by way of even partial extenuation is that it was only one of many serious omissions.

WILLIE SIROS  
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El Paso, TX 79925

Your comparisons of the atmosphere of the streets of the cities you visited made sense to me. The rise in the paranoia of the citizens of most American cities and the behavior of the police have worsened of late. Your description of the subtle menace of the prowling police cars and prowling street denizens echoes thoughts I've heard from others in similar situations. I'm glad I convinced the rest of the SF club to continue holding the con in downtown El Paso.

[That's SolarCon II Willie is talking about: April 16-18, with George R. R. Martin as pro-goh and Don C. Thompson as fan-goh, but for any details beyond that (except that Tom Reamy will be toast-master) I'll just have to suggest that you write to Willie.]

Anyway, downtown El Paso has places to walk to which can't be done in the suburbs. Juarez is only 10 or so blocks from the hotel, and downtown Juarez at night is an interesting experience, once. I find the city boring and dirty, but then I've been there hundreds of times. Juarez Avenue (the main drag) has been deteriorating. I don't drink, so when I go to Juarez it is mostly to keep my drinking friends out of trouble. And it is easy to find trouble there if you're not a little careful. The shows are as boring as those you described in L.A., but in Mexico it is possible to find easy sex if you're buying.

I really don't understand the fascination people have with Juarez the farther from El Paso they are. There's some sort of legend attached to Juarez, that I find rather silly. But I live too close to it to be objective.





GRANT CANFIELD  
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San Francisco, CA  
94117

'...and I think I missed one from Grant Canfield,' you say at the end of your WAHF column in Don-o-Saur 43. I don't

know what that means. Please don't explain it, however; let it remain one of the sweet mysteries of my life. You may take this as an index of my boredom lately. However, whatever it was of mine you missed, it was super, believe me, one of the best of those that I've ever done. You should regret its loss, try to improve your aim, and not miss so much in the future. Well, enclosed is another one . . . wish I could send more but am spreading myself thin for Christmas; it's a new perversion I wanted to try, you understand.

Matter of fact, I had found that mystery thing of Canfield's that I was missing last time and I fully intended to show it to you, but damned if I haven't managed to lose it again! So maybe it really will remain a mystery. (No, it isn't the kitty-cats on this page; they accompanied the above note, I believe).

MOSHE FEDER  
142-34 Booth Memorial Ave.  
Flushing, NY 11355

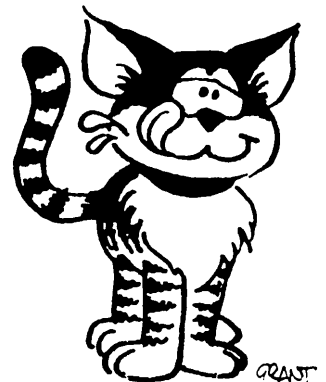
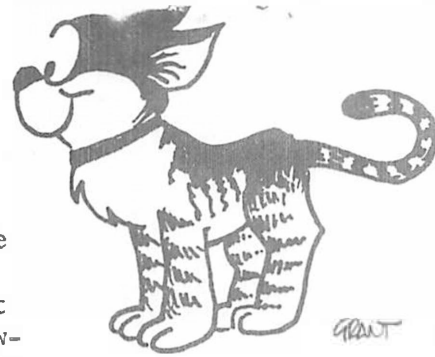
Allow me to add my congratulations [on the FAAn Award]. It wouldn't be at all inappropriate if you were to win the Hugo too, but I hope you'll now be a little

less anxious about that. I would like to differ with you on one point, the question of whose fault it was that you were put in the embarrassing position of not mentioning the FAAns at all in DoS 42. Your saying that you were remiss is true. As you admit in this issue, you had a copy of the ballot, so you knew you were one of the finalists. I admit to having been disappointed when I read DoS 42 that you didn't refer to your nomination. However, your saying that you should have insured that you'd learn who the winners were by nominating and voting is true only to the extent that we wanted all actifans to nominate and vote. The fact that you didn't does not affect my responsibility to be sure that all the nominees were promptly informed of the results.

What delayed matters (among other things) was my childish (?) [NO] wish that all the winners be surprised when the award was presented to them. Since we knew that only one or two of the winners were likely to be at Midwestcon, we held back on publicizing the names of the winners until other of the winners could be honored with presentations at Westercon and BYOBCon. Rotsler and Shull were both surprised with their trophies at Westercon. Anyway, you see that it was not your "own stupid fault."

Because there may be other interested fans who haven't yet heard the results, I'd appreciate it if you'd mention the names of the winners in the other categories. They were Bill Bowers for Best Fan Editor, OUTWOLDS 21/22 for Best Single Issue of a Fanzine (trophies to both Bill and Joan), Bill Rotsler for Best Fan Artist (humorous), Jim Shull for Best Fan Artist (non-humorous), and Harry Warner Jr. for Best Loc Writer.

I'd also appreciate it if you'd mention that the nomination period for the 1976 FAAn Awards (for the best fanzine fanac of 1975) runs from Jan. 1 to March 18 (postmark). Ballots can be obtained by sending a SASE to me. Or if you voted last year and remember the category definitions and rules, you may vote in a letter with a minimum donation of \$1.



## P E R S O N A L S

TO ALTER EGO  
from  
Carolyn

I see that Dick Geis won the Hugo both for Best Fanzine and Best Fan Writer. I can't quarrel with that. He puts out a good, well-written product. The hassle over the title has been unfortunate. I wish he had put up more of a fight for "The Alien Critic" and I think the right lawyer could have won it. "Science Fiction Review" or whatever lacks punch and style.

I can't help but wonder, Alter, if there wasn't a little jealousy behind his giving in on "The Alien Critic" so easily. Lots of people thought the alien critic was you, and Geis just can't take your being better liked than he is. Face facts, Alter, Geis has never given you the credit you deserve. Besides, your greater charm with the ladies is hard for him to overlook.

Which brings me to the reason for this letter. If you ever want to leave your present situation, be assured that there would be a place for you at DON-o-SAUR. We have a nice basement -- cool in summer, mild in winter, lots of books and old magazines, offset press and mimeo. Of course you would have to share the bathroom with Doug and the kittens, but Doug is off to school days and one soon gets used to the cute way the kittens have of climbing up your legs when you're shaving or using the john.

Sorry you missed Australia. Geis never lets you go anywhere, does he? Me neither. Don seldom takes me out, but the two of us, you and I, might manage to have some fun. Actually, I'm a rotten traveler when it comes to long trips, but I'm a great dancer and enjoy plays and eating out.

Hoping for an early reply --

Sincerely yours  
Carolyn

to ROD SNYDER  
from  
me

That line that you like about the "*arcient empty streets too dead for dreaming*" is Bob Dylan's, from "Mr. Tambourine Man," and so were a couple of phrases just before that -- "amazed by weariness" and "branded feet" -- clear allusions to the same song. I borrow quite a lot from Dylan; he has been a major influence on my life. Thanks for the artwork, and thanks too for 666. It looked for a while like I was actually going to write you a loc, but I withstood the urge, so you'll have to settle for this. You want some really good advice? It's this (but THINK about this carefully!): *Be careful what you dream, for your dreams shall surely come true.* (And does anybody happen to know the source of that? I don't. Isn't Dylan.

to KEITH CUPTIS

This is a promise, now, not just a hope: I will write soon, continuing the list of magazines and commenting on any number of other matters. But just in case I have to break the promise (could happen), let me say a word or two about "Rock and Waterfall: I would love to print it. But . . . Well, if you really are going to do *OPALESCENT*, it seems to me the most appropriate first publication would be there. I would have no objections to reprinting it. That is, if you wouldn't object. In any case, I am eagerly looking forward to *OPALESCENT*. (Eric Lindsay suggested that I prod you a bit about that).

I A L S O H E A R D F R O M . . .

Todd Bake (the artwork will be used; thanks); George Beahm; Sheryl Birkhead; Denny Bowden; Ray Bowie Jr.; Richard Brandt; Bill Breiding (short but sweet; thank you); Jim Carleton; Brett Cox (I do hope to hear more from you next time); Frank Denton; Joan Dick (I definitely agree with you about doctors!); Kevin Dillon (I'm absolutely planning to get around to writing to you, too, Real Soon Now); Graham England; Al Fitzpatrick (Right; copies of DoS will be awaiting you in England!); Jack Flanagan (horse thief, sheep stealer, and good friend); Stu Gilson; Patrick Hayden (he retracts the controversial statements he made in DoS 42; look it up; I've forgotten what he did say. Oh, okay, I looked it up and I guess it was the statement that medical experimentation on humans somehow "smacks of Naziism."); Hank Heath; Terry Hughes; Tom Jackson (phone call); Alan R. Jones; Alan Lankin; Dennis and Doris Lien; Wayne W. Martin; Taral Wayne MacDonald (Fantastic artwork; thanks!); Robert Peterson; John Robinson (my feeling is to leave the FAAN rules alone for a while, long enough to give them a chance to work or not work); Nigel Sellars; George Senda; Mark Sharpe; James Shull (I've been thinking about your letter; I'll try to reply with a letter; the things I want to say won't fit here); Dave Szurek (your reminiscences are fascinating; they should be published -- in a zine of your own, maybe?); Bruce Townley (damn! I really meant to use your remembrances of your grandfather; ran out of room too soon; sorry); Dr. A. D. Wallace; Bud Webster (your story will be returned soon, with comments -- mostly praise, but not totally. Aside from that, thanks for everything); and Laurine White. Again, my apologies to anyone I've overlooked. Let me know.



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