



CALIFANIA TALES

THE FANNISH AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LEN MOFFATT, 1923—2010

PREFACE

On November 20, 2010, June Moffatt started sending a series of e-mail postings to a select group of people. These postings (which, with permission, are reproduced on the following two pages) mention Len's admission to the hospital, the apparent improvement in his health, and the sudden 3:00 am notification by the hospital that Len had died. This is an amazing series of e-mail postings and I am presenting them to those who did not see the originals.

In the earlier days of my fanzine, NO AWARD, one of the things I wanted to do was to showcase the writing talents of current LASFS members. Somebody, I forget whom, mentioned Len Moffatt as a possible contributor. Having known Len since I was simultaneously discovered to both fandom and LASFS in 1975, I had no problem asking Len for a contribution to my zine, preferably something to do with LASFS - or, at least, Los Angeles' fandom, considering that he had been here ~~since the city was founded~~ for most of the history of the club. What you will see in these pages are all 9 installments of Len's autobiography.

The first 4 installments were originally pubbed on a computer which eventually stopped working and was replaced by another - with all of the original files being lost. Therefore, as OCR and I have a mutual disrespect, I retyped these issues, being very careful to remove the original typos before putting in the new ones.

The originals of the last 5 issues, residing in the bowels of this computer, were easily transferred to this master. Again, I checked the material and carefully removed the original typos before inserting new ones. Also, as June mentioned that Bill Rotsler was one of Len's favourite fanartists and I have lots of Rotsler illos, all of the artwork in this issue is by Rotsler.

Taken as a whole, Len's autobiography is a document created by a quiet but very gifted man who was one of the best-liked members of LASFS. He is very much missed.

Marty Cantor, North Hollywood, 2010

CALIFANIA TALES

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First edition

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Of this numbered edition, only 100 are being printed,
with issue number 1 going to June Moffatt
and issue number 2 going to Marty Cantor.

This is issue number 87.

This edition is free to attendees of the Len Moffatt Memorial
being held on January 22, 2011.

Thereafter, copies are US\$5.00 (plus postage and envelope costs), proceeds to TAFF and DUFF.

Eventually, a pdf version of this zine will be uploaded to www.efanzines.com

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JUNE'S E-MAIL POSTINGS

11/20/2010 - 7:04 am

Tuesday night Len suddenly started having extreme abdominal pain shortly after we went to bed. We discussed the possibility of a gall bladder attack, and I got up to Google on it. The symptoms seemed not unlike such. I wanted to call 911, but Len wouldn't hear of it. Later in the morning, we called our doctor, who said he wanted Len in the hospital immediately if not sooner. Len was far too weak to walk out to the car, so I did call 911. Within about two minutes, our living room was filled with tall, handsome firemen, carrying bright orange "suitcases" filled with all sorts of medical equipment.

One fireman asked Len to rate his pain on a scale of one to ten. "Eleven" Len replied without hesitation. We quickly decided that they would take him to the hospital in their ambulance and I would follow in our car. Once I got to the hospital, there were no parking spaces to be had near Emergency, so I parked by the medical building and (using my rollator) walked over. A nice attendant gave me a VISITOR sticker and led me in to the TX ward (don't ask). Len was in Bed No. 3, complaining of being cold. I rearranged his covers and various nurses and doctors came in to check on him. He was hooked up to an intravenous bag of "plain fluid" to keep him from getting dehydrated. (Naturally, they wouldn't give him any water.) The last thing I saw before I left was him finishing the second of a "glass" of some concoction to make his innards more visible to a special kind of cat scan.

11/20/2010 - 9:22 am

I went over to see Len this morning. He's been moved to a regular room but doesn't seem to have much energy. We spoke briefly, but most he just seemed to want to rest.

Len was operated on today for a herniated colon. The "regular room" was in the ICU. I put his wedding ring back on his finger, but I'm not positive he was aware of my doing so.

11/24/2010 - 8:59 am

Today it was decided to move Len from Intensive Care to a regular hospital room. About 4 p.m., a young man arrived with a gurney to take him upstairs. Much to my astonishment, there was a puzzle book on the bottom shelf of the gurney--the same one that I had brought with me and thought I lost!

Len is well-settled into Room 3006, and was allowed to brush his teeth for the first time in five days. A speech therapist came by to check on his swallowing ability, as they intend giving him a liquid diet (instead of the "nothing" diet he's been on).

11/26/2010 - 6:36 pm

Len went from the ICU to Room 3006 on Wednesday. On Thursday afternoon, he was transferred to Room 4027. The nurse said that they were evacuating the third floor, and "concentrating" the patients on the fourth floor. Len is now in a three-bed ward--his bed is the one nearest the door. I got there this morning in time to hear him telling the nurse to call me to bring some things from home. I told him I was already there, and I never did find out what it was that he wanted. He had had a liquid breakfast, including coffee, for which he rejoiced.

A few minutes later, an intern arrived with a gurney to take him to Radiology. I went with him--as far as the waiting room. When he came out, I asked him if he'd had a good time. "No!" he snarled, "I failed my breathing/swallowing test." Later, when the nurse brought in his liquid lunch, he was interrupted by an order to stop feeding him by mouth. The nurse showed me a diagram (which I didn't quite understand). It showed the esophagus and the airway and the danger of food or liquid going into the lungs. ("Homemade pneumonia" I commented, and the nurse agreed.

A goodly part of the afternoon was taken up with attempting to change the location of his IV. First the regular nurse tried, then the head nurse, and finally someone from Administration, who hadn't forgotten her skills. (The old location was swollen.)

I left about 4:30, after the sun had dipped below the horizon, but before darkness fell. (I find it better for driving home that way.)

11/27/2010 - 6:33 pm

In spite of the fact that he'd been taken off his Liquid Diet yesterday, when I arrived this morning he was just finishing breakfast, which consisted of orange juice (too sour!), Cream of Wheat and coffee (which he greeted affectionately). That sounds more like a Soft Diet to me. I listened to him growl and grouch with great joy. Nurses and techs were in and out all day, subjecting him to various exercises and medications..

I've been eating lunch in the hospital cafeteria. It's surprisingly good food for a hospital. For Thanksgiving, they had stuffed chicken breast, yams and half-cooked green beans. I could have had a salad, but chose to omit that. (I brought my own cranberry jelly.)

11/28/2010 - 6:51 pm

Len had a Soft Diet breakfast this morning. I was able to get there in time to put Coffee Tamer into his orange juice, to eliminate the sourness. He doesn't eat much, though. When the nice man from Radiology came in to take him downstairs for chest x-rays, he asked Len to raise his arms above his head. Len said he couldn't do it, so they brought a portable x-ray machine up to the room and took the required pictures there. So far, they've had him out of bed once--to eat breakfast yesterday--but he was back in bed by the time I arrived.

It's a three-bed ward. The middle bed has been empty until

today. I was right--it's crowded in there with three occupants. They moved Len's bed away from the wall to make room for my chair and rollator. His table has to go at the foot of his bed while I'm there. He seems to be in a bit less pain each day.

Hope I have something better to tell you-all tomorrow.

11/29/2010 - 6:28 pm

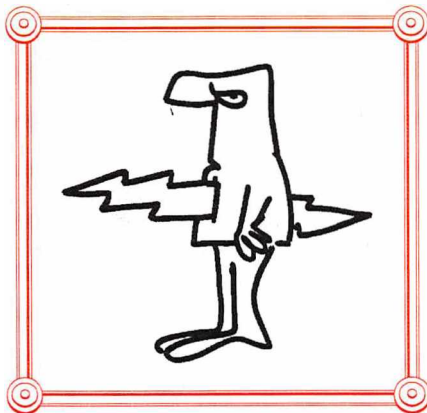
I arrived at Len's hospital room about 8:30 this morning. No sooner had I gotten there than I had to leave the room--they were bringing in their portable x-ray machine to take a picture of his abdomen. (His scar is at least a foot long!) Once they were out of the way, I helped Len with his breakfast (no, I didn't eat it for him!). Coffee, orange juice and Cream of Wheat. He ate about three spoonfuls of the cereal, a few sips of o.j. and about the same for coffee.

A goodly part of the day was inserting another IV port. One phlebotomist tried, releasing a couple of goutts of blood, but he had to retire unsuccessful. Another (more skilled) phlebotomist succeeded in getting it into his right hand. She then vacuumed out his throat, saying that his airway was partly clogged with phlegm. She also commented that "when you're dehydrated, your veins get skinnier."

A physical therapist came in and exercised him a bit. He didn't enjoy that either. The other two patients in the room left to go home, so for the moment, Len has the whole room to himself. I left about 3:30, having a couple of errands to run before I got home, hopefully before sundown.

11/30/2010 - 3:48 am

Got a call from the hospital at about 0300. Len has died.



CALIFANIA TALES

PART ONE

from NO AWARD #4
1998

*When first I heard of California fans
I lived in Pennsylvania
And I had no travel plans.
For I was a poor teenager
Supporting habits low-
Like buying science fiction mags
Or going to a picture show.*

*I had a science fiction club of fans,
The Western Pennsylvania
Science Fictioneers. Our plans
To write and publish fanzines
Slowly began to grow
As we read of LASFS in VOM
And in SHANGRI-LA, you know*

*But I first heard of LASFS in Pong's zine---
His Almanac in LE ZOMBIE
Described the silly scene:
Their search for a meeting place;
It really was no lark
When Walter D. found them a cave
(it was for bears!) in Griffith Park.*

*Now though I was quite young and quite naïve
In the Sticks of Pennsylvania,
Pong's tale I could not believe.
I understood it was just a jibe.
(Tucker's satire was so droll)
Soon a pilgrimage to Bixel Street
Became my sercon goal!*

*The W.P.S.F. became no more
When some of its key members
Went off to war.
My poetic license I have enough abused, Foo knows.
And so I shall continue these tales
In fannish prose:*

THE SERVICEMAN'S TALE

When the Greyhound bus stopped somewhere between San Diego and Los Angeles and the cops, both military and civilian, came aboard to inspect the passengers, I assumed that I was going to wind up in the brig for thirty days of "piss and punk." that was thirty days behind bars with bread and water and an alleged "square meal" every third day.

The reason for my fearful assumption was because my liberty pass was good only for the immediate environs of San Diego and the Marine tent camp where I was temporarily stationed on my way overseas. All too soon I would see service on Saipan and Okinawa and - after the war ended - occupation duty in Nagasaki. In the meantime I wanted to visit Slan Shack and the LASFS clubroom, both on Bixel Street in Los Angeles, the Mecca of fandom during world War II.

I was sitting next to a nice little old lady. We had been talking and I quickly resumed our conversation pretending that the presence of the SPs and MPs and state cops bothered me not in the least. As it turned out, they bothered me not in the least. Perhaps they assumed the lady was my mother and I did have an innocent-looking young face in those days.

They were checking out civilian as well as uniformed passengers and the presence of the state police indicated that they may have been looking for illegal immigrants from Mexico as well as for servicemen who might be AWOL.

I phoned Slan Shack from the LA bus station and got Myrtle R. Douglas a.k.a. Morojo. She told me which streetcars to catch to get within walking distance of Bixel Street.

Myrtle and Forry Ackerman published *VOICE OF THE IMAGINI-NATION* a.k.a. *VOM*, a letterzine that I wrote for. I was quite religious in my youth and my letters in *VOM* reflected this. I found myself "feuding" with Forry, Myrtle, and others who espoused atheism and I couldn't help being a little worried at meeting them in person.

As it was, I met only two fans that day, Myrtle - and Jimmy Kepner who happened to be visiting Slan Shack that Sunday afternoon. The other residents of the rooming house, the ones who had brought the name "Slan Shack" with them when they moved from Battle Creek, Michigan, to Los Angeles, were off elsewhere that day. Being wartime, some of them might have been working even though it was Sunday.

It was a pleasant visit and all too brief as I had to catch a bus back to San Diego in order to be in camp before bed check that night. We did discuss religion and I remember Jim commenting to Morojo that my

ideas of Christianity were "quite reasonable." Many years later I would write a folk song entitled, "The Old Fannish Trail," in which the following verse appeared:

*Young Len Moffatt preached sermons on sinning -
He was a Christian when the lions were winning!
But thanks to fandom and World War II
He became an agnostic—AND SO SHOULD YOU!*

Had I made the trip the day before I would have met more Californians, including Ackerman who had been in town from Fort MacArthur, where he was stationed and had the enviable job of editing the army camp's newspaper. I remember him sending me a copy of an issue wherein "Private Elmer Perdue" had done something or other. Forry was "Tuckerizing" his friends in the newspaper before Tucker did it in books.

I would return to Slan Shack and attend my first LASFS meeting at the Bixel club room after the war. Morojo was still at the Shack but no longer Forry's girl friend, or so I was told. The person who told me this as well as other gossip about LASFS members was Al Ashley, one of the original Slan Shackers from Michigan.

Al also told of the "queers" in LASFS. I don't think the term "gay" was in use in 1946. One of those named was Jimmy Kepner. I'm not sure when he came out of the closet but in years to come he would become one of the leaders in the Gay Movement in Los Angeles and its honored official archivist until his recent death.

I think Jim lived in the rooming house across the street from Slan Shack. It was called Tendril Towers. How amusing these house names must have been to Alfred E. van Vogt, who - with his wife Edna Mayne Hull - attended LASFS meetings regularly in those days.

Watch this space for THE NEO-CALIFANIAN'S TALE



CALIFANIA TALES

Part Two: The Neo-Califanian's Tale

from **NO AWARD #5**
MARCH, 1999

When I returned to western Pennsylvania in December of 1945 I was reminded of how much I hated the cold winters as a child. Not that it was always that warm in the parts of the Pacific where I had been - and winter was coming to Nagasaki during my brief stay there as part of the occupation force. So I couldn't wait to travel westward again, but only as far as Arizona or California, thank you.

Arizona was briefly considered, as I had been born in Phoenix. My parents and my sister had moved to Arizona for my father's health. I don't remember him, as he died a couple of years after I was born and my family moved back to Pennsylvania where I was raised. I have always considered myself a Westerner because I was born in Arizona, raised in *western* Pennsylvania, and have lived most of my life in California.

My family had no contacts left in Arizona but did have friends living in the Los Angeles area. My mother and I moved out here early in 1946, soon to be followed by my sister, brother-in-law, niece, nephew, and our dog, Rascal.

We found homes in Bell Gardens, a little town south-east of downtown Los Angeles. I didn't seek out my fellow-fans immediately as I needed to find a job and, to complicate matters, my mother had to go into the hospital. We didn't exactly find sunny California weather either. It was a wet winter with poor street drainage in our area. But by March I finally found my way back to Bixel Street in a roundabout way.

I traveled to Somewhere in Hollywood by bus and trolley. Not being a driver I was to use public transportation a lot in the years to come and back then it was a lot more efficient than it is now, especially the

streetcars. You could travel all over the local map on trolleys, including down to Orange County on the old red car line.

Having arrived at my destination I sat in a hole-in-the-wall office Somewhere in Hollywood and listened to the white-haired old man sitting on the other side of a battered desk asking me (in the Well-Rounded Tones of a Shakespearean Actor) for a "down payment" of one hundred dollars. I managed to not laugh in his face. He sort of reminded me of John Carradine and I liked Carradine. But he also reminded me of the scam artists I had known when I worked summers in carnivals.

What he was offering was a course in how to write for television, "the upcoming thing," as he put it. I didn't doubt that television was the upcoming thing but I doubted that a really good teaching course could come out of such a sleazy office. He would have been more believable had he been offering a course in how to speak iambic pentameter. I told him that I could not afford the hundred bucks and went away from there.

I decided to pay my second visit to Slan Shack on Bixel Street. Al Ashley was the only one home that afternoon. I had heard that he worked as a painter but apparently he had no jobs that day. The first thing that he told me was that he drank forty cups of coffee a day. After I was there a while I was inclined to believe him and made no effort to match him cup for cup. I love coffee but there are limits.

When Al began to tell me about all the queers and oddballs in LASFS I couldn't help thinking that this was my afternoon for meeting bullshit artists. Then I realized that he was trying to shock me because I was "the Christian fan," as Forry had dubbed me in *VOM* some time before. I'm afraid I disappointed him as I didn't react in a shocked manner and stuck around until the rest of the Slan Shackers came home from wherever they worked. Al had not taken into consideration the fact that I was just back from the war and was no longer the naïve kid that used to write letters to *VOM*.

Abby Lu, Al's wife, prepared dinner for all of us. I forget what it was but I was impressed by the fact that she did all this work to feed a bunch of boarders including an unexpected visitor like me and didn't seem to mind at all.

I think Myrtle Douglas a.k.a. Morojo was still living there too, perhaps the only denizen of the Slan Shack who was a native Californian. She may have helped prepare the dinner but I got the impression that Abby Lu was the one in charge of the kitchen.

That evening I also met Walt Liebscher and admired his piano playing and Dale Hart, he of the Texas-Harvard accent, who let me read his copy of the current issue of Liebscher's *CHANTICLEER*. I was familiar with the fanzine as my sister had copied out items from it to send me when I was overseas. Jack Weidenbeck, the artist, the quietest of the lot, dwelt there too and I'm sure there were one or two others but memory fails.

Much of the talk among the Slan Shackers was over my head, new to the scene as I was, but I enjoyed perusing the fanzines and listening to the music, and promised to show up at a club meeting as soon as possible. Having survived World War II, I wasn't about to be scared away from joining the world's oldest science fiction club by the possible threat of being molested by a member of my own gender.

Unlike Cy Condra, I don't have a funny story to tell about my first LASFS meeting. Apparently he joined around the same time that I did but I wasn't there the night that Elmer Perdue stood up during the meeting to ask if anyone knew where he could obtain a copy of the Haldeman-Julius Little blue Book entitled "How To Test Your Urine At Home." Russ Hodgkins, the club's dignified director, banged his gavel and said, "Elmer, you are Out of Order." "I know," said Elmer. "That is why I want the book!" Cy decided that this was his kind of club.

I would meet Cy some time later at the home of Charles Edward Burbee, Jr. In the meantime I do remember meeting Forry Ackerman and Tigrina at the first meeting I attended. Al Ashley had told me that Forry and Morojo had split up. I was sorry to hear that the couple that published *VOM*, one of my favourite zines, was no longer together. I remembered Tigrina from the pages of *VOM* as she, as well as Forry and Myrtle, argued with me on the merits of Christianity. So I didn't know what to expect when I met Forry and Tigrina and was pleasantly surprised when they greeted me cordially and welcomed me to the club.

I think Tigrina may have been the secretary then as I remember her punny minutes from that era, the Ackerman influence, no doubt. Apparently Gus Wil-

morth had only recently grown a beard as she referred to him as Gus Woolmouth in the minutes of one of the Thursday night meetings. Gus didn't seem to mind.

A.E. van Vogt and his wife and co-author, Edna Mayne Hull, attended meetings then as did an actor named Theodore Gottlieb, of which more later.

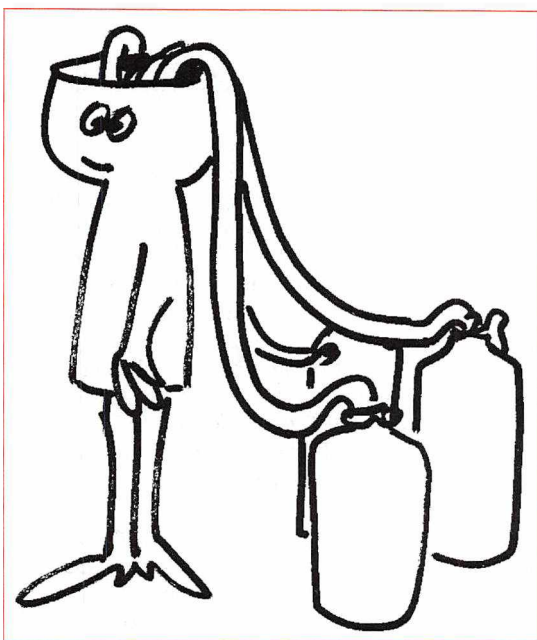
The LASFS club room on Bixel Street, next door to the Slan Shack, was a storefront room on the bottom floor of a building that might have been an office building or yet another apartment building. Some of the LASFS members lived across the street in a rooming house similar to Slan Shack but with more floors. It was called Tendril Towers. Others, like me, came from other parts of the LA area.

I remember Charles Burbee, Francis T. Laney, Bill Rotsler, E. Everett Evans, Alva Rogers, Rusty Hevelin, Arthur Jean Cox and his brother Bill, Ray Bradbury, Jim Kepner, Louise Leipier, Sam Umbrage, Phil Bronson, and Walt Daugherty as regular attendees, as well as the Slan Shackers. As I recall, Walt rented the club room and sublet it to LASFS as he was to do with its subsequent meeting place on Witmer, The Prince Rupert Arms.

I finally got a job at the Armstrong Cork Factory in South Gate, a town hard by Bell Gardens. (South Gate also had the trolley depot at the end of the "J" line that one took into Los Angeles. It was also where one could catch the Red Car to Santa Ana and other stops in Orange County.) The job entailed a great deal of hard labour but I was in good physical shape and it paid well enough. but it kept me from going to club meetings every Thursday night because of shift changes and even when I did have a Thursday night free I didn't always feel like taking the bus and trolley trip (plus a short walk) to get to the club.

Weekends were different. The people I had met and liked at LASFS seemed to be living what I thought of as a Bohemian life. There was usually a party to go to and to add to the excitement there were the plans being made for the Fourth World Science Fiction Convention. Although I was not on the committee I happened to be around when committee meetings were being held at Tendril Towers or wherever and I couldn't wait for July to come so I could attend my first Worldcon. (I knew about the first three before the war but was too poor to attend them.)

I was especially impressed by the enthusiasm that was being engendered for the Surprise Announcement at the Convention - the creation of the Fantasy Foundation. Forry had written a will, leaving his collection of books, magazines, movie artifacts, etc. to the Foundation to get it started. The goal was to have three duplicate libraries, one for use in the distant



future, one for reference use on site, and one as a lending library. There would also be an official publication, edited by Fran Laney, of *ACOLYTE* fame. Fans would be asked to will their collections to the foundation and memberships would be sold to support the project. What a wonderful dream it was.

A few weeks before the convention I was attending a LASFS meeting when a tall, lanky gentleman came into the club room and marched over to me. "Lemuel J. Moffatt?" he asked. I told him I was Len and was about to tell him that it was short for Leonard, not Lemuel, when I recognized his grinning face from a photograph I had seen on the cover of *VOM*. His identity was confirmed by the fanzine he handed me. He was none other than Arthur Wilson Tucker a.k.a. Bob Tucker a.k.a. Hoy Ping Pong ("The Chinese buck Rogers"), editor and publisher of *LE ZOMBIE*. I was delighted and honored to have my copy delivered in person by the man who had been my first contact in fandom back before the war. I was a little embarrassed too, as I had written to Tucker to complain that I had seen someone with a copy of the current issue of *LEZ* and mine had not arrived. He had interrupted the meeting to deliver my copy in person but nobody told him that he was out of order.

Bob had come out to California to visit fellow-fans before the Worldcon. I think he stayed at Slan Shack while he was out here. I remember seeing him there clowning it up with Mary Beth Wheeler and Walt Liebscher during one of my weekend visits. I think it was also a business trip for him as he had his fictional private eye visit the Los Angeles and Hollywood areas in one of his mystery novels that was published some time later. Tucker obviously knew the territory.

Other fans from around the country would attend the Pacificon which was the nickname given to that Fourth Worldcon. I don't remember anyone from overseas. The guests of Honor, A.E. van Vogt and E. Mayne Hull, were originally from Canada but they had moved to Los Angeles some time before the convention.

Bob Tucker was from Illinois, Charles Lucas and Milt Rothman were from Pennsylvania, Don Day was from Oregon, Art Widner was from Massachusetts, Jack Speer was from Oklahoma, and Bob Bloch came from Weyauwega, Wisconsin. (Weyauwega, Bloch told us, was an Indian word meaning "Clean Rest Rooms.") Those are the names and faces that immediately come to mind but I know there were other out-of-state fans there.

When I was first introduced to the van Vogts I addressed him as "Mr. van Vogt" but wasn't sure how to address his wife. I suppose calling her "Mrs. van Vogt" would have been proper but knowing that she used "E. Mayne Hull" as her byline, it occurred to me that she might prefer to be addressed as "Miss Hull." The "Ms" term wasn't in common usage back then and I doubt that Mayne would have used it if it had been. I noticed that everyone at the club called them "Van" and "Mayne" but I didn't feel that a newcomer like myself should have that privilege. However, by the time the convention was over, I too found myself speaking of them and to them as "Van" and "Mayne." I think they had somehow made it clear to me that I was being entirely too formal. Although I never got hooked by Dianetics or Scientology, Van and both of his wives, Mayne (who died too young) and Lydia (who has loved and cared for Van for many years) were and are among my favourite people.

I was to meet other favourite persons at Pacificon I, including two who would become my lifelong best friends, Rick Sneary and Stan Woolston.

The convention was not without unhappy events. On the first day Forry collapsed and was too ill to attend the rest of the convention. Out of town fans were able to visit him at his home but the presentation of the Fantasy Foundation needed him there for the whole con to keep selling it to the attendees, or at least that is one reason why I think it never really got going. Forry had worked so hard on it and on the convention itself, to the detriment to his health.

Sandy Kadet was a young fan from Minnesota, a teenager so full of enthusiasm that we all felt he would be a real asset to fandom. Unfortunately, another out-of-state attendee turned out to be a child molester. Sandy apparently didn't know what the molester was trying to do but Dale Hart happened to be on the scene when the attempt was made and showed the molester his fist. Sandy went back home and was

never heard from again, to the best of my knowledge.

Laney would have loved to use this incident as an illustration of the evils of homosexuality in Los Angeles fandom but the would-be molester did not live in California, let alone in the LArea. Of the local fans who were supposed to be homosexuals (according to Ashley or Laney) I only knew of two who were because they said they were and were proud of it. Neither of them (nor the others alleged to be "queer") were child molesters, nor did any of them make passes at anybody (or each other) in public places like club meetings, parties, etc. And of course what they did in the privacy of their homes was their own business. Laney's homophobia became so bad that there were those who suspected he protested too much ...

Getting back to Pacificon I, someone sent a telegram to Walt Dunkleburger, the President of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, who lived in Fargo, North Dakota, advising him that the convention had voted to disband the NFFF. I think the wire was signed "E. Everett Evans" and of course it was a hoax.

Although I had been in fandom since the thirties, the interruption of my fanac by the war, and being new on the scene in Los Angeles made me feel pretty much like a neo in some respects. I did not get involved in fan politics, not even to the extent of running for office in LASFS. That would come later. I sort of sat back and observed but since I wasn't trying to get involved I wasn't privy to everything going on behind the scenes, so to speak. The convention planning meetings I happened to attend seemed full of enthusiasm and those involved *seemed* to like working with each other. Later I would learn that there were differences of opinions and some major disagreements among the participants. Some of it was due to personality clashes, I'm sure. I have seen that so much in fannish feuding.

In *ALL OUR YESTERDAYS*, Harry Warner quotes me (as an impartial critic) as saying, "There may have been background hassles and the beginnings or continuations or bitter feuds among some of the fans present. But on the surface it was a happy, joyful con." Here are some happy and joyful highlights.

Russ Hodgkins passing the gavel to Chairman Walt Daugherty at the opening and Forry with microphone in hand introducing people in the audience. A little more than one hundred persons attended the con and not all of them were there that first day so it was not impossible to have the attendees each say something into the microphone, even if it was only, "Glad to be here." Having recently returned from the war, I was glad to be anywhere but I was especially glad to be with my fellow fans.

The morning a bunch of us piled into two or three

cars and went to Union Station to meet Bob Bloch's train. After picking him up we adjourned to the nearby Taix Restaurant for lunch and much to our surprise (and delight) Bloch picked up the tab. He told us that he had made two sales the previous week: his typewriter and his phonograph. He was the most popular speaker during the convention and the banquet.

The convention hall was in Park View Manor near Westlake Park, later to be renamed MacArthur Park for the egotistical general. At some time during the convention some of us wandered over to the Park to relax on the grass, feed the ducks that lived on the little lake, and exchange gossip and jokes. None of the latter were as funny as Bloch's material. I don't remember the gossip either.

I commuted to the convention, which means that I missed some sessions but the discussions on the civilian control of atomic energy inspired me to bring along the two photos I had of the Nagasaki "atom bomb area" (as it was called by the armed services brass) on the last day of the con. Showing the photos and telling about what I had seen in Nagasaki was not an official part of the program but several fans were interested enough to ask questions as well as jokingly wonder if I glowed in the dark.

I also attracted a little attention at the Masquerade Ball and might have attracted more if I had not been too shy to ask any of the few ladies present to dance. I was afraid that my free-wheeling style of jitterbugging would be too much for them. Actually, not much dancing was done, save for Walt Daugherty (who had won trophies for his ballroom dancing) and his wife and I forget who else.

The main event at the Masquerade was the viewing of the costumes. There weren't many but most of them were quite well done both in appearance and presentation. I was the most impressed by Morojo, who, recovering from recent surgery, came as Merritt's Snake Mother in a beautiful costume that encased her legs so that walking was impossible even if she had been up to it. She was carried into the hall and that inspired me to do a take-off, not on the Snake Mother, but on vampires.

I happened to be at Slan Shack when Myrtle was putting on her green makeup and she let me borrow some to put around my mouth and eyes. I parted my hair in the middle so that it hung down almost over my ears and turned up my jacket collar. Stan Woolston, who was with us at the time, did something similar but he didn't ham it up the way I did.

We rode to the hall in somebody's car and when we arrived I lay down flat on my back on the sidewalk, making my body as stiff as a corpse. I think Gus Wil-

morth, Rusty Hevelin and Alva Rogers were among those who carried this sleeping vampire into the hall and deposited him on a row of folding chairs against one wall. People came by and made various remarks but I managed to keep a dead pan as well as a stiff body. Perhaps standing at disciplinary attention when I was with the Marines prepared me for this performance.

Eventually I got up and walked around, leering at the women, including "the Girl We Would Most Like To Be Stranded On The Moon With," a publicity-seeking starlet, whose reaction to my hideous grin ws, I'm sure, one of genuine horror and not just play-acting.

Someone led me over to Laney who was sitting in his favorite position, his chair leaning back against the wall, his long skinny legs drawn up so that his knees were chest high. I dutifully grinned at him and he cried, "Oh, my God!" and brought his chair and legs down to normal level. Perhaps he thought I was one of the ten "fairies" he later claimed to have seen at Pacificon but some time later he and Burbee would invite me to join the Insurgent element, so perhaps he determined later that I was just as "normal" as he was, God help me.

Getting back to the really good costumes, there was Art Joquel and Tigrina in outfits appropriate to doing a Black Mass and Dale Hart looking like he had just stepped out of a Rogers *ASTOUNDING* cover as the Gray Lensman in a costume so tight that he dared not bend over and could not sit down. Bob Hoffman was professionally made up as the Frankenstein monster (he also scared the hell out of the starlet) and Ev Evans as a birdman from Rhea.

The Pacificon Program Book had a cover illustration by Lou Goldstone, the San Francisco artist. A woman's head, half skull, half flesh, it would be reprinted some time later to illustrate a story of mine in *LOS CUENTOS FANTASTICOS*!

During the convention a young man looked at my name badge and said, "Hah! You live across the river from me!" - and stomped off. I did get a glimpse of his name badge which read, "Rick Sneary, South Gate." The name didn't ring a bell right away but I saw it later in an issue of *SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES* that was part of the combozine distributed at Pacificon I. I would also remember the letter from Rick that my mother had forwarded to me when I was on Saipan. He wanted permission to reprint a Lew Martin story from *STELLAR TALES* which I had published before entering the service. I told him how to get in touch with Lew but I did not tell him that I didn't think he would get very far in fandom if he didn't learn how to spell.

(To be continued)

CALIFANIA TALES

Part Two: The Neo-Califanian's Tale (continued)

from **NO AWARD #6**
Fall/Winter 1999

Theodore, an actor who performed at one of the little theatres in Los Angeles, presented his one-man show one evening at the Pacificon. He had a large mobile face and very expressive hands which he used to great effect as he told tales of horror and humor. Like Bloch's "I have the heart of a small boy - I keep it in a jar on my desk," Theodore had a line that I will always remember. In one of his stories he told of his parents capturing puppy dogs and melting them in a huge vat to make "Oil of Dog," apparently a very marketable commodity at the time and place of the story. One night the parents fell (or were pushed?) into the vat and so Theodore asked the audience in that polite but insinuating voice: "In whom do you supposed I fry my potatoes?"

Not long after the convention I went to a movie matinee and happened to catch a serial chapter in which Theodore was playing an Oriental villain. He didn't look very Oriental despite the makeup and costuming but he could certainly look menacing enough to satisfy any serial fan.

The one movie screened at that 1946 Worldcon ws **ONE MILLION, B.C.**, the 1939 version starring cute and cuddly Carole Landis and that thick-thewed thespian, Victor Mature. It played as a comedy to most of us.

Sometime after the Pacificon I saw Fritz Lang's **ME-TROPOLIS** with other LASFS members at a Los Angeles theater but can't remember if it was the famous silent Movie theater or one of the art houses.

I had joined the Fantasy Amateur Press Association before going off to war and had used a hectograph to produce my first issue of **MOONSHINE** for that organization. Servicemen remained members during the way even if they weren't able to publish anything. I cut stencils for a post-war issue of **MOONSHINE** and Al Ashley ws kind enough to run them off on his mimeograph. Knowing I was in the market for one,

he advised me that Walt Daugherty had a closet full of them and that I could probably buy one from him.

The few times I saw Walt before the convention he was busy with other committee members and I hated to bother him during the convention. But when I mentioned to Al that I still didn't have a mimeo he took me over to Walt and said, "Sell this guy a mimeo!" Walt said he would be glad to show me what he had and we left the convention to go to his home where he did have some mimeos, though maybe not as many as Al had implied. The one I picked used ink pads, which fascinated me because one could change inks and pads without much trouble. Walt threw in several pads and cans of colored inks. I visualized a multi-colored **MOONSHINE** and my experiments with colored inks on colored papers probably contributed to much eyestrain for my fellow-fans.

The summer of 1946 continued to be an eventful one. My sister Millie, brother-in-law Paul, niece Shirley, nephew Bob, and our dog Rascal (a Spitz-collie raised by my mother and myself) moved out here from Pennsylvania and bought a house in Bell Gardens. My mother and I lived with them for a while, then rented a house, and eventually bought another house in the same town.

Paul had a job waiting for him at Pacific Tube (where he had worked for a short time during the war before joining the Navy) and was instrumental in getting me a job there which was somewhat better than the one I had at Armstrong Cork. I felt more at home in the steel mill, having worked in one before going into the service, and many of the workers there were from our home town of Ellwood City, Pa. I became a finish inspector of steel tubing, a monotonous job. But it paid well and was cleaner and less strenuous than shoveling colored mottle for tile flooring.

When I attended the Pacificcon that July I was still working at Armstrong Cork. I took a couple of extra days off work besides the allowed Independence Day holiday. When I returned to work the foreman asked where in hell I had been. I told him that I had been attending a science fiction convention in Los Angeles. "Oh," he said and walked away. So I wasn't fired and when I eventually told him I was quitting he urged me to stay with the promise that someday I would be promoted and so on. But I politely refused. Well, sort of politely.

Shortly after the Pacificcon I received a letter from Stan Woolston of Garden Grove, a small town near Santa Ana in Orange County. It began: "Dear Len, the last time I saw you, you were a vampire." Thus began a lifelong friendship.

Stan, taking the Red Car (trolley) from Santa Ana to Huntington Park and a bus from HP to Bell Gardens,

came to visit me. I was still living with my sister and brother-in-law at the time. We referred to our meeting as a two-fan con with a third fan, Rick Sneary of nearby South Gate, attending by phone. We had decided to call Rick to invite him over but he was entertaining fans himself that day, the original Outlanders: Gil Ayala, John Van Courvering, and Rex Ward. So we phone talked briefly and agreed to get together at a later date. I think we had a name for our "convention" but I can't recall what it was.

The Outlanders was an informal group of young fans who lived on the outskirts of Los Angeles and couldn't get to LASFS meetings very often, if at all. Rick had named the group and when Stan and I finally visited him we were invited to join. At that time it apparently did not have any regular meeting schedule.

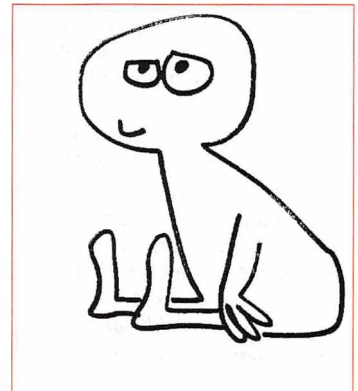
Meanwhile, Gil Ayala left the group to join the Army, and Rex Ward, after publishing a couple of interesting fanzines (one of which, **FANDOM SPEAKS**, wasn't a bad letterzine replacement for the now defunct **VOM**) also dropped out or gafiated.

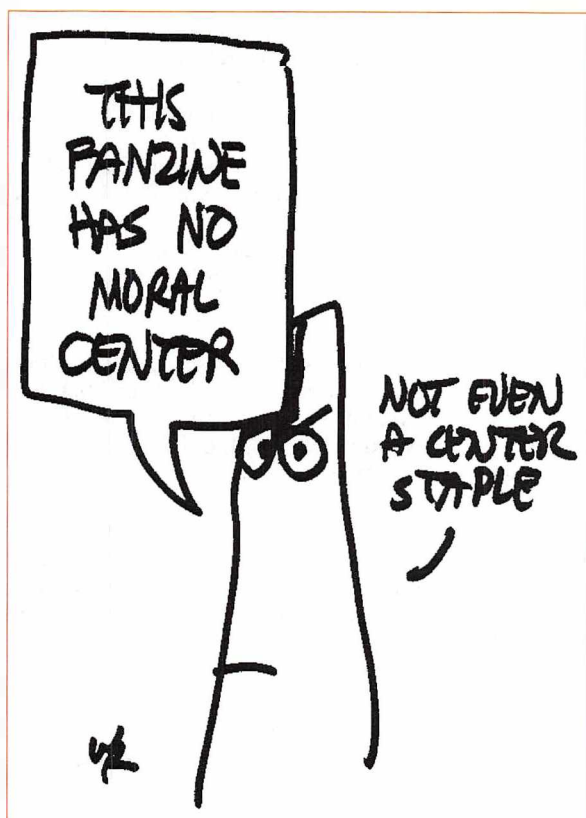
But we soon had new blood in the form of Con Pederson, Bill Elias, Alan and Freddie Hershey, and Dottie ("Grandma the Demon") Faulkner. We established a regular schedule of meeting once a month in each other's homes, called ourselves The Outlander Society, and decided to publish as a group effort.

Meanwhile, there were some changes at the LASFS. Sometime in 1947 or 1948 the old club moved from Bixel Street to a basement room in the Prince Rupert Arms, an apartment building on Wilmer Street. Once again it was a sublet from Walt Daugherty who rented the room for business purposes. It was a larger meeting place than the one on Bixel with more room for meetings and for publishing fanzines. We also shared it with the Pacific Rocket Society. There was some crossover in membership and we even shared mimeos and typewriters as I recall.

I still wasn't able to attend every Thursday night but I do recall one meeting at Bixel Street where someone announced that they had received a note from Theodore Sturgeon in reply to a question on how to write salable stories. Ted's reply was, "Read you market! Read your market! Read your market!"

Ray Bradbury happened to be there





that evening and he stood up to declaim: "No! No! No! DON'T read your market! DON'T read your market! DON'T read your market!" His argument was that if you read everything being published in your particular field you could be unduly influenced by ideas or themes already published instead of coming up with fresh, new material on your own.

Although I published for FAPA and became active in the National Fantasy Fan Federation, one of my major fan activities in those days was going to weekend parties. May's the Sunday night that I got home in the wee sma' hours of the morning, getting one or two hours sleep (or none at all), grabbing breakfast and going to work. I suppose I survived all this not only because I was young and strong but because I didn't do dope and my drinking was limited to beer for the most part. I had also developed a taste for good scotch but I almost always drank it in moderation, partly because of my financial situation.

Sometimes the party would be at Forry's collection-crowded home on New Hampshire Avenue where an out of town fan or author might be visiting. There were usually goodies to munch, coffee and soft drinks, but no beer or booze. I didn't miss the latter because there was so much to see there and interesting people with whom to visit. Forry would move twice in the future to larger houses as his collection of books, magazines, and all sorts of movie paraphernalia grew, and grew, and grew...

Not all of the parties turned out to be barrels of fun. I remember one hosted by a popular young lady where I had to stay overnight, having missed the last street-car for the night to my area.

She had a Murphy bed which is a kind of hideaway bed that comes out of the wall. she also had a sofa.

She also had another overnight guest, a young man who was exceedingly drunk and decided that he would sleep in the Murphy bed with her. She told him that she wasn't interested but he climbed into the bed and produced a knife.

I don't remember all of the details of the conversation that followed by between the two of us we talked him into handing over the knife. she let him stay in the bed with her until he passed out and then she joined me on the couch. I probably smelled better than he did. He wasn't around when we got up to go out for breakfast. I ate a lot of breakfasts in coffee shops in those days.

Dale Hart, poet and man about town, hosted parties too. Dale was from Texas and *enunciated* his words to the degree that one might think he was performing a role in a play, but it was just his natural way of talking. I said that he had a "Texas-Harvard" accent and he laughingly agreed.

A party at Hart's apartment usually wound up in one or more of the local bars or night clubs. When I met Walter Mosley at a book signing in recent times I told him that the '40s and '50s Los Angeles he wrote about read very familiar to me as my friends and I used to go to the Mexican clubs and "colored" bars, not being rich enough to afford the ritzier joints. "You could do that *then*," he smiled.

Sometimes we got some strange looks from the regulars but when it became obvious that we weren't there to make trouble but to enjoy the music, the food, and the beer, no one paid us much attention. Except on the nights when a dancing lady named Helene and her partner Enrique (Henry) were with us. Their Latin style ballroom dancing usually go applause from the watchers, including the other dancers, and more beer would mysteriously appear for our table.

One time Jack Speer (originally from Oklahoma) came down from the northwest where he was learning to be a lawyer. Forry invited a bunch of us to his home as usual to meet the visiting fan. I think it was Jack who expressed an interest in seeing the night life of Los Angeles. In any case, this was right down Dale Hart's alley, so to speak, and he took over as our tour guide. Our party included Dale, Jack Forry, Helene, Betty and Elmer Perdue, and yours truly. There may have been others - I know there were more persons than that at Forry's - but those were the ones I re-

member going out on a night-time trek.

I think our first stop was a German beer hall but I could be confusing it with another night, another party. Another stop was the Pico Club which was indeed on Pico Boulevard. It turned out to be a haven for the local lesbians. We were seated at the back of the club, close to the rest rooms.

The all girl swing band was excellent. I thought the lady drummer was especially good. I don't know whether it was then or later in the evening (when we were in a Negro bar) that Betty Perdue began to worry aloud about being seen in the area. She was a schoolteacher and feared the wrath of the school board. We pointed out to her that if there was someone there who knew her they might have to explain why they were there too, so not likely to rat on her.

We were at a small table with not enough chairs to go around. Understandable, as the joint was crowded. Most of the dancers were female couples but a couple of us took turns dancing with Helene. At the end of a set Helene came back to the table and perched on someone's knee. No hanky-panky, she was barely sitting on the edge of his knee. The maitre'd came over and asked her not to "do that" as there were some vice cops up front and they didn't want to have any trouble.

Dale Hart, filled with righteous indignation, pointed out in his wonderfully large and Texas-Harvard accent that the room was full of women sitting together and holding hands and slow dancing with each other, etc., etc. while all our lady friend was doing was taking a breather on someone's kneed due to the inadequate seating, etc., etc.

"You no longer have our patronage!" he announced and led us out of there. I suspect that was that the maitre'd wanted but I would have liked to have lingered longer to hear more of the band, especially the drummer. but all in all it was a delightful evening.

We weren't even nervous in the Negro bar later as there were two big, mean looking black cops there and besides we could tell it was a neighborhood bar with a mom and pop atmosphere. Dale did advise us to drink our beer directly from the freshly opened bottles as he suspected the glasses or mugs might not be all that sanitary. He gave the same advice wherever we went, whether the bar was white bread, down home black, or LA Mexican. I think he may have worked as a pearl diver (dishwasher) at some time in his life and knew how poorly health code laws were enforced. There was all kind of corruption in LA in those days, an interesting time indeed.

A few years ago at a BoucherCon in Omaha, Howard Browne (editor, novelist, screenwriter) told me of

how he was responsible for the infamous Shaver Mystery series in **AMAZING STORIES**. It seems that he and Ray Palmer, editor of **AMAZING**, were sorting through the mail in Palmer's Chicago office. Howard picked up a letter from one Richard Shaver which told of underground "deros" and other weird happenings, claiming that it was all true. Howard tossed the letter into the wastebasket, labeling it as from a nut case, mentioning some of its content to Palmer. Palmer told him to retrieve the letter, saying that he might be throwing away something that would increase the magazine's circulation!

Thus was born the Shaver Mystery which contributed to some unhappiness in fandom in general and at LASFS, in particular. Forry Ackerman led those who felt that fans should boycott **AMAZING STORIES** because it was contributing to the mundane population's idea that s-f fans were nut cases.

AMAZING had a fanzine-review column and Charles Burbee, editor of the club's official organ, *Shangri L'Affaires* aka *Shaggy*, was told not to send the fanzine to **AMAZING**.

(In **FAPA** we were asked whether or not we wanted our zines included in the bundle sent to the review column. My reply was that I never had sent any of my zines to **AMAZING**, as I had stopped buying or reading the magazine years before the advent of Shaver, and that sending an apa bundle for review to any prozine was a waste of time and money. Whoever did the reviews was not going to review all the zines in the bundle but stick to reviewing the individual genzines sent in.)

I knew that a fandom boycott would not hurt any prozine but if others, like me, wanted to stop buying the magazine, why not? As for *Shaggy*, it was obvious that its success was due to Burbee and the people who wrote or did artwork for it. Although it had columns or departments dealing with club doings and business, it was obviously Burbee's genzine. He would send it where he damn well pleased.

Burbee did something else that offended some club members. He published Laney's article, "Apologize, Al Ashley," the obvious intent of which was to let fandom know that many club members were homosexual. I guess it was supposed to be a humorous piece but years later I was reminded of it and of Laney's polemic, "Ah! Sweet Idiocy" when McCarthy was conducting his witch hunts..

So the Insurgent element was born midst a flurry of foolish fannish feuding. Cy Condra, a sometimes member of the IE, says that they were kicked out of the club but I have always had the impression that the IE wanted to leave as much as the loyalists wanted them to.

Attending meetings irregularly as I did I wasn't around during some of the arguments prior to the break-off when Burb and Fran began publishing their Insurgent material in FAPA about Al Ashley, E. Everett Evans, etc. I asked Evans what he thought of it. "Two dirty-minded little boys writing dirty words on a back fence," was his reply.

Eventually I would be welcomed to the Insurgent Element but that was due more to something I did in FAPA rather than in local fandom and it is another story.

Meanwhile, I got to know Burbee better after he left the club. Stan Woolston came up to my home for a Sunday visit and we decided to take the bus to South Gate and visit Rick Sneary. We should have called first because Rick and his family were not home that day. (I later learned that they had another home in Palm Springs where they repaired to when Rick's father, a railroad engineer, had some time off.) So we caught a trolley out of South Gate and headed for Normandie Avenue, where the Burbees lived in an upstairs apartment.

I know it was upstairs as when we got there, we rang a bell of some kind and Burb came to the head of the stairs. "We are spies from the enemy camp!" I announced and he invited us to come up and help him put out a one-shot fanzine.

"When you come to Burbee's, you put out a one-shot, by God!" is about the way he put it.

So Stan and I took sutns sitting at a typer writing some nonsense about Al Ashley, I think. Cy Condra showed up and added to the mess. Soon stencils were cut and the mimeo was whirring away. I remember Burb giving me some advice on inking. He claimed I didn't use enough ink on my FAPA zine. "Pour it on!" he said. "You can't use too much goddamned ink!" Maybe he wanted me to hurry up and use up all of my colored inks in the hopes that I would eventually use black ink on white paper, easier to read than red on green, for instance.

We were treated to a nice dinner by Burb's first wife, Isabella. I think it was Mexican style food (which suited me fine - I may be from a WASP background but I have a Mexican stomach) and it marked for me the beginning of many a fine time at Burbee's homes over the years.

Oh, yes. I think the one-shot was called **BROWN-OUT, The Magazine That Fans Believe In.**

(To be continued)



CALIFANIA TALES

Part Three: The Outlander's Tale

from **NO AWARD #7**
Spring, 2000

Each year at LOSCON, The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society's proprietary convention, this world's oldest s-f- club gives two awards, namely The Forry Award and the Evans-Freehafer Award.

The Forry Award usually goes to a professional in the field as a lifetime achievement award. The annual winner is elected by the membership of LASFS using a fairly simple nominating and voting procedure. It is named for one of the club's oldest members, Forrest J Ackerman.

I was going to write that I knew Forry before he was internationally famous and known as Mr. Science Fiction from Japan to Continental Europe and, for all I know, in Africa, North and South Poles, and maybe even Upper and Lower Katchelkickelkalikans. Actually, Forry was a famous fan in this country and overseas when I first heard of him through the pages of VOM and other fanzines. By the time we met in person in 1946, he and Bob Tucker were vying for the title of Number One Fan depending on which fan poll you wanted to believe. At the Worldcon (Pacificon I) in 1946, Tucker announced that Forry was indeed the Number One Fan and that he, Tucker, would be the Number One and One Half Fan.

Forry's preservation of Science Fiction, fantasy and weird books, magazines, artwork, movie artifacts, etc., etc., and his promotion of the field all these years is certainly unequalled by anyone. His generosity and open house policy has earned him innumerable friends. Unfortunately, the collection has also attracted thieves in fannish guise on occasion.

More than one friend has referred to Forry as a Peter Pan, the little boy who never grew up. He was and is envied because his hobby and his profession became one, and he has done it all: collect, write, edit, agent, lecture, travel to distant climes, act in movies, all of it

related directly to his love of s-f and fantasy. So the Forry Award represents all phases of the science fiction field as exemplified by the man for whom it is named.

The Evans-Freehafer Award is given to a member of LASFS who has done more than his or her share to help the old club survive and prosper. I don't know how the first three recipients were chosen, but nowadays the last three recipients form a committee to choose the annual winner.

By the time I joined LASFS in 1946, Paul Freehafer had already died but was still well remembered by his friends. There had been more than one fannish feud among the club members and, as I understand it, Freehafer remained friends with all the members without being a fence-sitter. How much he was loved and missed is shown by the fact that the club voted to call their meeting place Freehafer Hall, where it met over the years. That remains true to this day.

E. Everett Evans, who moved to Los Angeles in the Forties from Battle Creek, Michigan, one of Michifandom's Slan Shack crew, was in his early fifties when I met him in 1956. He didn't live in LA's version of Slan Shack which was next door to the clubhouse. He was across the street in yet another old rooming house, dubbed Tendril Towers by local fans. Later he would move to another rooming house run by a lady named Louise Leipiar to whom I and others are indebted for introducing a certain lovely young lady named June to local fandom but that comes later in this tale.

I'm not sure what Ev did for a living. He may have had a pension from the Navy but this cigar-smoking old gent (old to me as I was only in my twenties at the time) who could hand out praise or gripes with equal pomposity always seemed to have money to spare for whatever cause came up. One of these was helping to pay the club's room rent when not enough dues were collected to cover it, and on more than one occasion when we went out for a group dinner, our separate checks never arrived. Ev had picked up the tab.

Burbee and Laney wrote items implying that Ev was one of the club's "queers." I never got that impression as I have seen him pat more than one female fanny and I have it on good authority that he was as fond of the women as any other dirty old man. Of course, he could have been bisexual but who the hell cares? In any event, he eventually married a femme fan and writer, Thelma Hamm, and they appeared to be a happily married couple until the day he died.

Besides his bigheartedness, he was a hard worker for the club and had a lot to do with getting the Westerncons started. He died in 1958, shortly after the SoLa-Con. During the Fifties he tried his hand at pro writing as did several LASFS members of that era. He

sold a few stories and a novel. The novel did not do well but one of his short stories has the oft-quoted line, "Slowly and painfully he leaped to his feet..."

There are probably other old time club members who did as much for LASFS as Freehafer and Evans, but they are representative of the members who are willing to work hard to keep the club going. Ev was not liked by everyone in the club, but he had many friends and even those who weren't all that fond of him would have to admit that he gave more than just money to the betterment of LASFS and fandom. Apparently, Paul Freehafer was universally liked; and, despite his own problems, was willing to work hard for the club. Somehow, the late, lamented Gary Louie comes to mind as a recent member in the same mold.

After the so-called Insurgent element left the club, there was a rumor that Burbee intended to continue publishing *SHANGRI-L' AFFAIRES* as his own fanzine. I don't know if this rumor was started by the IE or was conjured up out of the imagination of some worried LASFS member; but, somehow, it was decided that the club would go back to the original magazine title of *SHANGRI-LA*. Don't ask me if we continued the old numbering or started all over with No. One as I can't recall. No one wanted to take on the job of editing the zine, knowing full well that it meant cutting most if not all of the stencils, running the mimeo, collating, stapling, labeling, and mailing, and doing it on a more or less regular basis.

Someone came up with the bright idea of a rotating editorship. A member could volunteer to produce just one issue. He or she could get help from others or course, and would be responsible for gathering the material to publish. The next issue would be produced by another volunteer, etc. As a result, the magazine lacked a certain consistency, not to mention the loss of a lot of quality control, so to speak.

The problem was compounded when there seemed to be trouble in keeping track of the mailing list. I am sure there were fans in other parts of the country





(perhaps even overseas) who came to the conclusion that *SHAGGY* had died and perhaps the LASFS had also folded.

It was during this period that the very informal Outlanders became the not-very-formal Outlander Society. Rick Sneary insisted and the other Outlanders agreed that if we had any official rules they would be officially unofficial. We would meet once a month in each other's homes. We would produce a round-robin type of "chain letter." Not the kind you get in the mail that threatens disaster if you don't keep it going, but more like the one I started with the Western Pennsylvania Science Fictioneers, pre-WWII. (The first person on the membership list would write something, anything, whatever they felt like, and mail it to the next person on the list, who in turn would go and do likewise, sending both his and the first person's contribution to the third person, and so on. When the by-now bulky letter got back to the first person, he would remove his original piece and replace it with a new one, and on into the night.)

Anyone could apply for membership, but they had to be voted in unanimously. The idea was to have a group not likely to have fussin' and feudin' among its members. The OS did select some Honorary Members. One was Ed Cox, a good friend of some members, who lived in a really outlandish place called Lubec, Maine. Forry and Wendy Ackerman were also Honorary Members and had a better attendance record than some of the regular members.

By this time some of us Outlanders were attending LASFS on a regular basis thanks to Alan and Freddie Hershey, who lived in Bell (close by South Gate and Bell Gardens) and who had a car.

I used to refer to this period of LASFS history as the "doldrums" but perhaps that was an unfair exaggeration.

tion. Despite its lack of contact with fandom in general, the old club was still meeting every Thursday in a room sublet to them by Walt Daugherty. Unlike the Bixel Street room (which had a storefront window), this one was below street level just off the lobby of the Prince Rupert Arms on Witmer St. (The last time we drove by there, the apartment building had steel bars protecting its windows, which told us that the neighborhood wasn't as safe as it was when we met there.)

Actually, the large club room had windows that looked out onto the slanting sidewalk. (the building was set into a hill.) You could watch the legs and feet of passing pedestrians, sometimes a passer-by would stop and lean down to peer into the room. I guess we had blinds or shades of some kind but rarely used them.

LASFS used the room on Thursday nights (eventually it was shared by the Pacific Rocket Society and there was some crossover in the memberships) and sometimes on weekends to publish *SHAGGY* and other fanzines.

Getting back to the Outlanders, I must admit that I was the one who suggested having monthly meetings in our homes, as well doing the "Unofficial Eternal chain Letter;" and, hey, why don't we publish our own fanzine? We did, and it was called *THE OUTLANDER*, what else? More on that later.

Meanwhile, Outlanders were helping to keep LASFS going by running for office and taking our turns at publishing *SHAGGY*. It was fairly easy to get elected then as hardly anybody wanted to do the work. Older members like Forry and Walt had already done more than their share for the club; and, among the so-called younger members, the Outlanders were the most fannishly active. During this period, Rick served as Treasurer and as Director, not at the same time although I am sure he could have managed it. The Director ran the meetings. Later in the club's history the name of the office was changed, first to Procedural Director and then to President to avoid confusion with members of the Board of Directors.

I served as Secretary during Rick's term as Director. At various times I was also Senior Committeeman (third in command) whose main job was welcoming guests and new members. I started the system of having the guests fill out cards for the JC to use in introducing them during the meeting and of course for the club's records.

I never ran for Treasurer, knowing that it really was the hardest job of the five procedural offices. It still is. Back then there were fewer members but getting all of them to pay their dues every week took someone with the tenacity of a Sneary or a Barney Bernard.

Nowadays, there are many more members, the club owns a lot with two buildings, and the Treasurer still has to lean on some members to pay their dues, as well as do a lot more record keeping and paper work. the job is just as tough or tougher, but at least the Treasurer doesn't have to dig into his or her own pocket to help pay the rent.

After 1946 the Worldcon did not return to the Los Angeles area until 1958. There were two more west coast Worldcons before 1958, Portland in 1950 and San Francisco in 1954, but most of the Worldcons from the first one in New York 1939 to the sixteenth one in South Gate in '58 were held in the Midwest or East of the United States with the exception of Toronto in 1948 and London in 1957. (In case you are wondering about the numbering, there were no Worldcons in 1942, 1943, 1944, and 1945. The first three were in New York, Chicago, and Denver in 1939, 1940, and 1941. The fourth one was to be in Los Angeles in 1942 but was postponed until after World War II.)

The enthusiasm generated by the 1946 Worldcon carried over to LASFS, despite the club's internal problems. I think it was Ev Evans who voiced our wish that we could have another convention locally. It wouldn't have to be a three day formal affair, just a one day get-together to "fangab." Walt Daugherty did more than agree with the idea. He set about organizing the first West Coast Science Fantasy Conference. Sponsored by LASFS, it was indeed a one day affair but it did have a program and I think an auction, and we returned to Park View Manor near Westlake (now MacArthur) Park, the site of the 1946 Worldcon, for the 1948 "get-together."

Authors present included Ross Rocklyn, the up-and-coming Ray Bradbury, Van and Mayne, of course, and I think that is the one time I met Claire Winger Harris, an elderly lady who wrote s-f for the Gernsback pulps. A female s-f writer or fan was a rarity in those days. When Ray got up to speak he pulled a ream of paper from his briefcase, pretending that it was the speech he intended to read to us. It got a good laugh. I don't recall what he did talk about. Having heard him speak so many times over the years, I can say with authority that besides being a great writer he is one of the world's best hambones.

There used to be a theory that writers usually made poor speakers but gentlemen like Ray Bradbury, Bob Bloch, Tony Boucher, Harlan Ellison, Tony Hillerman, and Jerry Pournelle (to name a few in no particular order) are exceptions to the rule.

The first Westercon was successful enough to warrant putting on a second one in 1949. By then the Outlander Society was established and active in fandom in general as well as locally. While Rex Ward was still

with the group he had come up with the slogan "South Gate in '58 derived from a Bay Area slogan, "Golden Gate in '58!" I guess they were bidding for the '48 Worldcon, but obviously Toronto's bid won.

Although it was nice to think of having a Worldcon in one's home town, Rick Sneary, who lived in South Gate, and the rest of us Outlanders, weren't all that serious about it. At first. We, and our friends around the country and overseas, keep the slogan in print until it became obvious that we were indeed *expected* to make the bid at the appropriate time.

Meanwhile, the Outlander society decided to bid for the 1950 Westercon. We had some ideas of our own as to what we would like to see at a con, even if it was only a one-day deal. The 1949 Westercon was held at a Knights of Pythias Hall in Los Angeles and we rented it again for the 1950 one. As I recall, the meeting room was on the second floor of a ramshackle old building and there was a closet at the head of the stairs that contained a skeleton, such as one might see in a medical lab or a horror movie. We didn't know why it was there, but it was a fun thing to show to the attendees.

We decided to have an actual Guest of Honor and asked R.S. (Doc) Richardson (aka Philip Latham), the astronomer and writer, if he would oblige. He had been a guest at more than one of our Outlander meetings, bringing along his wife and young daughter, the latter a little girl at the time. They seemed to enjoy our Outlander antics, including the opera take-offs I used to do at meetings and parties. Doc was more than willing to be our GoH and we also asked his friend Chesley Bonestell, the great astronomical artist, to attend. Bonestell was apparently too shy to attend a fan convention, but he quite generously donated several of his original paintings to our auction. The convention actually made money, part of which



was passed on to the next Westercon committee, and part of which was banked by Rick as a war chest for South Gate in '58.

We had a kind of fan art show with one of our own members, teenager Con Pederson, getting first prize (whatever it was) as voted on by the attendees.

Speaking of prizes, our other teen-age member, John Van Couvering, suggested that we have a drawing for a door prize. He went on a one-man scavenger expedition and found a big old wooden door which he brought to the convention and hid somewhere. I don't remember which attendee won the door prize, but imagine their surprise and perhaps consternation when presented with an actual door. We also had a science fiction book (probably purchased from Ackerman) as the winner's "consolation prize."

Forry usually had a table of books for sale at these affairs and I think Dale Hart rented a table for book selling too. The Outlander Society had its own table backed by a banner advertising "South Gate in '58!" I think we had a display of photos of our members. We also had copies of *THE OUTLANDER* for sale.

Although it was basically an Outlander operation, we had lots of help from our Honorary Members Forry and Wendy and from other Lasfians like Walt Daugherty, our auctioneer, and others. Anyway, all of the Outlanders were also Lasfians; so, though we, as Outlanders, were responsible for the convention, it was still being worked on by the LASFS.

None of us (members of LASFS and members of the Outlander Society) wanted to keep the Westercon in the LArea forever. Well, perhaps a few did, but it was obvious that it was the same basic crew which did it year after year, the fun of doing it might wear thin. But not to worry, there were two out of town bids for the fourth Westercon, one from San Diego and one from San Francisco.

I sort of favored the San Diego bid but really didn't know enough about either group to have a good reason for favoring one over the other. As it turned out, San Francisco and the Bay Area in general became a favorite place to visit in the years to come. San Diego was and is a fun place to visit, too, but I would eventually have more friends in the Bay Area.

So we had a vote and the Bay Area bid won. I understand that the committee that won the bid for some reason was unable to plan and produce the convention and all the work was done by another committee. In any case, the Westercons were on their way to being a truly West Coast conference. At least until the time it was held in Boise, Idaho. That established the precedent that they did not have to have a West Coast location.

Before and after the third Westercon the Outlanders were keeping busy, helping to keep LASFS alive, having their own monthly meetings (which were more like parties), writing their eternal chain letter, publishing their magazine, and socializing in general.

Some of us were also active in the NFFF and FAPA, still indulged in good old fashioned letter writing, kept up with our reading (in my case s-f, mystery, history, show biz, cereal boxes, etc.), went to movies and stage shows, and somehow kept up with our daily jobs or, in the case of our younger members, school work.

While I was still working at the steel tubing mill there was a Big Steel strike, which meant that our smaller plant would not be getting material to work on. The plant was closed temporarily and we were laid off - temporarily.

I went out to find a temporary job and wound up at a small paper box factory just a few blocks from where I lived. The company manufactured folding cartons such as cereal boxes, soap and detergent boxes, beer and soft drink carriers, some candy cartons, a variety of packaging items. As a floor worker, I didn't make as much as I did as a finished tube inspector, but the work and the surroundings were a lot more interesting. Eventually I got to work in the printing department and learned to feed a small printing press. I also helped the foreman to sort and set type and anything else that a printer's devil must do, or learn to do.

Other parts of the whole operation fascinated me too. Behind the carton plant was the company's board mill which manufactured various grades of paper by using recycled paper goods, newsprint, etc.

I liked to go back to the mill's "beater room" where the hydro-pulper vats ("beaters") were. Sometimes I was there as part of my job, hauling paper cuttings or trimmings from our carton cutting department to be recycled, sometimes on my break or lunch hour. I liked to sort through the broken bales of paper brought into the back yard, looking for books or magazines. Once I even found an old copy of *GHOST STORIES*, a pulp my Uncle Willie used to read when I was a kid.

I learned to be a "stripper" in the cutting department, a job that required a certain amount of stamina as well as a good eye and some skill. Sometimes I worked as a swamper, going on deliveries with the truck drivers. Needless to say, I did not go back to the tube mill.

I worked in all the departments in the carton plant at one time or another and learned enough about each one that I could make extra money staying overtime to fill in almost anywhere. I wasn't a master of all the

trades but I could keep up with most of the work without screwing it up. It was all good training for what was to come, a career as a non-fiction writer in the packaging industry, which paid a lot better than writing for the magazines.

I worked at that same address for more than forty years for four different companies. When the second company took over I transferred into the office, something that probably wouldn't have happened except for the fact that I had some stories published in the latter-day pulps!

Except for a college course in Journalism, I was probably the only person in the office who didn't have a complete college education. When someone asked me what I did for a living I used to keep it simple by saying I was a technical writer for paper boxes, but my job over the years entailed more than that.

Writing (all kinds of writing, including ghosting for others) was an important part of it, as was dealing with customers by phone as well as by mail and sometimes in person. As a Sales Correspondent I had to work hand in hand with all the other departments: sales, scheduling, production, shipping, inventory, billing, purchasing, etc.

Eventually I would also write a column for the company magazine. I was asked to write about each department as well as interview employees and write about them. sometimes it was fun and sometimes it was difficult. But I enjoyed writing and I enjoyed the challenge.

I might still be working, but the fifth company to take over shut down the carton plant to be used as a warehouse for the board mill, making paper and selling it to others to process being their main interest. So I was forced into retirement although I could have heeded the call of more than one head hunter. but I didn't want to start anew in a different location; and, since it was a layoff as well as retirement (for me and a few others), I got severance pay as well as my pensions. But I still didn't have enough time (or energy) to do all the things I would like to do and wonder how I kept up with all of our activities when I was working five days a week!

Getting back to the late Forties and early Fifties, my mother and I moved to a rented house, still in Bell Gardens, and then I got a GI Loan to start buying a house of my own, still in Bell Gardens.

I have yet to tell you more about the various members of the Outlander Society and their doings as well as events and people at LASFS and elsewhere in local fandom, which means that this Tale will have to be continued...

CALIFANIA TALES

Part Three: The Outlander's Tale (continued!)

from **NO AWARD #8**
Fall, 2000

The Outlander Society would sometimes have guests at its meetings. The guest could be a local author or fan including those who had expressed interest in joining the club. A secret ballot requiring a unanimous "yes" would determine who got invited to join.

When Dorothea M. Faulkner (aka "Grandma the Demon" when she wrote locs to the prozines, Rory Faulkner when she wrote poetry both serious and humorous, and "Dottie" to her close friends) attended her first LASFS meeting we knew at once that she was Outlander material. She was a little old grey-haired lady from Covina and the type of person we used to call a "pistol."

Intelligent, well-read, opinionated, and articulate, she was fun to be with, to talk with, even if you might not agree with her right-wing politics. She carried on a correspondence with John W. Campbell, Jr., Eric Frank Russell, and Robert A. Heinlein. She was the widow of a Naval officer and had at least one daughter whom I only met once or twice. She was independent as a hog on ice, to use an expression that she might very well use, and an outstanding story teller and limerick reciter.

I remember an Outlander meeting at Stan Woolston's home in Garden Grove. Our special guest that day was Cleve Cartmill who was one of the members of The Manana Literary Society which included Heinlein, Anthony Boucher, Ed Hamilton, and others of that era. (Read *Rocket To The Morgue* by H.H. Holmes - or Anthony Boucher, if you find a later edition. One of the characters is a composite of Cartmill and Heinlein.) Cleve wrote fantasy and s-f for the old pulps, including Campbell's *UNKNOWN WORLDS*. He was in a wheelchair due to some infirmity but quite able to wheel himself around as well as create entertaining fiction.

We got into a limerick reciting competition and Dottie won the day with the following gem:

"There was a rather shy young lady who found herself at a limerick session like this one and, when it came her turn she blushed and said that she knew only one limerick and would it be acceptable for her to say da-da in place of the naughty parts. The others at the party agree, if somewhat reluctantly, and she proceeded as follows:

There was a young lady da da da
Da da, Da da, da da
Da-da, Da da
Da-da, Da da
Da-da, Da-da-da fuck!"

Cleve almost fell out of his wheelchair and I was rolling on the floor.

Some time before Dottie joined the LASFS and the Outlander Society, Alan and Freddie Hershey arrived on the scene. Alan was a chemist who had been part of the crew at Alamogordo during the war. His quiet manner and pleasant personality got him elected to the office of Director of LASFS and he was one of the few Directors who managed to keep order during the meetings without raising his voice or banging the gavel.

I don't recall Freddie running for office but she, like Dottie, was a "pistol" in her own way and helped make the old club as well as the newer Outlanders a bit livelier, to say the least. Outlander meetings as well as other parties at the Hershey's home in Bell were always filled with everything from serious discussion to outlandish fun and nonsense. Actually, it was always open house at the Hersheys between meetings and parties if you were considered a really close friend. There was always beer in the fridge as well as bites to eat plus good conversation or simply reading while listening to classical music.

It was during this time that I started to write my Katchelkicklekalkanese Opera Trilogy and the first of the three "L'Amour de la Trine" was performed at an Outlander Meeting hosted by the Hersheys. I was really flattered when Freddie dubbed me the funniest man in the world. In the room, maybe, but surely not in the entire world.

But that was the way with Freddie. When she liked something her enthusiasm knew no bounds. Alan was the quiet one of the pair; but his comments, sometimes serious, often wryly humorous, carried as much weight with us as did Freddie's more boisterous remarks.

When the Outlanders sponsored the third Westercon, we decided that Freddie should chair it. We may have been wrong, but we assumed this would be the first science fiction convention to be chaired by a woman, at least on the West Coast. So, naturally, the precedent was established that if we did win the bid for the 1958 WorldCon it would be chaired by a woman, presumably Freddie. But Freddie dropped out of fandom

before then. We then assumed it would be Mari Wolf, who had joined the OS after attending the third Westercon. But that wasn't to be, either, as the fanish fates would have it.

The Hersheys were good writers, too, and added to the quality of material that we published in *THE OUTLANDER MAGAZINE*.

They also helped with *Shaggy (Shangri-LA)*, especially Freddie, which was still surviving under the revolving editorship system. Because of the decrease in circulation, *Shaggy's* letter column was virtually extinct. When I took a turn at editing an issue, I tried to encourage readers to write by having some kind of a letter column, come hell or high water. I got Rick to write a loc and created a letter of my own, pretending to be a British fan reader (I used the name of a character from an H.G. Wells story, but I forget which one). I asked Freddie to write one; and, following my cue, she pretended to be a nurse who read s-f and lived in Idaho or somewhere in that area. Naturally, she wrote a sort of caustic letter in an attempt to stir up the monkeys. But, with only three letters, I'm afraid it wasn't enough to get others (local or elsewhere) to write locs for the zine.

The youngest members of the Outlander Society were also the youngest members of the LASFS, Con Pederson and John Van Couvering.

Con, like more than one young fan we have known, was not happy at home with his parents. They had had him late in their lives so there was a bigger than usual generation gap. As I recall, they lived in Minnesota, and Con did have to go back there to live with them between extended trips to Southern California. For a while, he lived in one of the beach towns with bachelor Bill Elias, an Outland from West "By God!" Virginia. Bill was like a big brother to Con.

John Van Couvering came from a large family, all redheads as far as I could tell. His father was an engineer in the oil industry; and, I think, John wound up there, too. He had gained some fannish fame as the fan who walked through a glass door. This was not literally true, although John was somewhat accident prone. What happened was that he bumped into a glass partition (which shattered) in the local library while walking along with his nose in a book.

John was a pretty good self-taught cartoonist and comical writer. Someone at LASFS (maybe Rick or me, but it could have been any member interested in keeping the club 'zine going) suggested that we have a *Junior Edition of Shaggy*, with Con or John (or both) at the helm. I think John wound up with top billing. Other Outlanders pitched in to guide and help the young'uns, and so we found ourselves at the club room on a Saturday afternoon with stencils ready to

run on whichever mimeo was available at the time.

There was one, small problem. We could not find the club's paper supply. The club room was sub-let from Walt Daugherty. The paper could have been in a locked cabinet, but we had only the key to the club-room and Walt wasn't there. We kept looking; and, eventually, heard a cry of "Eureka" or some such from Van Couvering. He had found some paper which we assumed belonged to the club as it wasn't locked away. Perhaps we should have known better, as the paper was 8" x 11", not the regular 8^{1/2}" x 11" mimeo paper.

John proceeded to slap on a stencil and start printing while Rick complained that there wouldn't be any margins. "Who reads the margins?" asked John blithely, proceeding to repro the zine.

On the following Thursday evening he wasn't so blithe when Walt raised hell about the misuse of his private stock of paper. As I said, perhaps we should have known better because of the special size of the paper.

THE OUTLANDER MAGAZINE was usually run off on one of my mimeographs although we may have done a couple at the LASFS club room. We had a rotating editorship, too, not that any of us did any real editing. The person responsible for the issue was just that. He or she was expected to get the other members to write stuff for it. Rick, as our unofficial treasurer, kept track of the mailing list so it wasn't likely to get lost.

We published excerpts from our "eternal chain letter" (round robin), wrote articles, verse, a little fiction, and all three of my opera take-offs. I recall how pleased I was when Sam Merwin, Jr. reviewed *THE OUTLANDER MAGAZINE* IN **Startling** or **Thrilling Wonder**, I forget which one had the fanzine review column, and expressed his appreciation of what he called my "horsing around operas."

I would get to meet Sam some time later at a local MWA (Mystery Writers of America) meeting as well as at conventions and local parties. But, before then, he sort of figured in my life when I tried to sell a novelle to some mag or other. It came back with a nice note saying they might have bought it, but they had just purchased a story with a similar theme from Sam Merwin, Jr. It turned out to be *House of Many Worlds*. My story was a parallel time world story, too, but had an entirely different plot and situation. Still, it was nice to get that kind of letter instead of a printed rejection slip.

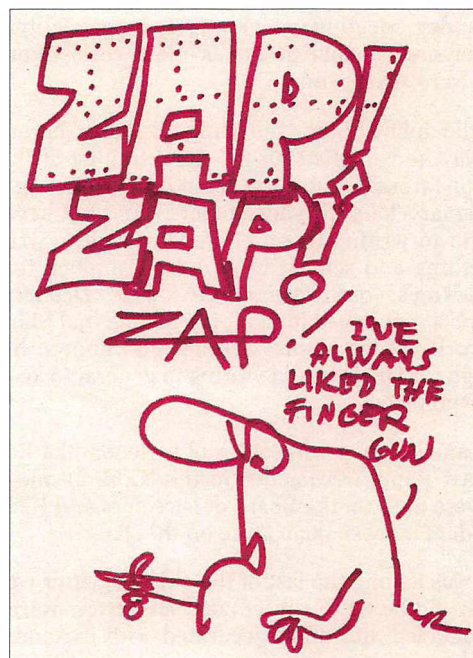
I think Sam was living in Florida at that time but later he moved to California to write for movies or TV and do some editing here and there. He drank more than was good for him as did more than one writer from that era. We didn't really think that we would live for-

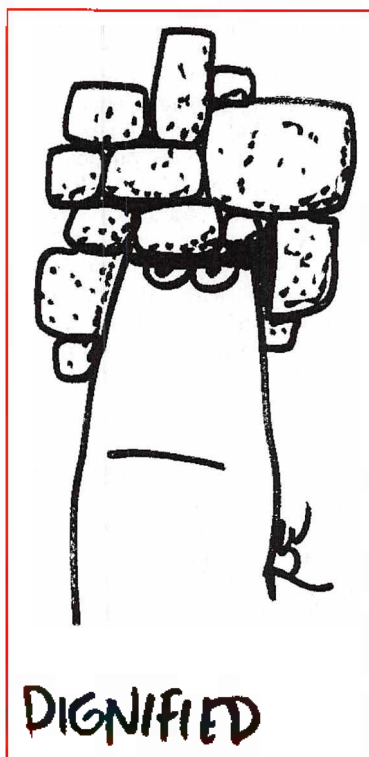
ever, but it was somewhere in the backs of our minds.

Stan Woolston, who was a printer by trade, had a small Chandler & Price letterpress in a shed in his back yard. He usually worked at someone else's print shop and used his own press for hobby purposes. All of the covers on *THE OUTLANDER MAGAZINE* were printed by Stan. You certainly couldn't judge the zine's content by the covers as they were what one might call "symbolic." He had this cut of an Indian tepee and it seemed to go well with the "Outlander" logo. I think only one reader asked what Indians had to do with s-f fandom and I'm not sure we bothered to answer that one.

I haven't said much about my two best friends, Rick Sney and Stan Woolston. For three guys who didn't have a heck of a lot in common outside of our mutual interest in science fiction and fandom, we got along very well. Eventually we were known as the Hub of the Outlander Society. I'm not sure who came up with that appellation. It might have been Rick but it could have been one of the Hersheys. Members came and members went but we three seemed to go on forever. Long after the Outlander Society was no longer meeting or publishing, we hung together and even managed to organize a committee to put on the 1958 WorldCon, combined with the Westercon for that year.

Rick, a native Californian, was born a cripple and his health was poor enough to keep him out of public schools. He was tutored at home and that, plus his wide range of reading (s-f was only a part of it) developed a brain and personality equally strong in facing the rigors of trying to live a normal life. He got into





fandom, as so many of us did back then, through the letter columns in the pulps. I could write (and have written) pages on Sir Richard Sneyry, but I would recommend that you get a copy of *BUTTON-TACK: THE RICK SNEYRY MEMORIAL FANZINE*. The first edition is out of print but SCIFI, Inc. published a second edition and copies are probably still available from Bruce Pelz.

Stan Woolston was born in Illinois, but his family moved to California where he has lived most of his life. Having a club foot, he was not in the armed service during WWII, but served as an air raid warden. However, his mother and one of his sisters were in the Army. Stan's primary interest in fandom became the National Fantasy Fan Federation. Living in Garden Grove in Orange County, a long distance from LA and the LASFS, he welcomed the chance to be an Outlander. Meetings at his place, especially back in the days when that area was more rural than it is now, were always fun.

Freddie dubbed Stan "the benign Buddha" because of the way he would sit on the floor smiling at the goings-on around him. He sometimes came up with some marvelous story idea or situations but never got around to writing them. He did manage to write up something and send it in to John Campbell for *As-tounding's* old *Probability Zero Department*. Campbell published it and it is a shame that Stan didn't work harder at pro writing. Foo knows, he did enough for fanzines and writing in general to keep the NFFF going.

Rick and I, along with other old friends like Ed Cox and Art Rapp, were active in the NFFF at one time. We were even on the Board of Directors and Rick was President at least once. More on that later.

Stan was among the last of the old time letter writers. Rarely did he write a brief note. His letters were long and detailed and often decorated with cartoons and

bits of comic verse. He could be deadly serious or wacky-funny and he never took himself too seriously. If I write of Stan in the past tense, it is because he is as gone from us as Rick is. His body may be alive, but the marvelous mind that was Woolston is no longer with us.

Another special guest at an Outlander meeting, this one hosted by the Hersheys, was Ray Bradbury. I'm not sure how he got to the meeting. Alan may have picked him up, either at Ray's home or at the end of the trolley line. Ray didn't drive and did not like to ride in cars or on planes. Trolley, trains, and I guess buses (as well as his trusty bicycle) were his chosen methods of transportation when it was too far to walk.

Ray announced that he just happened to have his latest story with him. I don't know if he had sold it yet, but I do remember that it was "Way In The Middle of the Air" - the one about the black folks migrating to Mars. Naturally, we asked him to read it to us.

Before, he began to entertain us with one of his W.C. Fields imitations. When he began to read, Alan, as was his wont, crawled under the coffee table to relax. Alan was a tall man, so only his head and shoulders were under the table and I think out of sight of Ray, who was sitting on the couch. At some time during the reading, I heard these soft buzzing sounds and realized that Alan, as was his wont, had drifted off to sleep and was softly snoring. Freddie noticed this, too, and made an unhappy face, but none of us dared wake him lest he bump his head on the underside of the table and draw even more attention to the fact that he was not, at that moment, an ardent Bradbury fan.

Actually, I suspect that Alan was simply tired and was one of those persons who do not like to be read to. God knows, he did enough reading on his own. Freddie once told me - when Alan wasn't present - that he would sit and read for hours on end, which tended to make her somewhat impatient.

"He just sits there and reads!" is the way she put it. "If the roof was made of green shit and it fell in on his head, he would still sit there and read!"

Freddie was a reader, too, but she spent a lot of time on gardening, cooking, and developed an interest in archeology. Eventually, she and Alan would go their separate ways and find happiness with new partners.

I almost forgot to finish the Bradbury story. Ray stayed for the whole meeting/party and I guess it got too late to catch a bus or a streetcar. Dave Lesperance, a temporary member of our group, volunteered to take him home, and legend has it that it was a white-knuckle ride for Ray all the way.

Shortly after my move to California I submitted a short story to **Astounding**. It was one that I had written when I was in the service, and my college Journalism instructor had given it good marks. It was returned to me along with a very encouraging letter from Editor John W. Campbell, Jr. I guess the story was totally unsuitable for the Campbell **Astounding** as he didn't give me any hints or help on how to make it acceptable to him (as he did with some other writers) but he did assure me that I was a good story teller and should continue to write and submit stories to him and to other editors in the field.

The only other time that I had submitted a story to a prozine was back in my high school days. I can't remember the exact plot of the short I sent to Ray Palmer at **Amazing** but (unlike the one I sent to **Astounding**) I do remember the title, which was *Beer and the Fourth Dimension*. Now, at that young stage of my life, I was equally ignorant about beer and the fourth dimension, but I didn't let that stop me from writing what was supposed to be a comic story. It came back from **Amazing** with the standard printed rejection slip. Scribbled in the margin of the slip was one word, "Overstocked." At first, I had no idea what that meant. The story was "overstocked?" With what? Eventually, I assume that **Amazing** had a large backlog of short stories and didn't want to buy another one at that time. So I was slightly encouraged.

But I didn't really get into professional writing until after World War II and two or three years after my move to California. I was too busy having fun as a bachelor fan attending club meetings and parties, writing and pubbing with the Outlander Society and for LASFS, NFFF, FAPA, etc.

But, during this period (shortly after the war), there was a so-called s-f promag "boom." Apparently inspired by the atomic ending of the war, everybody and his uncle seemed to be trying to publish science fiction books and mags. The books were primarily reprints of some classic material but the mags ranged in quality from pretty good to rather bad.

Ackerman announced his Agency and took on some of us LASFS members along with his already established clients. The LASFS decided to have annual Fanquets at which new writers would be honored.

I began to write short stories for Forry to peddle. I was still working in the plant at that time and could plot a story in my mind during the day while running a printing press or a ream cutter or whatever job I was covering that day.

At home in the evening, I would start writing the first draft on my old Remette. By the end of the week (or earlier) I would have a complete story which I would s-l-o-w-l-y re-type into a more or less readable second draft. I never took time to do more than a second draft.

I have heard some writers brag that they never wrote more than one draft of their stuff. I can only assume that they were better typists than I was or were so popular that they could have written with crayons (I'm cleaning this up) on toilet paper and editors would be eager to buy their output.

I remember Ray Bradbury telling us how he worked on more than one story at a time. He would get up in the morning and start a story. If he didn't finish it that day, it would go into a filing cabinet and he would pull out another one that he had started previously. He did this on a daily basis and eventually would have several stories for his agent to sell. I suspect he started this system after his days of selling newspapers on the streets of Los Angeles when he was doing his writing in his spare time. I also suspect that in his early days as a writer he burned a lot of midnight oil.

Eventually, Forry sold one of my stories to one of the new fly-by-night promags. They earned that name because most of them didn't last more than two or three issues.

Out Of This World Adventures was an experimental latter day pulp in that it featured a colored comic book section in the middle of all the printed prose. It is now a collector's item among comic book fans, if not among old pulp fans.

My story appeared in the second issue of **OOTWA** along with stories by A. Bertram Chandler, Basil Wells (one-time member of the Western Pennsylvania Science Fictioneers, the club I started years before), J. Harvey Haggard, Bryce Walton (another LASFSian), John and Dorothy de Courey, and Walt Sheldon.

My title for my story was "Reaction" but editor Don Wollheim re-named it "Alpha Centauri Curtain Call" which, upon reflection, I decided was a much better title for Pike Pickens' first space adventure. The character (*aka* The Tramp-Clown of the Spaceways) became my alter-ego who performed at parties and cons and even at a hospital.

Some years later I thanked Don for publishing the story and in his wry way, he asked if I had been paid for it. "Oh, yes," I said. "That's more than I did as the editor," cracked Wollheim. I didn't know whether to believe him or not, but who knew with those old fly-by-night mags?

I used to think that **OOTWA** lasted only two issues but I recently learned that it probably saw four issues. My story was in V1, #2, dated December 1950. The last time I saw a copy for sale the dealer wanted forty bucks for it. I didn't buy it, but then I'm not a big comic book fan.

(to be continued, rsn or later)

CALIFANIA TALES

Part Three: The Outlander's Tale (continued since nine)

from **NO AWARD #9**
Spring, 2001

Femmesfans were still few in number when the third Westercon was put on by the Outlander Society in July of 1950, so when an attractive young lady named Mari Wolf who worked in wind tunnel design showed up at the convention she was welcomed by one and all. It was hardly necessary for the Outlanders to take a vote to invite her to join as she certainly qualified geographically (she lived with her parents in Laguna Beach) and was pleasant combination of brains and beauty.

Despite the fact that I didn't have a car and had to hitch rides or take a bus, we began dating. She did drive so sometimes she would spend the weekend at my home but most of the time, I would travel down to Laguna Beach to visit her and her parents. Her father seemed to like me but I wasn't sure about her mother, who was politely friendly but somehow I got the impression that she thought Mari could do better.

Not that I really cared about what her parents thought. Mari was also interested in writing (we even started a story together) and we danced well together. I liked jitterbugging and she had been an Arthur Murray dance instructor and was able to follow my free-form type of jazz dancing.

But it was to be a short-lived romance. The 1950 WorldCon was in Portland, Oregon that fall. Mari, Rick and Stan attended it but I couldn't afford to go. Mari met Roger Phillips Graham at the convention and it was love at first whatever.

I only knew Rog as one of Ray Palmer's stable of writers and the author of a funny article in one of Burb's FAPazines. The article was entitled "Jesus Christ, An Autobiography" and was based on a telegram Rog had received from an editor stating: "Jesus Christ, I wish I could write like you!" Although I enjoyed the article, I experienced a short period of hatred for Rog. But I got over it, aided by friends like Dottie Faulkner who said that although Mari was certainly a nice girl, I was better off not marrying a pampered girl with rich, snooty parents. Well, perhaps her father was rich, and her mother snooty, but I never thought of Mari as pampered, and I doubted that Rog was any better off than I was financially. Anyway, I had the impression that Mari was supporting herself and that her job paid more than either mine or Rog's.

After they were married, Rog became an "Outlaw" which was what the Outlanders dubbed people who married into the group. And we became good friends. Every time I see an early photo of Walter Matthau I am reminded of Rog Graham except that Rog was better looking. He was also a big man and his huge hands reminded me of Renny's door-busting fists in the Doc Savage novels. I wondered how many typewriters he wore out from pounding them with those hands but perhaps he had a delicate touch despite the fact that they were strong enough to crush beer cans—the old fashioned steel cans, not the aluminum ones we have today.

Rog started his writing career by telling Palmer that he could write better stories than the ones then being published in AMAZING STORIES. Palmer challenged him to do so and Rog continued to write for AMAZING even after moving to Los Angeles. But he also wrote for other markets and one or more of his mystery short stories wound up in Anthony Boucher "Best of the Year" anthologies.

Rog told us of how Palmer used to phone him and say something like "I need five-thousand words right away to fill out an issue before press time!" Rog would get in his car and drive around, plotting a story in his head. When he had something to start with he would drive home and start pounding the typer. What he really hated was when he had to wind up the story within the word limitations required and try not to leave too many loose ends. No time for rewriting, of course. But it was a living.

Eventually, Mari and Rog broke up, I know not why. Mari gaffiated and remarried, perhaps more than once.

Rog moved to the Bay Area where he met and married Honey Wood who was quite active in local fandom there. Eventually she would be dubbed an "Outlaw" or perhaps "Honorary Outlaw" when both she and Rog provided so much help with the Solacon in 1958.

During the time that I was dating Mari, the Hersheys split up. Freddie presently married Hal Curtis, a long time LASFS member, and they moved out of the area, winding up in Hawaii.

When Mari announced her engagement to Rog, Alan and I got together at his home in Bell one evening, drank gallons of beer, and solved all the problems of the world. I sure wish I could remember those solutions as I am sure the world would be a better place than it is now.

The Hersheys had helped develop my interest in opera and ballet. One of the biggest thrills of my life was hearing Leonard Warren sing "Rigoletto" at the Los Angeles Shrine Auditorium. I preferred Verdi to Wagner, any night at the opera.

While I was still going with Mari, Alan said he was ordering a ticket for Swan Lake (I forget the company) and would I like to order a couple of tickets for Mari and me. Damn betcha. But when the ballet date was approaching we were no longer an item and so I was wondering whom I could find to go with

us. (Alan was doing the driving, of course.)

I must have wondered aloud at a LASFS meeting because Wendy Ackerman suggested that I ask the new girl in the club if she was interested. The new girl was Anna Sinclair, a longhaired blonde recently moved to LA from Arizona. She was working as a housekeeper for a doctor and his family in the Hollywood area. We had barely met but I was bold enough to ask her if she was interested in ballet.

"What does it get me if I am?" was her reply. Perhaps that should have been a warning signal but I took it as a kind of cute smart-ass reply. Anyway, I was on the rebound and easily caught.

A lot seemed to be happening during that period. The LASFS had established an annual banquet (called Fanquet, what else?) to honor the new author who had sold the most words during the previous year. Dave Lesperance and I had tied for first place in 1950 so we both were Guests of Honor at the third Fanquet in 1951—which was also a wedding banquet for Anna and me. We had been married that afternoon and once again Alan was our chauffeur that evening.

As I recall, Ev Evans was honored at the first New Writers Banquet, and Louise Leipier at the second one. Louise wrote under the name of L. Major Reynolds but the best thing she ever did for LASFS (and eventually for me) was introduce her daughter June to the club.

June married Eph Konigsberg, one of the club's main book reviewers, who would eventually establish Konigsberg Instruments, a company that specializes in miniature medical implants.

Yes, June and I met at LASFS back in the Forties and got married to two different persons. More than a decade would pass before we were free to date and to marry.

Meanwhile, back at that third Fanquet, our fellow LASFSIANS and Outlanders gave Anna and me wedding gifts in the form of several hardcover s-f books. The winning new authors were expected to speak. Dave Lesperance alphabetically went first and gave quite a sermon talk. He asked the audience what they wanted from a writer, what did they really expect. My talk was sort of serious but leavened somewhat with humor (at least the audience laughed in the right places). I even got a "Hear! Hear!" from Bradbury when I made some disparaging remark about television. Naturally, I also referred to my all-time favorite book, Gulliver's Travels. All in all, it was a fine first wedding night.

Alan Hershey would remarry soon, having met Mary Gibson, a Scot lass, who had come to the LASFS with her father, Dr.

Gibson, a good friend of Forry's. Alan even lived for a while in Scotland, going to the University of Edinburgh, and courting Mary. Both of them are gone now but theirs was a long and happy union with many fine offspring.

The Outlanders seemed on the verge of breaking up what with the loss of Freddie and Alan but they weren't quite ready to disband yet. Anna was our new "Outlaw" and a teenager named Alvin Taylor, who lived in South Gate, joined us.

He and I had something in common, as we both loved jazz as well as swing. Alvin was a kind of a smartass kid but that didn't bother us. He wanted to be a stand-up comic and I think actually worked in a club for a while. Some years ago, I heard from someone who said that he was working in his parents' clothing store.

When we knew him, he went on a hiking tour in Europe. He came back with stories of meeting Papa Hemingway and how the famous author was in poor health, "bleeding from every body orifice." This was quite a few years before Hemingway committed suicide.

My niece Shirley, now a teenager herself, had joined our group. I remember that both John van Couvering and Alvin Taylor were interested in dating her. She wasn't all that interested in science fiction but she did like reading and probably found the lads interesting if not exactly her type.

When Shirley was still in grade school, she used to help me publish my FAPAazine, MOONSHINE. Older FAPA mem-

bers may remember an issue where a die cut silver colored corrugated paper moon was pasted on a black construction paper cover which had the zine's title hand stenciled (I think in white ink) on the black background. It was a lot of work but she seemed to enjoy it. (The die-cut moons were scrap from a job in the paper box factory. I managed to salvage enough to use on the covers.)

Alvin Taylor once sold me a gimmick for a story. It wasn't a plot but a piece of business to use in a

vampire story. He said if I wanted to use it, I could have it for a penny. So, I gave him one red cent and came up with a plot to go with the gimmick. What I wrote was a satire of vampire stories, which I called "Father's Vampire."

Writing satires or burlesques was what I liked to do best.

I should have by-lined it "by Len Moffatt, based on an idea by Alvin Taylor" but that seemed too unwieldy and besides if he had not sold me the gimmick there wouldn't have been a story. So, I gave him equal by-line credit and when Forry sold it to WEIRD TALES I split the payment with Alvin. This made Anna angry.



She was quite serious when she argued that I owned the gimmick because I had paid Alvin's asking price. That Alvin didn't deserve the shared by-line, and certainly did not deserve any of the payment from WI' as I did all of the plotting and writing, etc., etc., etc.

"Father's Vampire" was translated into Spanish and reprinted in LOS CUENTOS FANTASTICOS, a Mexican fantasy magazine as "El Vampiro de Papa"—but there was no money to argue about there as it paid not one centavo. Nearly five decades later the story was reprinted in a Marty Greenberg anthology, *100 Creepy Little Creature Stories*.

That Mexican promag pirated another one of my stories from Don Day's FANSCIENT, which was as much a "little magazine" as a fanzine in that it used fiction and artwork. I remember the story's title was "Early Butchering" (yet another post-Atomic War tale, of which there were so many back then) because I received a letter from Redd Boggs telling me how much he liked it. When it was reprinted in LOS CUENTOS FANTASTICOS they used Lou Goldstone's b&w drawing from the cover of the 1946 Worldcon (Pacifcon) program book. It was a woman's head, half skull, half flesh, and was a good symbolic illo for the story. I don't suppose Lou got paid either.

A Mexican friend at work, after reading both the English and Spanish versions of my stories, assured me that the Mexican promag had done a good job of translating without changing anything so I'll give them credit for that.

Eventually Anna tried her hand at writing. She didn't type so I had to type anything she wrote. Fortunately, her handwriting was a lot easier to read than mine. She wrote a short-short story, more of a vignette, to which I added a last line, to give it "closure" so to speak. Forry sold it to one of the short-lived promags of that era—I forget which one. I thought it an interesting mood piece that could have been part of a longer story but she never wrote anything else except for fanzines. Later she would get into painting with watercolors.

My mother moved in with my sister and brother-in-law and eventually got a place of her own. Our dog Rascal, after living seventeen pampered years, died of too many things wrong with him.

Some time before that we were given a kitten that turned out to be a female. I named her Bynderly Bubah, which was the name of a character in a children's story I was trying to write. Rascal treated the kitten as an old man would treat a pesky child. He was a Spitz-Collie with a furry body and lion-like mane. Bubah liked to jump on the latter and hang on with her claws, which never actually touched his flesh. He would stand up and stalk away shaking her off. Sometimes she managed to hang on for quite a while as her claws got tangled in his mane.

When Bubah got older, Rascal suddenly realized that she was female. So, he would try to mount her and it was her turn to shake him off, in a manner of speaking. He was actually never able to touch her but he sure as hell tried. As they both

grew older, they managed to live in peaceful co-existence and I think she may have missed him somewhat after he was gone.

What has this to do with Los Angeles area fandom? Not much, but I'm vamping until I have the time and energy to dig out some old fanzines and apa mailings to help refresh my memory. Until then, this old Outlander's tale will have

to be continued...

CALIFANIA TALES

Part Three: The Outlander's Tale (continuation)

from **NO AWARD #10**
Fall, 2001

I don't know who Harry Warner was quoting in his *A Wealth of Fable* when he wrote that someone had analyzed the Outlander Society by saying that it "was formed by a group of dissatisfied people who gyrated to and fro, back and forth, upon the coattails of the mighty LASFS and who wanted some identity of their own."

I hope that anonymous someone had his or her tongue firmly in cheek when making that erroneous statement. At the time the Outlander Society was formed, shortly after the 1946 Worldcon, the so-called "mighty LASFS" was losing its might as a focal point in fandom. True, Outlanders were also LASFS members and a good thing, too, as some of us helped keep the old club going when the going got tough.

Besides writing and publishing our own zine, THE OUTLANDER—which ran at least thirteen issues from early 1949 to May 1957—we also helped keep SHANGRI LA alive and some of us served as LASFS officers.

I served as LASFS Secretary when Rick was Director and remember how he kept order at meetings by tapping his gavel and saying "No more than two speakers at the same time!" It worked as it got a laugh and the membership would quiet down so that whoever had the floor at the time could be heard.

The fourth issue of *THE OUTLANDER* (early 1950) had a full-page ad announcing LASFS's new Associate Member policy. It cost a dollar a year and entitled the A.M. to *SHANGRI LA* and any other publication the club might produce during said year, and notifications of Special Meetings. I don't remember if this helped to increase *SHANGRI LA*'S circulation but this policy could have been the forerunner of today's DE PROFUNDIS policy.

After Laney published *AH! SWEET IDIOCY!* Stan Woolston and I suggested to Forry Ackerman that he write *his* memoirs for us to publish. Stan was a professional printer and had a Chandler & Price letterpress in a shed in his back yard and I had some experience as a pressman. I thought we would make a pretty good editing and publishing team. I guess we planned to finance the project ourselves.

Forry seemed amused by the whole idea but he did provide some copy to get us started. Actually it was an article he had published in *SHANGRI LA* (or some fanzine), the one about how he discovered *AMAZING STORIES* on a newsstand and how it told him to "take me home, little boy. You will love me!"—the story he has retold so many times over the years. I don't think that Stan ever set it in type. He probably wanted the assurance that there would be more forthcoming but it never happened. Forry was busy with his agency and other projects and it would be a few years before he got around to putting some of his memoirs on tape..

But the publishing team of Moffatt and Woolston (always encouraged by their closest friend, Sneary) would find a project that they could complete. Late in 1949 or early 1950 I thought it might be interesting to try and publish a fan directory. I knew that Walt Daugherty had published a neatly mimeographed one early in the 1940's. I don't recall how comprehensive it was but a new one seemed in order.

What I wanted to see was a letterpress-printed booklet listing names, addresses, phone numbers, sex, birth dates, and fan club affiliations. Stan and I decided it would be a good idea to get some financial backing. Our work would be donated as a labor of love but paper and ink cost money, probably more than we could afford.

So we asked the National Fantasy Fan Foundation and the Fantasy Foundation to act as co-sponsors of the project. I don't remember how we went about getting the NFFF's okay (and the money) but Forry came up with matching dollars from the Fantasy Foundation. I don't know how many copies of the questionnaires we printed up but probably close to a thousand. We distributed them through fan clubs and fanzines to fans and pros around the world

We wound up with more than four hundred names, fifty-one of which were female. We might have had more names but I refused to list anyone who did not turn in a questionnaire. My feeling was that if they weren't interested enough to fill out and send it in they weren't really interested in being listed.

There were probably those who somehow missed getting a questionnaire despite all the help we got from all over fandom in distributing them. There were probably a few fans and pros who did not want their addresses or phone numbers publicized. We did not assume that all and sundry would want to be listed which is why Andy All and Sam Sundry's names did not appear in the directory.

We even cross-indexed the directory. The first section was subdivided into Countries and States, in alphabetical order, with the names under each heading in alphabetical order. The second section listed all of the names in alphabetical order with Country or State, and page number, following each name.

I don't recall how many we printed but it took a while to sell most of them at twenty-five cents a copy. I was especially unhappy with the NFFF (and may have dropped out of it at that time) because most of its members did not buy copies. Nevertheless I eventually made sure that both the NFFF and the FF got back the money the two outfits had put into the project, and that Stan was reimbursed for his out-of-pocket expenses.

The goal had been that if the project made profit it would be divided between the NFFF and the FF. Eventually I divided up the unsold copies between the NFFF and the FF and have no idea how many, if any, of those were ever sold.

In my Introduction to the 1950 Fan Directory I wrote "I hope that this Directory will serve you many times, many ways, and that you will have as much fun using it as I did compiling it!" Well, I did have fun compiling—it was the lack of interest of so many fans afterwards that angered me. They wanted to be listed but they didn't want to spend a lousy two-bits for a copy. They were expecting maybe "contributor's copies"?

But for Stan and me there was a happy ending. Some twenty years later, I received a note from Terry Carr telling me that he still used that 1950 Directory. Most of the addresses and phone numbers were obsolete but he often found the other information useful.

Countries represented in the 1950 Directory were Australia, Canada, Canal Zone, England, France, Hawaii, Ireland, Scotland and U. S. A. Thirty-nine States and the District of Columbia were represented in the U. S. A. section. (*Um — in 1950, Hawaii was not a separate country. — ed.*

Although it was obviously a screen project there was a bit of silly humor provided by Ackerman. He gave us a properly filled in questionnaire (as did Wendayne) and then another one that filled in the blanks as follows:

Name: WRIGHT, Weaver. Address: P.O. Box 260, London, France

Phone: Out of Order. Sex: Fresh! Birthdate: Early in Life. Fan Organizations: Pseudonyms Fanonymous, FAPA (Finance Ackerman's Personal Affairs), LASFS (Laney and Searles Friction Society), ETC., USW, KTP.

We dutifully listed it in the France section, right under the only other French entry, George H. Gallett, France's Number One Fan of the day.

I remember hearing or reading about Walt Daugherty making phonograph recordings of fans, meetings, even Perdue playing what he, Elmer, called "stink finger piano"—but by the 1950's, making wire recordings became the fannish thing to do.

We used wire to correspond as well as to record conversations at meetings or parties and music off the radio, for that matter. We made more than one wire recording at Outlander meetings, and the Insurgent Element added to their fame (or infamy, take your pick) by recording such classics as "Sneary At Bay." I think that one had the voices of Burbee, Laney, Rotsler and Sneary and I remember Redd Boggs telling me years ago that he had that wire (or a copy). I wonder if it is still in some fannish archives somewhere. (I do have Rick's voice on a tape made some years later on which he acts as announcer for some music he recorded for me.)

The problem with wire recordings (other than being more lo-fi than hi-fi) was that the wires broke so easily. You could retie them together (losing part of whatever was on it) and record over the mended wire. I remember one time at our home on Lanto Street in Bell Gardens when a wire broke and somehow got all over the living room and even into the kitchen. I'm not sure how this happened but it took us a long time to get it straightened out and rewound (by hand) back on its spool. Once that chore was accomplished, it worked as good as new.

I don't think that when the Outlanders started to attend LASFS on a regular basis that it was considered a "barbarian invasion" a term that was used later when new and younger fans joined the old club and didn't always do things that met with the older members' approval. The Outlander Society did have its younger members but we also had enough older and adult members to sort of balance things out. And most of the OS members were willing to do the work to keep the LASFS

going as a science fiction fan club, as well as a social group.

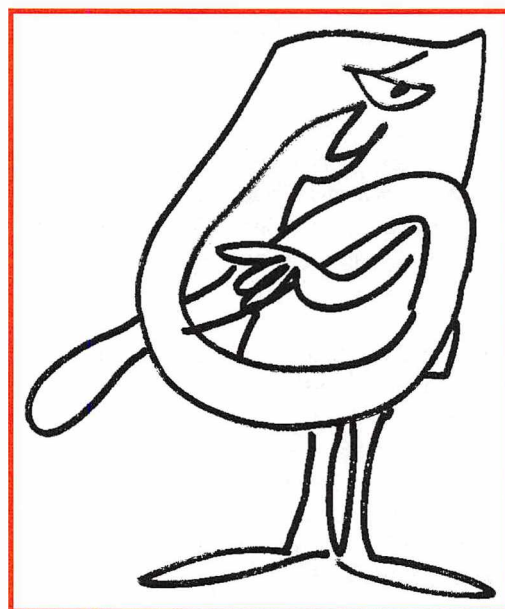
Ackerman was usually the first person a visiting fan phoned when arriving in LA and soon the time would come when Sneary was just as likely to be called, or called on, by fannish visitors. As for parties, all of the parties I have been to at Forry's various abodes tend to blend into each other. Besides the fun of partying with one's fellow fans, there were always interesting people to meet. Not just s-f pros but actors and directors from the movies and TV.

The Hershey and Moffatt households also hosted parties that were not limited to Outlanders. We almost always had special guests at our monthly meetings but the non-meeting parties might include friends who weren't Outlanders but were probably LASFS members, as well as visitors from out-of-town.

I may have dropped out of the NFFF in the Fifties, after serving on its Board of Directors with the likes of such great fans as Rick Sneary, Art Rapp and Ed Cox. I think Edco dropped out eventually but Rick and Stan Woolston stayed with it and Stan became one of the NFFF's hardest and most productive workers.

I was still a member of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association and at one point was able to make myself its temporary benevolent dictator. A couple of members took my satirical commentary too seriously, others thought it was funny and to the point, including Fran Laney and Charles Burbee who sent me a postcard inviting me to join the Insurgent Element. (I should have mentioned above that Burb threw very good parties too...)

(To Be Continued)



CALIFANIA TALES

Part Three: The Outlander's Tale (unconcluded)

from NO AWARD #11
Winter/Spring, 2002

(Author's Note: In the previous edition of this memoir the editor inserted a comment to advise thee and me that Hawaii was not a separate country in 1950 when Stan Woolston and I published that Fan Directory. True, at that time Hawaii may have been a Territory of the U.S.A. but the people who were born and raised there probably thought of their islands as a separate country no matter who or what had taken over as the government--and some of them may still think thusly despite the statehood status. Sort of like Texas...)

The Outlander Society published at least one issue of *The Outlander News Review* in July of 1951. Perhaps it was intended as a stopgap publication between issues of *The Outlander Magazine*. It featured a report on the fourth Westercon shortly after it happened.

The rest of the three-page issue had an ad for the seventh issue of *The Outlander Magazine* ("15¢ a copy... or if ya wanna save a nickel... 7 issues for \$1.00"), an ad for *The 1950 Fan Directory*, a book review by me, and news notes on traveling Outlanders: the Ackermans (Paris) and Con Pederson (Minnesota and Pennsylvania).

The colophon advised readers "You are receiving this issue free because (1) You subscribe to *The Outlander Magazine* (2) You are a prospective subscriber or have forgotten to renew your subscription which has run out (3) You write fanmag reviews for the promags (4) We just like you." Anna and I are listed as editors, which means that I cut the stencils and she helped with the mimeography, "assisted by Alvin (Dude) Taylor".

The Westercon IV report was from Rick and Stan but it is obvious that I wrote the introductory paragraph. In fact, I would guess that I wrote the whole thing or cobbled it together from notes and oral reports supplied by Rick and Stan. It reads as follows:

WESTERCON IV A GOOD SHOW: GEORGE PAL GUEST SPEAKER: SAN DIEGO IN '52!

The fourth Annual West Coast Science Fiction Conference (Westercon IV), sponsored by The Elves, Gnomes and Little Men's Science Fiction, Chowder and Marching Society, was held in San Francisco over the June 29th and 30th weekend. Two Outlanders, Rick Sneary & Stan Woolston, were among the 150-odd fen present. Herewith their report:

Sneary arrived at the Garden Library in Berkeley Friday evening, June 29th. About 40 fen were there, E. E. Evans of LA being the first out-of-towner to arrive. (The GL has lots of stf titles.) About 50 3-dimensional color slides of the *Norwegian* and *The Little Men* were shown. Later some of the fen adjourned to D. B. Moore's residence, where Sneary spent the night. Anthony Boucher, LeRoy Tackett, Hans Rush, Claude Plum & others played records, drank beer and yakked. It was learned that Wilmar Shiras was not expected and that the hoped-for preview of Pal's *When Worlds Collide* would not be shown as the film was still being colored. (This stfpic will be released in August.)

The *Little Men's Rhodomagnetic Digest* had planned to publish an editorial about *Galaxy* but H. L. Gold (in about ten letters of which he had photostats made) said he would sue if they used the editorial. Boucher thinks Gold takes things too seriously. Later Boucher revealed that the *Magazine of Fantasy & SF* regretted passing up Bradbury's "Way In The Middle of The Air". Boucher is interested in more "little animal" stories (hurdles, etc.) for the mag.

Woolston arrived at the con hall in Frisco Saturday AM, June 30. He had his third breakfast with Knappheide and met a few others there. No one present to take the dollar admission fee or register names. The *Little Men*, who had taken over the con after the breakup of the club originally sponsoring it, spent only 10 days in preparation via phone, letters, and telegrams. A beer and coke booth was being set up.

The formal program started before noon. Chairman Tom Quinn introduced Honorary Chairman Boucher, after saying that the conference was a trial run for the 1953 world convention which Frisco wants.

Five fen from Oregon & Paul Gordon, Bill Cox, Mel Brown and Roy Squires from the LA area were among those present. A panel book discussion included Evans, Boucher, Sam Peoples, Kepner, Quinn--and Roger Nelson of San Diego who won the 1952 Westercon bid by acclamation. Sneary reminded everyone of South Gate in '58!

R. Bretnor, an intelligent but "wandering speaker" talked on the Future of Stf, asking everyone to propagandize & teach stf. Next a forum was held. Ideas discussed: Expanding field environment of man makes his end impossible...Stf goes beyond Plotto; introduces new ideas...Effect of pseudo-science on stf is like dianetics...Identity of reader with hero essential...Extrapolation today is at a minimum.

Bidding at the auction was healthy. Outstanding items were a Bonestell original, originals by G. Faraco and a Bradbury manuscript.

Margaret St. Clair started a "wild research" for story ideas

but said the ideas offered were not strong enough. Quipped she didn't see why men should get beautiful girls when the women didn't get beautiful men. She chews gum when writing. Finds writing fun but thinking sometimes miserable.

The Psychological Aspects of Stf was discussed by Dr. Bernard J. Kahn. Fact & fantasy. Stf an old subject, i.e. figure out what people will do. They had three ways to react: fight, run or associate. He said s-f and fantasy were as old as recorded history & religion.

A recording of a Dimension X program was played. "The Barnhouse Effect".

Boucher spoke several times during the con and at the banquet that evening. (Sunday was evidently spent in informal fangabbing, motating, recuperating, etc.)

George Pal was presented with an "Invisible Little Man" award for his fine work in producing adult stf films. Pal said he was being typed as a science fiction movie producer and was proud of it. He gave much credit to writers like Heinlein, Balmer and Wylie and showered a great of praise on artist Bonestell. He said Bonestell was already at work on the sets for his next production which will be H. G. Wells' "War of the Worlds".

Boucher apologized for the dollar admission fee but said it was necessary because of the last minute organizing of the con. (No time to save money for it, we guess.) However the fans were treated to a free theatre party where they saw the superb French fantasy film (English titles) Orpheus.

So--despite the pre-con difficulties--Westercon IV was apparently a good show. And now it's Westercon V in San Diego in '52, Nolacon in '51, Detroit in '52?, Frisco in '53?, and...South Gate in '58!

To translate for the modern reader, Nolacon was the World Science Fiction Convention held in New Orleans later that year (1951). The bids for '52, '53, and '58 were for Worldcons but of the three only South Gate won its bid for the 1958 WorldCon (and combined it with the '58 Westercon, having won that bid also). Chicago beat out Detroit for the 1952 WorldCon, and Philadelphia, not San Francisco, put on the 1953 WorldCon. San Francisco would host the WorldCon in 1954.

(At this late date I would like to apologize to my friends in the Bay Area for referring to The City as "Frisco". Ed Clinton, one time active LASFSIAN but a native of San Francisco, set me straight on that point many moons ago.)

1951 was the year that Moffatt House got its name. Arthur Wilson (Bob) Tucker is to blame. He started writing a series of private eye novels featuring Charles Horne, the first of which (The Chinese Doll) was published in 1946. He named his characters after his friends and that practice is still referred to as

"Tuckerizing" to this day in both s-f and mystery fiction fandom. The fifth and final Charles Horne novel (Red Herring) was published in 1951. The murder takes place in a fleabag hotel called the Moffatt House. The inscription in my copy reads: "May your stay in the House be not so fatal." So, wherever I have lived since then gets dubbed "Moffatt House" and it has become our publishing house name as well.

We didn't make it to the 1952 Westercon in San Diego but we were able to attend the Westercon at the Hotel Commodore in Los Angeles the following year. I think that is the one where the female member of a mundane couple, passing Anna and me on our way to the banquet, said, "See, dear? Some of them look normal."

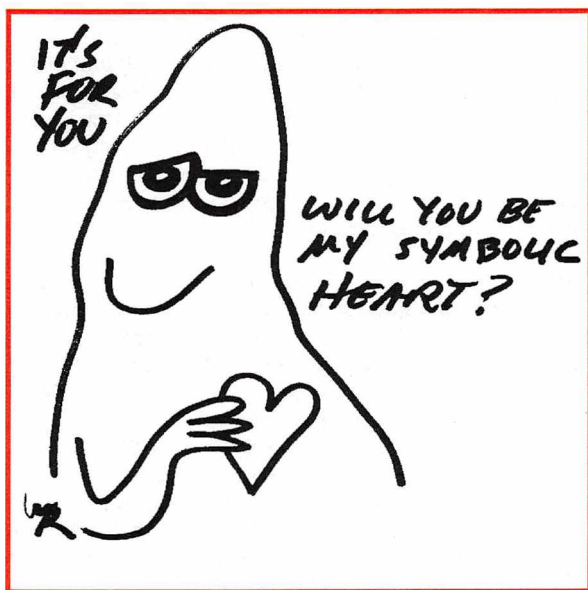
That may have been the banquet where we were seated across the table from Barney Bernard, who did yeoman duty as LASFS treasurer (sometimes digging into his own pocket to help pay the club's rent), but who could drive you up the wall with the way he presented his puns. Yes, presented them. Instead of making a pun or puns as part of the conversation he would corner you and announce that he had just thought of the most wonderful pun--and proceed to explain it to you.

At that banquet he had other things on his mind or perhaps his expressed curiosity as to how the huge chandeliers were hung overhead was a buildup to something punny--although that was not his usual method of punning. But he kept talking--almost fussing--on "how in the world did they get them up there, how are they fastened?" etc. Finally I said, "Barney, why don't you climb up there and find out for yourself?" He looked at me quite seriously and said, "I am not a human fly!" To which I made the obvious reply: "Oh? What kind of fly are you?" He reached across the table to shake my hand and offer his congratulations for my "quip" and was reasonably quiet the rest of the evening.

Jessie Wilt, a good friend of Rick's, had been in the LASFS for some time, a quiet young lady who worked for Pacific Press (printer for the LA Times). She and I shared a love of old movies (domestic and foreign) as well as writers like Dickens. She encouraged me in my writing, perhaps more than Anna did.

Another good friend was Ed Clinton, one of LASFS's star book reviewers. I'll never forget the evening he "reviewed" a book by holding it up for all to see. Then he ripped out the front part of the book and threw the pages on the floor, held up the remaining part of the book and announced, "Now you have a good novel!" I think the book was the paperback of Matheson's *I Am Legend*.

Ed and I shared a love of music, especially opera. He was--and I assume still is--a Mozart buff. We also dug



jazz and swing. The pop tune he did **not** like was "Sentimental Journey." Every time June and I hear that song we think of Ed because he despised it so.

Ed was single when I first met him but eventually married another girl from LASFS, Audrey Seidel. That marriage didn't work out. Eventually Ed and Jessie got married and had a son, Anthony, named after Anthony Boucher, who was a favorite editor and writer for many of us. Ed, as an homage to Boucher, used "Anthony More" as his by-line in both his pro and fan writings. (One of my favorite pieces by "Anthony More" is an appreciation of that classic movie, King Kong--the original version. It first appeared in *Shaggy* but I reprinted it at least twice over the years, once in *Science Fiction Parade*, and once in my FAPA zine, *Moonshine*.)

New faces kept showing up in the Fifties local fan scene to join those of us left over from the Forties. Ron Ellik and Paul Turner added greatly to the sercon scene as well as to the party scene. Ron was fond of root beer but eventually developed a taste for wine. Paul, like me, was a beer drinker--but we drank other things too.

While we were still living in Bell Gardens we received a phone call from a young fan who introduced himself as George W. Fields. He lived with his parents in Montebello but was calling from a phone booth in Bell, a neighboring city of Bell Gardens and South Gate. He had two friends with him, a Steve Tolliver and a Ted Johnstone. I guess they had arrived in Bell via bus and were calling ahead to see if it would be okay for them to call on us. I think they were also looking for a ride to a LASFS meeting.

We had a car by then and drove over to Bell to pick them up. Later we learned that they were using

"fannish pseudonyms." The quiet and most serious one of the trio was Steve whose real name was Fred Langley. George, whose real name was George Williamson, was an artist who also loved to write and play the critic.

Ted would eventually use his real name, David McDaniel, for his professional writing career. He wrote several of the Man From U.N.C.L.E. books.

Steve/Fred and Ron Ellik would eventually collaborate on an U.N.C.L.E. novel (*The Cross Of Gold Affair*) using the by-line of Fredric Davies.

All three became quite active in local fandom including LASFS and though they were never Outlander Society members they did join the South Gate in '58! movement. The remaining Outlanders were still active in LASFS, or NFFF, or FAPA (or all three) and in fandom in general. We still got together socially along with all of our other local friends.

Stan Woolston introduced me to a cute and freckled young lady at one of the WesterCons in Los Angeles, either the one in 1953 or the one in 1955. I think he had met her at the 1952 WorldCon when she was still Betty Jo McCarthy, a WAVE in the U. S. Navy. At the time I met her she was Bjo Wells and had split up or was about to split up with Don Wells, her first husband.

I'm not sure when she started coming to LASFS but eventually she, along with Djinn Faine, Al Lewis, Ernie Wheatley and others would supply new blood for the club's fanzine, *Shangri-LA*, by changing it back to its previous title, *Shangri-L'Affaires*, and getting Burbee to write a guest editorial for their initial effort.

As more young fans joined the club, a few of the older ones stopped coming to meetings. I don't think that all of them were driven out by the so-called "barbarian invasions". Some simply gafiated or fafiated for other reasons. Anyone who was willing to give the matter serious thought had to realize that the old club would not continue to exist without gaining new members. If some of them were young and ram-bunctious, they would eventually mature--or get thrown out by those of us who still weren't too old to perform the "bum's rush".

The *Outlander Magazine* continued to be published up to May 1957 by Rick, Stan, my niece Shirley, Anna and me. The round-robin "chain" letter had come to a halt earlier in the decade as the OS membership dwindled but Rick, Stan and I had been conducting a correspondence for some time (named the *Hubletter*, as we three had been dubbed the Hub of the Outlander Society) so we published excerpts from it as "Filings From The Hub" to replace "Filings From The Chain".

Another new (to Califania) fan face was Ed Cox who moved out from Lubec, Maine. As an old pen pal and Honorary Outlander he was welcomed by all of us and stayed at Moffatt House for a few days while looking for an apartment to rent.

He lived for a while in Hermosa Beach and we used to drive down there on weekends to visit him and go to the Lighthouse to dig progressive jazz. There was a Dixieland joint near by and I would insist on having a couple of beers there too as I loved the old traditional sounds. Unfortunately, the band was made up of some pretty old guys who blew as well as they could but I wish I had heard them when all of them had their lips. Still, it was *live* Dixie played by cats who knew it all in their heads even if they couldn't always quite get it through their instruments.

When I moved to Califania in 1946 I had my record collection and my pulp mag and book collection shipped out as we drove out and barely had room in the car for our clothes. All but one record (my favorite version "Dance Of The Hours" played by Fiedler's Boston Pops) survived the shipment, as did the books and mags. Among the mags was my collection of Doc Savage magazines. I decided that I would replace my pulps with books which would last longer and began to sell or swap my s-f mags to collect s-f in hardcovers. I also decided to raise some *dinero* by selling the Docs. This was quite some time before they started reprinting them in paperback.

It seems that friend Edco in Lubec was willing to buy them so I shipped them back to him. They made their third trip cross-country when he moved to California in the 50's. I guess one of Ed's sons has them now.

L. Sprague de Camp was among the pro writers who visited LASFS while we were still meeting at the Prince Rupert Arms on Witmer Street. For some reason the chairs had been arranged in what amounted to a circle, around the walls of the clubroom. That was okay for regular meetings as the officers could sit at a table at some point in the circle and still conduct the meeting. The setup also had the advantage of not having to move the chairs out of the way when we wanted to set up printing operations. (The LASFS, co-renter Pacific Rocket Society, the Outlander Society, and Daugherty, who sublet the room to the LASFS and the PRS, all did a lot of mimeographing in that room.)

Sprague could have stood in front of (or sat at) the director's table but he elected to stand in the middle of the room and slowly rotate his body in order to face us as he spoke. Fortunately, he was a good speaker and no one had trouble hearing him during the few passing seconds his back happened to be to you. I envied his ability to handle what to some would have been a difficult situation in such a cool and collected manner.

Although the van Vogts and Bradbury weren't coming to the club as often as they once did we still had other "captive pros" in attendance like Ross Rocklyn and Bryce Walton. There would be visits from Doc Smith and Stu Byrnes (aka John Bloodstone). I remember that Stu had written a "Tarzan On Mars" novel that Palmer wanted to publish but couldn't get an okay from the Burroughs estate.

At one time or another we had heard rumors of another s-f club in the LArea, a club that had no interest in fraternizing with LASFS or any other group like the Insurgents and the Outlanders. It could not have been the Chesley Donovan Foundation of Beverly Hills as their members were quite willing to join LASFS and co-operate by working on WesterCons, like the ones in Los Angeles in 1955 and 1957. Lew Kovner chaired both of those cons and was one of several local fans who volunteered to help the remaining Outlanders put on the 1958 Worldcon c/w the 1958 WesterCon aka SOLACON.

Other CDF members who became known to fandom in general as well as locally were Jon Lackey (especially at the SOLACON!), Helen Urban, poet, and Ron Cobb, artist. Their oldest member was probably Roy Squires, collector and chapbook publisher, who took over *The Fantasy Advertiser* magazine from Gus Willmorth and later passed it on to Leland Sapiro who turned it into *The Riverside Quarterly*, a literary magazine, what some used to call "little magazines" as opposed to "fanzines".

Arthur Jean Cox, sometimes LASFS director and secretary, who could remember anything you wanted to know about the *Astounding* of that era and earlier, wrote for *The Riverside Quarterly*. Jean's interests were not limited to science fiction and fantasy. In time, he became a leading authority on Charles Dickens and his works--perhaps the leading authority, for all I know. A good old friend who is still around.

I started *Science Fiction Parade*, a review zine, in the summer of 1956. Stan provided a letterpress printed title and, as usual, I cut the stencils and Anna did the mimeography. The purpose of the magazine was to publicize "South Gate in '58!" and at the end of the first issue we added "WAW TO THE GATE IN '58!" as we wanted to bring that wonderful Irish fan, Walt Willis, to our '58 WorldCon.

SFP began with a bi-monthly schedule. That first issue was dated July-August 1956. The next two were dated September-October and November-December but we switched to a quarterly schedule in 1957. It was sent gratis to those who responded with letters or cards. The last Moffatt House issue of SFP was the eighth one, published shortly after the 1958 WorldCon with my report on the SOLACON. I didn't know if it was proper for someone who ran a convention to report on it but I assumed that a committee mem-

ber's view of the convention's successes and failures might be valuable to others. After that I turned the mag over to Stan Woolston who published the ninth and tenth issues in March and June of 1962. If there were any more after that, I don't recall them.

The zine featured convention reports, reviews of fanzine, prozines, movies, books, and reports on fan clubs--and after the first issue a lively letter column. Rick Sneary, Stan Woolston, George W. Fields, Ted Johnstone, Ron Ellick, Harry Warner, Rory Faulkner, Arthur (ATOM) Thomson, and Walt Willis were among those who wrote reports, reviews, and commentaries for SFP. Some of them also wrote letters for the lettercol as did well-known fans and pros like Charles Burbee, Hans Stefan Santesson, Redd Boggs and Isaac Asimov to name a few. I had a ball editing that zine!

In the fifth issue of *Science Fiction Parade* (Second Quarter, 1957) we had a full-page ad for *THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF RICK SNEARY*, which I had compiled and edited after finally convincing Rick that fandom might be interested in it. It was subtitled "Thirteen Years of the Wit and Wisdom of the Sage of South Gate." Rick insisted on having a disclaimer in the front of the book pointing out that the Sneary who wrote some of the things quoted therein was not necessarily the same as the current Sneary.

THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF RICK SNEARY sported a printed cover (by Stan, who else?) and a back cover by ATOM. We sold it for twenty-five cents a copy, announcing that all funds collected would go into the "WAW TO THE GATE" fund.

I don't recall how much we collected but it turned out that Walt and Madeleine were unable to make the trip and the money was donated to TAFF. Incidentally, when I delivered Ron Ellick's copy he thumbed through it and said, "There should be more publications like this!" Not long after, he and Terry Carr published *THE INCOMPLEAT BURBEE*, and other such fan books would follow...

In the latter part of 1957 we sold the house in Bell Gardens and bought a newer and larger one in Downey. Moffatt House was now on Belcher, a street name I felt was appropriate for a beer drinker. Besides the master bedroom, it had a small and a large bedroom. The latter became the "work" room, used for sewing, mimeographing, and other artistic endeavors. It also provided extra crash space if needed for more than one overnight visitor.

The small room became Len's Den with a desk, a typewriter, and closet full of fanzines. There was still space for a small bed, which provided even a more comfortable sleeping place for visitors staying more than one night. Mike Hinge, an artist from New Zealand, would be our first international guest followed

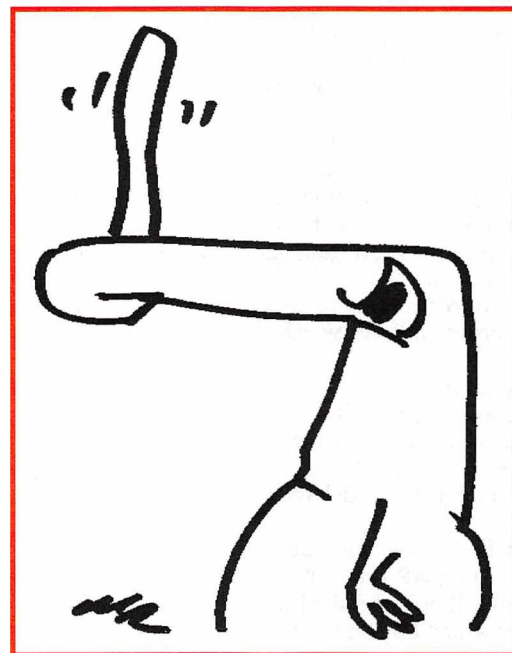
not too long afterwards with visits from Ella Parker and then Ethel Lindsay, two of my favorite femme fans from the British Isles.

Mike arrived in time to attend the SOLACON in 1958. He was skinny but wiry, and strong as an ox. He had earned his boat fare by working on the docks. He was already quite a good artist and cartoonist. We had corresponded a while before he decided to come to the States and his letters were a wonderful combination of New Zealand slang and jazz music idiom. Sometimes it was difficult to understand what he was saying in person but eventually we got his accent sorted out.

He continued his art education in Los Angeles and eventually moved to New York and from all reports did well there. He got into mobile art as well as creating on artboard and canvas. But while he was out here he impressed those who met him in a number of different ways. Some thought of him as a wild and woolly kiwi who drank too much. Others found him to have a wacky sense of humor and helpful and generous. He would do things like go out at night, when street traffic had died down, to make rubbings of manhole covers for his art morgue. Now imagine explaining what he was doing to the cops who happen to come by when he was down on his knees in the middle of the street.

I have known a lot of artists in my seventy-eight years on this planet and they are all a little crazy--and I love every one of them. Of course, all of us writers are perfectly sane...

(to be continued)



CALIFANIA TALES

Part Three: The Outlander's Tale (concluded)

**from NO AWARD #12
Fall, 2002**

The third issue of Science Fiction Parade, dated November-December 1956, announced the South Gate in '58 Planning Committee. Listed were: Anna Sinclair Moffatt--Chairlady, Lew Kovner--Corresponding Secretary, Forry Ackerman--Pro Public Relations, George W. Fields--Fan Public Relations, Rick Sneary--Treasurer, Len Moffatt--Recording Secretary, Art Thomson--British Public Relations, and Walt Willis--Irish Public Relations.

The fourth issue of SFP, dated First Quarter 1957, indicated that Stan Woolston, Honey Wood and Rog Graham, Steve Tolliver, Ted Johnstone, Jessie Wilt, Ron Ellik, and John Berry had been added to the planning committee.

The final committee consisted primarily of Anna as chair, Rick as treasurer, and me as both corresponding and recording secretary. We all came up with program items and I found myself becoming spokesman for the committee in person, as well as on paper. Speakers and program ideas were also provided by Forry Ackerman, Bob Bloch, Bjo Trimble, Karen & Poul Anderson, and others.

Stan Woolston used his letterpress to print membership cards, color-coded souvenir menus for the banquet (we had three choices of entree), and he also printed repro proofs from a cut I had made by one of my employer's printing plate makers. The cut was the SoLaCon sun symbol and the proofs were used by Jimmy Wilson (an ex-director of LASFS) in laying out the Program Book, which was lithographed.

Rog Graham would become our Program Director whose chief function was to introduce speakers, as well as help in getting them to their programs on time. His wife, Honey, was of great help in registration and helping Rick with the bookkeeping.

Our first choice for Guest of Honor was Henry Kuttner. But 1958 was a Year of the Jackpot and he was among those who died that year. Perhaps we should have asked both him and his helpmeet, C. L. Moore,

but we knew that she was a very private person who avoided public appearances. Many years later she did consent to be interviewed by Dave Hulan at a Westercon, I think, but back in the Fifties, the Kuttners were pros you did not really expect to see at conventions.

We asked Isaac Asimov, who was sorry he couldn't accept because his busy schedule (teaching and writing) prevented him from having enough time to come out from New York via car, bus or train and--like Bradbury--he refused to travel by plane.

So we decided to honor someone newer to the field. Richard Matheson was a popular local writer with books, TV plays, and at least one movie to his credit.

There were others we could have asked, one of them being Anthony Boucher, but he had already agreed to be our toastmaster and our parliamentarian, and as it turned out, that was a very good thing indeed.

The tenth Westercon was held at the Knickerbocker Hotel in Hollywood July 4 - 7, 1957. Chaired by Lew Kovner with help from LASFS and the Chesley Donovan Society, it proved to be a bit too expensive for many fans because of the fancier-than-usual con hotel. Not that most of us didn't have a good time and enjoy the program items as well as one another's company but even a gent like me with a steady, well-paying job found it costlier than we were accustomed to at s-f cons. My con report was titled "Backward Glances Through Bloodshot Eyes."

Marilyn and Paul Tulley, who had done such a good job of chairing the 1956 Westercon in Oakland, were prepared to bid for the 1958 Westercon. They had also said earlier that they planned to bid for the 1958 WorldCon and we had encouraged them to do so. They were new to fandom but had shown they could organize well and work hard to put on a good convention. It would be a friendly competition.

We also bid for the 1958 Westercon--the idea being that if we didn't win the WorldCon bid we would still have the Westercon as our South Gate in '58 convention. Someone (not us) somehow convinced the Tulleys not to bid for the '58 Westercon. They withdrew their bid in favor of South Gate. Apparently they didn't bother to bid for the '58 WorldCon either, as ours was the only bid presented at the 1957 WorldCon business meeting in London, and the vote was recorded as unanimous for South Gate in '58!

The fourteenth World Science Fiction Convention was held at the Biltmore Hotel in New York City over the 1956 Labor Day Weekend. Ron Ellik's report in the second issue of Science Fiction Parade, as well as what he heard from others who attended, indicated that the convention suffered a lot of problems including financial ones, amounting to \$1,500. A hat was passed at the end of the con to collect donations to

help pay the debt, or as they say in Old Blighty, they had a whip-around.

Speaking of England, the London bid won the WorldCon for 1957, further insuring that the 1958 WorldCon would be in the western U.S.A. We assumed that the London committee did not receive pass-on money from New York. Shortly after the London WorldCon they sent some pass-on money to us. We had heard that they had received an unexpected bill from their hotel or something like that, so we returned the money to them, with thanks, as we felt they probably needed it more than we did.

Our basic funding for the SoLaCon (the official nickname for the sixteenth WorldCon c/w the eleventh Westercon) came from what the Outlanders had managed to save over the years and from our own pockets. We determined to run the convention on a really tight budget, find a hotel the fans could afford, and spend little or no money on frills of any kind. Once the con started Rick, our treasurer, and his assistant Honey Wood Graham, realized that we were in the black and likely to stay there.

So we didn't have money worries which was just as well as we had other worries because of what had happened two years previously in New York, the creation of the World Science Fiction Society, Inc.

Now that particular corporation should not be confused with the World SF Society that heads up the WorldCons today, although its purpose was presumably the same. It could have worked, too, had it not been for the problems engendered when its Board of Directors began feuding among themselves. Accusations were hurled back and forth; at least one lawsuit (and maybe counter-suit) was threatened. As a result, all of fandom was plunged into a bloodless war.

There were those who felt that the WSFS, Inc. was a wonderful thing. As a non-profit corporation it should act as an "umbrella" protecting Worldcon committees from having to pay convention debts out of their own pockets, being able to declare bankruptcy, etc. I doubt if it would have been that simple but it sounded good.

There were those who felt that the WSFS, Inc. was a farce because of the people presumably running it not being able to get along with each other. Out here on the West Coast, we heard and read a lot of pro and con arguments from friends in the east and in fanzines from the various participants and cynical observers.

Nevertheless, the SoLacon Committee was perfectly willing to go along with the WSFS, Inc.'s rules and regs as most of them had to do with the continuity of the WorldCon, putting what was being done traditionally into some kind of legalese.

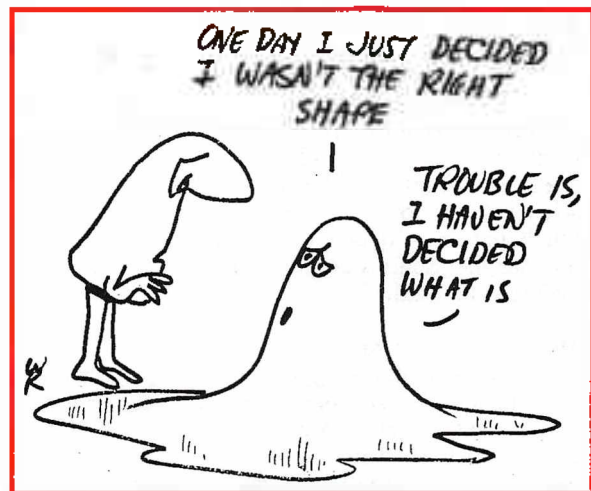
We hired our own lawyer to help us and he informed us that an organization incorporated in the state of New York or any other state would not be recognized by the state of California--unless it was registered in Sacramento. So we had him write to the proper Sacramento office and was told that they would need copies of the NY corporation papers. We asked for them to be sent to us and eventually they were.

Now all of this took quite a bit of time, with the convention date fast approaching. I for one was somewhat pissed-off because no one on the WSFS Board of Directors knew enough to send us copies of the papers back when we first won the bid.

Then the papers that they did send were so badly reproduced that the Sacramento office said they were unusable and would we please send readable copies. By this time the convention date (Labor Day weekend) was upon us and we said to hell with it and went into the con without the alleged protection of a corporation.

I don't remember now who suggested that we check out the old Alexandria Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. It had been a fine and famous hotel in the past with guests like John Barrymore and other famous folks staying there. It was still in fair shape in 1958 but obviously wasn't as posh as the Knickerbocker and other hotels in the nicer parts of town.

We met the Carlin Brothers, whose first names I have forgotten, though we did get on a first-name basis. One of them was the hotel manager, the other was the convention manager, and they looked enough alike to be twins so that when we talked to one of them without the other present we were never sure which brother it was. Not that it mattered, for if one agreed to something, the other one seemed to get the word fast enough.





I was elected to do the negotiating and the first thing I did was explain to them as simply as possible what a science-fiction convention was all about. It wasn't as difficult as I thought it would be, perhaps because I stressed the fact that the fans and even some of the pros, ranged in age from early teens to folks in their seventies or older, and that we weren't likely to be as rowdy as lodge members who liked to cut loose when they came to the big city.

I don't recall the details of the deal we made but I made sure that we had it in writing. The only thing I couldn't get them to agree to was to put a portable cash bar on the mezzanine level where most of the con activity would occur, thus saving our adult drinkers from having to go down to the street level bar during the programs. I continued to nag them about this the first day of the con and finally they gave in and set up the bar the next day. At the end of the con they thanked me and said they wished that they had done as I asked to start with as the upstairs cash bar made more money during the day than the one on street level.

Rick, Anna, and I made an appointment with the Honorable Leland R. Weaver, Mayor of South Gate. Once again, I was the spokesman as I told the Mayor the story of the young fan who dreamed of having a science fiction convention in his own home town. The tough part was telling the Mayor in a diplomatic manner that South Gate didn't have a hotel or other facility to house the WorldCon.

Mayor Weaver turned out to be sharper than we expected for a small town politico. His appearance was that of a kindly and friendly man and I rather expect that he was. He latched on to our idea immediately and got in touch with the Mayor of Los Angeles to work things out. The result was a proclamation from the Los Angeles Mayor's office declaring that the Al-

exandria Hotel was within the South Gate city limits for the duration of the SoLaCon.

Mayor Weaver read this at the opening of the convention--to wild applause--and added a few remarks of his own, appropriate to an s-f and fantasy con. He said that he once stayed in a hotel similar to the old Alexandria except that it had no bathrooms. It was, he said, uncanny... Some groans and more wild applause.

We tried to get the WSFS Directors together during the con and there was a kind of meeting, engineered I think by Ev Evans, but nothing much was resolved. George Nims Raybin, a New York fan and lawyer, who introduced himself to people by saying "I'm a bastard--but I'm a *likeable* bastard!" resigned from his office as the WSFS legal officer, but I don't think that was as a result of the meeting.

During the first two days of the con (Friday and Saturday) people kept nagging us about WSFS, some for, and some against. I'm surprised I held my temper as well as I did because it seemed to me that my closest friend's convention dreams were being marred by the WSFS Hassle. Actually, I did reach a point that if anyone else came up to me or to Rick to tell us what we should do to or for or with WSFS, I would have slugged whoever it was, man, woman or child. As for Rick, at one point he was heard to say, "A curse on both your houses!"

The WorldCon business meeting was scheduled for Sunday. Anna, Rick, Tony Boucher, and I got together in our room. We were afraid that the business meeting would become a battlefield. We had already received a petition signed by a number of fans requesting that the con committee and/or the board of directors dissolve the WSFS, Inc. and return the charter to the state of New York.

We also knew that some fans (including more than one board member) were claiming that the WSFS business meeting held in London was somehow illegal and therefore the SoLaCon could not conduct a proper WSFS business meeting.

George Nims Raybin had requested that he be permitted to announce his resignation as the WSFS legal officer at our business meeting. We saw no problem with that but what about the confusion caused by the battling directors and the other fans feuding over whether or not the WSFS Inc. had a right to control WorldCons?

Tony listened to us for awhile and finally interrupted to advise us of the powers of the chair. This resulted in deciding that we would run the business meeting the way we wanted to do it and that the main item of business would be voting for the 1959 WorldCon site. There were two bidders, Chicago fandom and Detroit

fandom, both of whom threw fine bidding parties, I might add, as an old party fan.

We would let George make his announcement, which was cheered by many, and we had Bill Donaho read the petition. However, as a con committee we could not act on the petition but referred it to the board of directors who in turn could present it to WSFS members for consideration or voting. As it turned out, the WSFS, Inc. lost its charter because someone didn't bother to do whatever was necessary to keep it renewed. When someone tried to start a discussion at the business meeting regarding whether or not the Loncon business meeting had been "legal", Anna (as instructed by Tony) pounded the gavel and announced that this was the business meeting of a world science fiction convention being held in the state of California. Period.

There was a split second of silence and then a roar from the crowd. A roar followed by joyful shouting and applauding.

After things quieted down we proceeded to hold the election for the 1959 WorldCon site, and Detroit won.

After the SoLaCon there were several reports on the con in general and the business meeting in particular. Some of them were confused or totally inaccurate. We did *not* dissolve the WSFS, Inc. at that business meeting. All we did was throw the problems of the WSFS Hassle back to the people who had created them. All we wanted to do was put on an international convention of s-f fans and that is exactly what we did.

Although the Willises were unable to make it we did have Ron Bennett, the TAFF winner from England, as

well as George Locke, Bob Shaw and James White. And of course Mike Hinge from New Zealand.

We had a tea-drinking contest (popular at British cons at the time) for which the hotel could only supply tea bags, which were despised by some Britishers as well as by our New Zealander. They proceeded to rip open the bags and boil the tea in something supplied by the hotel. I had made friends with the catering manager who helped us in many ways, not all of them connected with his job, and the Carlins didn't mind at all! I think Djinn Faine won the contest by being the last one sitting after the other contestants finally found it necessary to rush to the nearest rest room.

Having avoided a riot at the business meeting, we almost had a similar threat after the Masquerade Ball, thanks to nearly seven-foot tall Jon Lackey showing up in a really weird wizard costume. I think he wore platform shoes to make himself even taller than seven feet. His robe and horrific make-up, combined with the gibberish he was spouting, while carrying a staff in one hand and a smoking brazier in the other, earned him the nickname of "Old Smudgepot". After his presentation in a cloud of smoke, he left the hotel, along with his acolytes, and marched to Pershing Square, close by the Alexandra. Pershing Square was usually populated with bums, political speakers, winos, and all sorts of riffraff. Jon preached to them in his gibberish tongue and they began to surround him and his friends. He hurriedly marched back to the hotel followed by a shouting crowd. Some of them managed to get into the hotel after him. Eventually the front doors were secured but the crowd remained outside, pressing against them.



We tried to get the hotel detective, a young Korean who was having a ball talking with the fans (no busted parties at the SoLaCon!), but he smiled and shrugged, and went back to his conversation. Someone called the police who arrived, broke up the mob, and came inside to track down the ones who had got in before the doors were locked.

I was in the ballroom at the time and when they asked who was in charge, I told them that I was on the committee and that our people would probably be wearing convention badges and not dressed in ragged or dirty clothes. I noticed that the cops were smiling and obviously trying to keep from laughing while I expressed my desire for them to get the bums out of there.

Then I realized that I was still in costume as Pike Pickens, the Tramp Clown of the Spaceways, with red nose, blackened, unshaven beard, patched vest and pants, etc. I don't think I was wearing my badge either but they took my word that I was the convention secretary and let me help them find and remove the interlopers.

While the crowd was still outside someone got out on one of the window balconies and we could hear the mob shouting, "Jump! Jump! Jump! Jump!" Jon claims it wasn't him as he and his cohorts had changed into civies and left the hotel by the basement garage entrance.

Jon's costume and his entrance plus the unwanted excitement that followed tended to make one forget just how many really good costumes there were. Karen Anderson tried out her bat wings (made from wire hangers and cloth, cleverly assembled) for the first time, and there was a well-wrapped Mummy based on the old Karloff film.

Speaking of films, we could have had THE BLOB as a

premier at the SoLaCon but we turned it down. Most of us were so unhappy with the so-called s-f films of the Fifties, the ones with giant insects or giant lizards or whatever. THE BLOB sounded like yet another monster movie. Many years later I saw it on TV and thought it a pretty good suspense movie so maybe the fans at the con wouldn't have panned it, but who knows?

What we did have was the showing of a Ghost Story TV pilot from Arch Oboler, Peabody Award winning writer and director for radio, movies and television. He arrived with his film and his son while the Auction Bloch was still going on.

Bob Bloch had suggested that we get pros to volunteer to donate an hour of their time to whoever made the highest bid. Naturally we called it the Auction Bloch and the other pros present joined in the fun,

and the money earned went to TAFF.

Apparently John Campbell had not volunteered which was lucky for us as he came along while I was explaining to Mr. Oboler that we would set him up in the auditorium as soon as the auction ended. I asked John if he knew Arch Oboler and he said no, but he would love to meet him. It turned out that Oboler was a big fan of John's and when it came time to take Oboler into the meeting hall I was reluctant to

interrupt their conversation but they both understood and I assumed got together later.

Arch Oboler's TV pilot was the first in a ghost stories series and it--along with his talk--went over well with the audience, even if it wasn't science-fiction.

Shortly after John and Peg Campbell arrived at the convention. Anna and I, accompanied by Thelma Evans who asked if she could tag along, went up to their suite to welcome them. Peg was feeling a little ill from the plane flight and excused herself to the bedroom.



We started to leave, not wishing to be a disturbance but John insisted that we stay, saying that Peg would be hurt if we cut our visit short.

He had twisted a coat hanger into the shape of a divining rod and demonstrated how it could "find" the water pipes in the hotel plumbing. We also discussed such things as whether or not Cortez was a superman and other matters, all of which was a "warm up" for the speech he gave that evening.

I was sorry to see the grand old editor of science-fiction losing popularity with many of the fans because of weird idea and beliefs. He had encouraged me in my writing some dozen years before and over the years impressed me as a real gentleman of intellectual integrity. I might disagree with his preachments and stubbornness but he brought us the science-fiction we enjoyed and was indeed the founder of a golden age.

Someone told me that John was quite upset at the banquet when The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction won the Hugo that year. Our toastmaster, Tony Boucher, was editor of the winning prozine, and I'm not quite sure how we handled that. Anna, Rick, and I knew the winners in advance of course, as did Rog Phillips, who manufactured the Hugo trophies for '58, and we wondered how we could have Tony on both sides of the table when it came time for the prozine award. Most likely one of us took the card from him to read and then handed him the rocket. There was a moment of silence--from Tony, and a roar of applause from the audience.

One day of the con was Westercon Day, during which Bjo and company presented a futuristic fashion show (the first one at any con) which was emceed by the superb Robert Bloch.

San Diego fandom and Seattle fandom were bidding for the 1959 Westercon. Seattle won handily and the Westercon got out of California for the first time. Coincidentally it was at the Outlander-sponsored third Westercon that it got out of Los Angeles and went to San Francisco for the fourth one. We called it the "Outlander Effect"...

Too bad we didn't have Bjo in charge of the art show we attempted to have. We did have art to display (other than what we had in the auction) but the only place we could keep it was in a room that locked--so it would be safe overnight, or whenever George W. Fields, who was in charge of the show, was out of the room which was often enough that many attendees never saw the show. I guess we assumed that George would get help so that he could get to some of the program items while someone else sat in the art room, but apparently he elected to lock it up whenever he felt like it.

SoLaCon was a con of many highlights. Here are a few more:

Christine Moskowitz's color slides of s-f cover art and Sam's commentary on same.

Sam and Walt Daugherty's auctioneering at the Auction Bloch. (Later in the con they auctioned off each other!)

Walt following our instructions by running a "controlled" auction of donated artwork, books, etc. We knew we were in the black so we told him to make it easy for the kids who didn't have much money to buy an item before the bidding got too high for them. That was *then*. More recent auctions have shown me that sometimes the young kids have more money to bid with than some of us adults...

The comic play by Karen Anderson & Company with Doc Smith and Campbell and others participating. It had to do with a promag called FISTPOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION and how the writers tried to get the editor to change his ways...without success.

So many of our friends in the fannish world helped us. Some have been mentioned and I hesitate to make a list lest I inadvertently leave someone out.

After the con, we settled up with the hotel, not that there was that much to settle, and got the managers to write us a letter stating that we owed them nothing. This letter, which also expressed how much they enjoyed having the convention there, was printed in our Final Report, along with a complete financial report, and a copy of Richard Matheson's banquet speech.

I don't have a copy handy but I do know that we passed on money to the 1959 WorldCon and the 1959 Westercon and donated money to TAFF, NFFF and LASFS.

At the end of the con, Rick marched across the stage carrying a sign that read "South Gate Again in 2010!" He told me that he put it that far in the future because then he wouldn't be around and have to work on it. He was right, damn it!

Thus endeth this old Outlander's Tale.



