

FILE 770



\* With many a shout of "Mush!" midwestern and eastern fans drove through the teeth of winter to Ann Arbor, Michigan, and wound up in Confusion \* Asked how he liked Damon Knight's The Futurians, Frederik Pohl grinned, "First I read it...Then my lawyer read it."

\* On the 203rd anniversary of Paul Revere's ride, George Flynn had to do some fast moving of his own \* "Can we continue to deal with sf as a merely escapist fiction, pointless, mindless entertainment...Or is this, perhaps, a moment when we can make a brave statement with our fiction, with our literary love, our bodies and our annual World gathering?" (Harlan Ellison) \* Only a few years ago doing illustrations for issues of PERRY RHODAN, Van Toorn now proudly reports that his new prozine, ORBIT, had excellent first issue sales \* "I think this language needs a verb tense for things that haven't happened yet as I write but will be over when you read" (John Berry) \* The LA [Westercon] bidders had planned to use the Marriott again, but lo and behold, Doug Wright had already gone in and signed a three-year contract with the hotel, including every July 4 \* Ahead of me in line for boarding passes was Alan Frisbie. "Smoking or no smoking?" asked the clerk. "No smoking -- and no chewing either," replied Alan \* Roger Sween is moving to St. Cloud -- where the penitentiary is \* All facts verified by Rhodesian Military Intelligence \* A staff of five works around the clock to corflu out the tiniest traces of irony or wit in order to maintain the reputation bault for F770 is DNQ and WHOLE FANZINE CATALOG. If you smile at any point in this zine a full refund will be provided \* "The trouble with fanzines is that they are protected by the First Amendment. (That's the U.S. Constitution, not the WSFS Constitution." (Alexis Gilliland) \* Equal time for Decadent Winnipeg Fandom \* "Madman" Riley contended at Wilcon he had figured out what separated him from the rest of the human race was that he had no shame. So he tried asking for the loan of some. \* "I know now why all Texans carry six-guns. When the cockroaches rear up on their hind legs you need a six-gun!" (Yale Edeiken) \* "I will no longer accept nor respond to any fannish correspondence of any nature whatsoever." (M. David Johnson) \* "Geis is routinely booed at the Worldcon when he wins a Hugo because his 'fanzine', which is placed in the amateur class, generates a small profit for him after payment to certain contributors. Well TOUGH CRUD." (Rick Katze) \* Two new additions to Southern Car Wreck Fandom are Rickey Sheppard of Bowling Green, KY, and Ken Moore of Nashville, TN. \* "I now pronounce you man and wife -- the sentences to run concurrently." (Arthur Hlavaty) \* Southern Car Wreck Fandom Opens Detroit Chapter \* Dealer Harry Friedenbergl seemed happy, if only because Craig Miller has moved on from Star Wars to other films: "Every time he came by my table, a week later I'd get a letter from a lawyer." \* 37 cat census reports from the slaves of 55 cats, 4 honorary cats, and 2 dishonorary cats \* FILE 770:39 (Ted White, introducing his fanzine review column) "I shall try to review every fanzine I receive..." \* Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Unemployment Line \* "[Caudel] Degler's now living in an Indy suburb. He is married to a woman described as 'extremely unattractive'. Later, Phil Farmer told me that Degler had gotten his autograph. Phil responded by getting Degler's autograph, to have proof that Claude had actually materialized." (Ed Connor) \* "Pickersgill is right! I can afford to go to America any time I want to! Who needs TAFF? Not me -- why, I've been to America thousands of times, and it's no different than being at home." (Avedon Carol) \*

# TENTH ANNIVERSARY

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FILE 770:73 \* Edited by Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys CA 91401. Available for hot tips, loose lips, and sheer insanity, but especially for subscriptions at 5/\$5.00. Expensive, long-distance telephone calls (on your nickel) are also welcomed at: (818) 787-5061!  
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An introduction to Mike's  
mimeography, by Stephen King:

(I lied, it's by me.) This issue was meant to be a carefully-mimeographed genzine version of File 770. (Yeah, Mike? What happened?) I'm having incredible problems with both of my mimeographs. One immediately wrinkles any stencil unless the motor is running at high speed, ruling out slipsheeting. The other one patiently yields to hand-cranking, biding its time until the 250th copy when the stencil creeps askew on the silkscreen and any stencil with an illustration cemented in splits the bonding of the bottom edge, leaving a splotch of ink on every copy. Just in case the stencil contains no illustration, at the 275th copy the drum rim grinds through the stencil and leaves tire tracks down the righthand side of each copy. Therefore, instead of a pretentious mimeographed genzine, you are being presented with a laboriously handmade fanzine that appears to be on a better grade of paper than usual for no particular reason!

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## ART CREDITS

Alan White:	Cover
Stu Shiffman:	4,21
Jim McLeod:	5,16
Joe Pearson:	11
Steven Fox	14
Bill Rotsler	19,22
Sheryl Birkhead	25
Joan Hanke-Woods	27
Teddy Harvia	29

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# ROUNDFILLINGS

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MIKE GLYER

## 1. The Ten Most-Asked Questions About File 770

### (1) Where did you get this name?

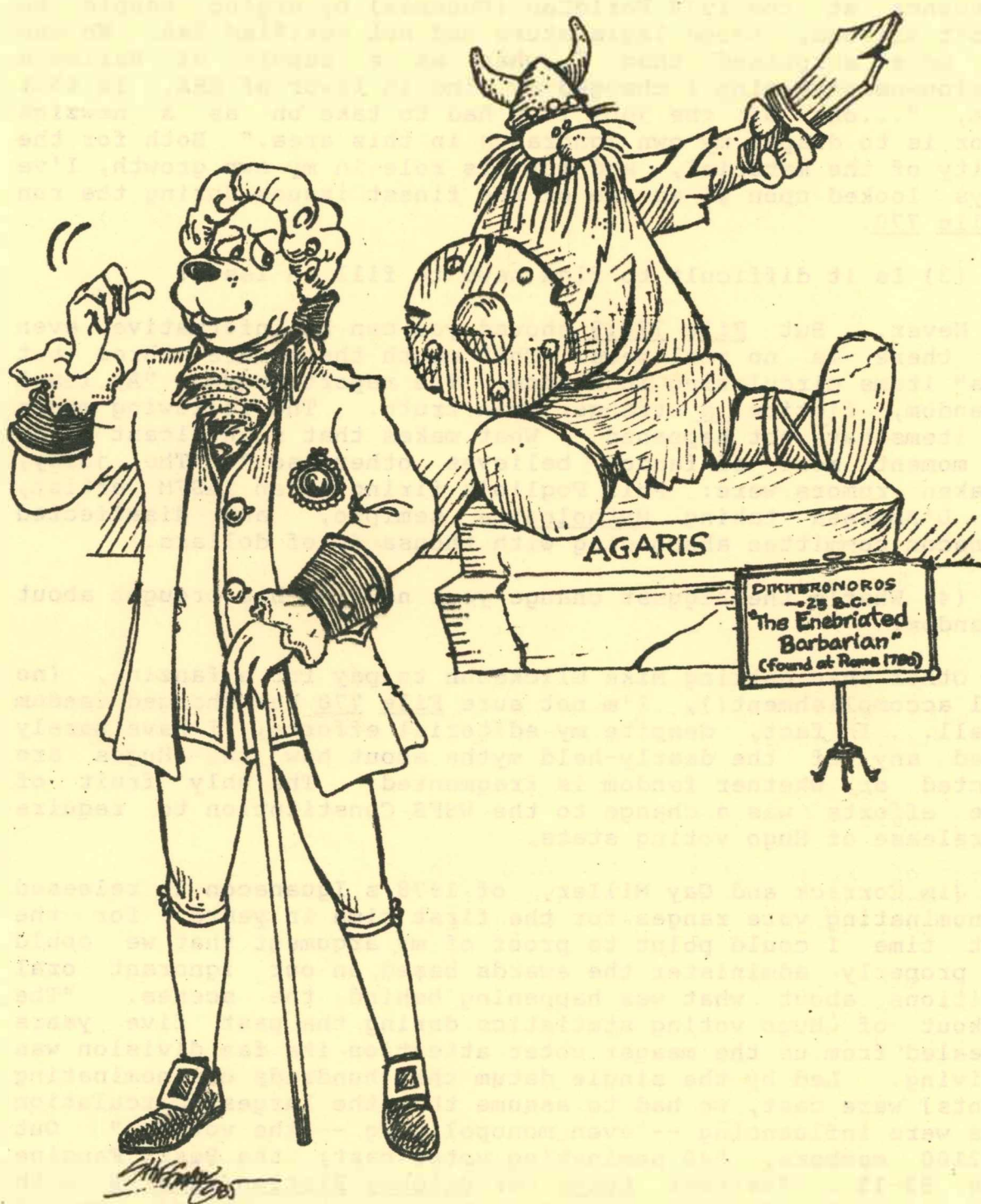
The short answer is: I missed LeGuin's Oikeumene novels, or else this zine would have been named Ansible, and Langford would have been stuck publishing "Son of Skyrack".

The real answer is that I searched methodically for one word which would instantly conjure "fandom" and "news" in the minds of reader. I wrote lists of words. I screened the entire title index of Bruce Pelz' collection to avoid duplication. I discarded DNQ, although it later materialized as the title of a rival newzine edited by Taral Wayne and Victoria Vayne.

In the mid-70s, Norm Hollyn's memorable Requqitation Six number 1, et seq., had jokingly expressed the truth that titles with numbers in them are more memorable. Thanks to Harry Warner Jr.'s A Wealth of Fable, and Fred Patten's WorldCon history articles for the MAC progress reports, fandom's collective memory had recently been refreshed about the party in Room 770. 770 looked like a good numerical icon to add to a title. So in the tradition of cryptic names like Malcolm X and HAWAII 5-0, I took the number 770, put a utilitarian information-related noun in front of it, and voila! Possibly the dumbest fanzine title ever to win a Hugo.

### (2) What issue of File 770 do you think was the best?

Issue #5 has never been surpassed as an example of what I



#### 4 73 Issues and He Still Hasn't Found a Better Title?

want my newzine to do. It was a theme issue devoted to articles on feminism and fandom by Jeanne Gomoll, Victoria Vayne and Dan Goodman. File 770:2 had concluded with my editorial howling about Harlan Ellison's announcement he would justify his attendance at the 1978 WorldCon (Phoenix) by urging people to boycott Arizona, whose legislature had not ratified ERA. No one was more surprised than I when as a result of Harlan's consciousness-raising I changed my mind in favor of ERA. In #5 I wrote, "...one of the jobs I've had to take on as a newzine editor is to dispel my own ignorance in this area." Both for the quality of the material, and for its role in my own growth, I've always looked upon #5 as one of the finest issues during the run of File 770.

(3) Is it difficult to find news to fill an issue?

Never. But File 770:9 showed you can be informative even when there is no real news. That month there were three hot "news" items circulating in fandom. The report began: "At least in fandom, fiction is stranger than truth. The following major news items have not happened. What makes that significant is at the moment most of fandom believes otherwise." The juicy, mistaken rumors were: Phil Foglio's firing as an IASFM artist, Don D'Amassa taking Mythologies semipro, and disaffected Iguanacon committee absconding with thousands of dollars.

(4) What's the biggest change your newzine has brought about in fandom?

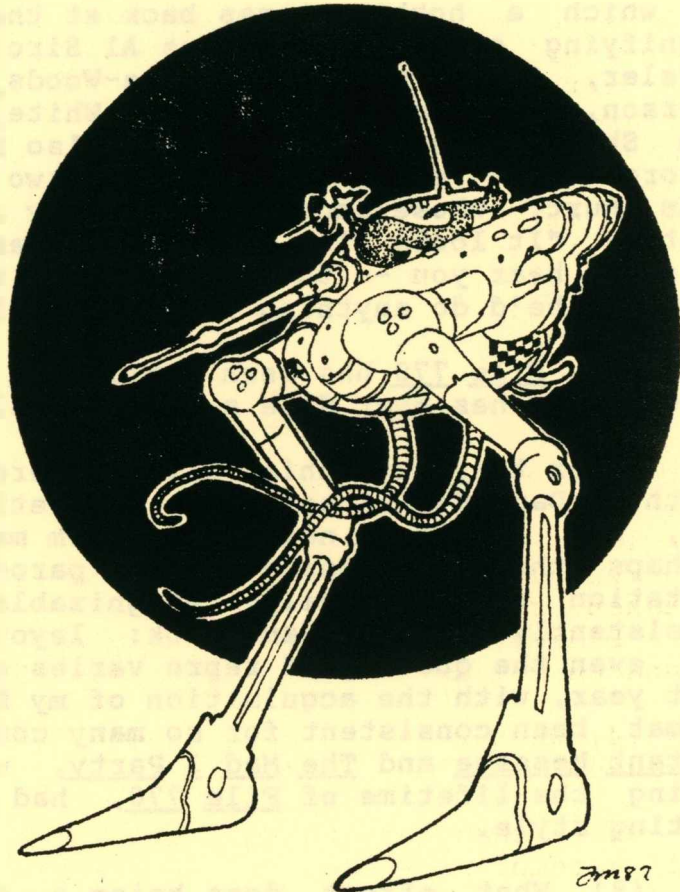
Other than getting Mike Glicksohn to pay for a fanzine, (no small accomplishment!), I'm not sure File 770 has changed fandom at all. In fact, despite my editorial efforts, I have barely dented any of the dearly-held myths about how the Hugos are selected or whether fandom is fragmented. The only fruit of those efforts was a change to the WSFS Constitution to require the release of Hugo voting stats.

When Jim Corrick and Gay Miller, of 1978's Iguanacon 2, released the nominating vote ranges for the first time in years, for the first time I could point to proof of my argument that we could not properly administer the awards based on our ignorant oral traditions about what was happening behind the scenes. "The blackout of Hugo voting statistics during the past five years concealed from us the meager voter attention its fan division was receiving. Led by the single datum that hundreds of [nominating ballots] were cast, we had to assume that the largest circulation zines were influencing -- even monopolizing -- the voting." Out of 2100 members, 540 nominating votes cast; the Best Fanzine range 53-15. "Neither Locus nor Science Fiction Review with their thousands of readers could muster more than 50-odd votes." Even to this day, Locus' 8100+ circulation does not translate into a proportionately high nomination count.

(5) What's the most pleasant surprise you ever had editing this fanzine?

In July, 1983, I had to fly back to Boston on four days' notice to attend a three-week-long management training class. Ordinarily this would have prevented publication of File 770:42 for a month, and made its news awesomely stale.

With stencils typed on my manual typewriter in the Howard Johnsons at Kenmore Square, a party of NESFans led by Dave and Claire Anderson published and collated the issue -- the only issue printed on trufannish fibertone, by the way -- and treated me like I was some kind of guest of honor in the process. One of the best weeks I ever enjoyed in fandom.



(6) What's the most unpleasant thing that ever happened to you editing File 770?

Do I have to answer this question. I guess so, since I asked it... The flak surrounding File 770's obituary for Susan Wood easily outdistances anything else in my memory. Inaccurate information from presumably reliable sources was followed by different but equally unpalatable information in a verified coroner's report. These events underscored the hazards in fandom of reporting certain stories at all.

You didn't think I was going to make some flip answer about Ted White, did you? The truth is Ted's fanzine review column in issues 39 to 42 or 43 helped make them the best series in the run of this fanzine.

(7) Would you rather publish by xerox than mimeo?

Well, if I could afford \$300 an issue in publication costs, instead of the \$70 or so I'm spending now, I'd love to have that clean look and flawless reproduction. Especially for the benefit

of the artists. File 770 has been lucky to have a number of loyal (and patient!) fan artists help give this zine its fannish look.

Wade Gilbreath did some early covers, for example F770:18, in which a hobbit stares back at the readers through a giant magnifying glass. There was Al Sirois, Alexis Gilliland, Bill Rotsler, Steve Fox, Joan Hanke-Woods, Taral, Brad Foster, Joe Pearson, Charlie Jackson, Alan White, C. Lee Healy, Linda Leach, Jim Shull, Charlie Williams. Also Bard Davison, who did the unforgettable sicko illo showing two medics examining a supine John Hurt, whose face is covered by a repulsive creature. First doctor: "It looks like he has an alien on his face." John Hurt: "I can't hear you -- there's an alien on my face." Second doctor: "My God, he'd do anything for a cheap laugh!"

(8) File 770 has been publishing for over ten years. How come nobody has ever done a hoax issue?

After they read this, five different people will do them next month. Dana Siegel and Marie Bartlett said they had an idea for one, but I guess I never made them mad enough to actually do it. Perhaps the real reason is that parody flows most easily from imitation of a readily recognizable style. File 770 never consistently kept the same look: layout changes, format changes, and even the quality of repro varies occasionally. Only in the past year, with the acquisition of my Pied Piper computer, has the format been consistent for so many consecutive issues. Locus, Instant Message and The Mad 3 Party, which have all been parodied during the lifetime of File 770, had a consistent appearance and writing style.

(9) What effect does being a one-man operation have on editing this fanzine?

Since File 770 lacks that newsroom staff which always seems such an important part of "Lou Grant" or All The President's Men, it's been especially important for me to cover well the stories that land on my own doorstep. Like the 1979 series of stories about for-profit convention-runner Doug Wright, who waged a campaign of harassment to drive other LA cons out of existence.

The climax was my account of infiltrating a Wright con as a gofer. "One of my earliest concerns was that somebody would recognize me. Later on my vanity was pricked when no one recognized me." Although financial reverses eventually subdued Wright's imperial ambitions, as happens to many small businessmen, he is still around LA staging the occasional huckster convention.

(10) If you had them all on tape, what episode in the history of File 770 would you replay?

Easy: when Austin was battling Detroit for the right to host the 1985 NASFiC, Robert Taylor and crew hit upon the idea of "stuffing" the annual File 770 Poll, which readers which bid they preferred. The nice thing was: Robert told all his voters who

weren't already subscribers to be sure and sign up. I got 40 new subscribers in the deal. It was the only year I ever made a profit from File 770, even if it was just \$25.

## 2. Panic in the Year 770

Once a decade probably isn't too often to repeat my editorial policies. In File 770:1, my editorial policy began, "Even without doing anything that could be called 'crusading journalism' the act of reporting what happens in fandom is certain to offend a number of people....A leading newzine like Karass or Locus tends to become an important influence out of proportion to its editors' capacity for enforcing journalistic standards....Let's face it, a newzine must rely on sources generally no stronger than gossip. A fannish newzine is a one or two person organ plagued with an irregular schedule, covering the same geographic area as the Washington Post with one five-hundredth the staff."

Perhaps another editorial policy also bears repeating from that issue. It's still in force. "[Since] an editor is no better than his/her source, news will be attributed to its source. If I blow it, bitch at me. If my source blows it, just send me the facts and save your bitching for him. ...Concerning the objectivity of File 770, when you are riled up by its presentation or by any opinion published therein, I'll seldom refuse an interesting rebuttal. Boring rebuttals will be out of luck, but I feel that given the newzine's opinion-influencing nature, my opinion should be just one of several available to you." In time this commitment led to the introduction of regular columnists Taral, and Victoria Vayne, but as early as File 770:2 I led off with Chuck Crayne's rebuttal to my first-issue description of his L.A. in '79 WorldCon bid. I have always tried to resist the custom among newzine editors of insuring our delusions of accuracy by refusing to acknowledge misstatements.

Those who remember the television series "The Fugitive", and Dr. Richard Kimble/actor David Janssen's pursuit of the one-armed man who killed his wife, may also remember it was the first series which had a premeditated ending. Two years into the run of a series that ran five years on ABC, "The Fugitive's" creators wrote a two-part episode ending the hunt for the one-armed man, and locked it in the vault. During "The Fugitive's" final year the episode was filmed, and aired to end the season.

I started File 770 in January, 1978. Though setting no date, I figured a few years down the line File 770 would draw to a close. File 770:1 contained the necessary statement of editorial philosophy -- deliberately avoiding any plagiarism of Charles Foster Kane. Several articulate letters of comment came back, lecturing me about editing fannish newzines; I saved them. Yes, at the carefully chosen moment of my retirement I would excerpt these letters in an article "passing the torch" to the next sucker, ah, crusading newzine editor.

Now it's ten years later, and I realize one thing has changed. I don't know what might someday close this chapter in my fanzine editing career, but whatever could bring an end to File 770 isn't likely to fill me with the ambition to write an editorial last will and testament. ("Rage, rage, against the fading of the hecto!") We'll just have to hope those of you with recessive newzine editor genes will remember where you filed this issue when the time comes...

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CHUCK CRAYNE: (Los Angeles: January 22, 1978) Actually, most of the comments which I have to make, you anticipated in your 'comments in closing'. But you did not go far enough. What you have created in File 770:1 is not so much a newzine as it is a personalzine. It tells what you think about several con bids; what you think of Putnam books; what you think of various fanzines; et al. To be sure, there are probably some people who are interested in what you think. But there are a lot more who are interested in what you KNOW -- they are capable of forming their own opinions.

Editorializing is fine in its place. But if you rely on selling subscriptions to those who agree with you, either you will have a very small circulation, or you will be promoting the most bland opinions ever to be found this side of an incumbent politician in an election year. You have to capture your audience with news before you can try to persuade them with your reasoning. Commentary must be clearly separated from the news; must be clearly identified as opinion; and should be physically grouped together away from the front page.

Whenever possible, news items should be written only by someone who was there. Until you get enough of a following that a lot of people will be willing to act as roving reporters for you, that will not be possible. You will have to put together composites from a number of sources. The best way to give credibility to such an account is to attribute your sources. For example, do not say "Five hundred fans attended the first UNCON." Say instead, "Figures released by the UNCON committee show that five hundred fans..." Don't say "attendance at the last LOSCON was disappointing." Say instead, "Bruce Pelz, head moneygouger of the LASFS said that he was disappointed with the turnout..."

Of course, there will be cases where you can not find anyone who will allow his name to be associated with a juicy item. In that case, you should try to find someone of note who will comment on the rumor or wishes to deny it. Rather than, "it is rumored that everyone in the LASFS is a secret Trekkie", say "Ruth Rigel, speaking on behalf of the LASFS, denied emphatically that any members are now or have ever been Trekkies."

If you succeed in turning File 770 into a real newzine, I will be pleased to subscribe. But I'll have to see a few more issues first.

((Please turn to page 38))

all remember Conan Doyle's Jezail bullet, that wandered through Watson's body from story to story? The hero of my first published book has a wound that wanders from his left side to his right and back again in the course of one short novel. He also has an automatic transmission Citroen with a foot-clutch.

It happened very simply. I had the hero shot in the right shoulder. It seemed nastier than the left. I also had him driving a standard shift Citroen. The big kind of Citroen that they don't import much into this country. In fact, I've never seen one, even in pictures. Never known anyone who had one. The word "Citroen" appealed to me, so I gave him one. I've given my present heroine a Dusenbergh, on the same principles.

It was only in the proofreading of the galleys that someone noticed that a man who couldn't use his right arm would have trouble driving a standard shift car. Or any car, unless in England. I was the someone, and I changed both the location of the wound and the transmission of the car. I hated to do the latter, because I wasn't sure Citroen even made an automatic transmission, and because I couldn't see Mr. Long driving one. (Having had a little more experience with San Francisco since that day, I admit that anyone who does not drive an automatic in that city is an idiot and a public menace.)

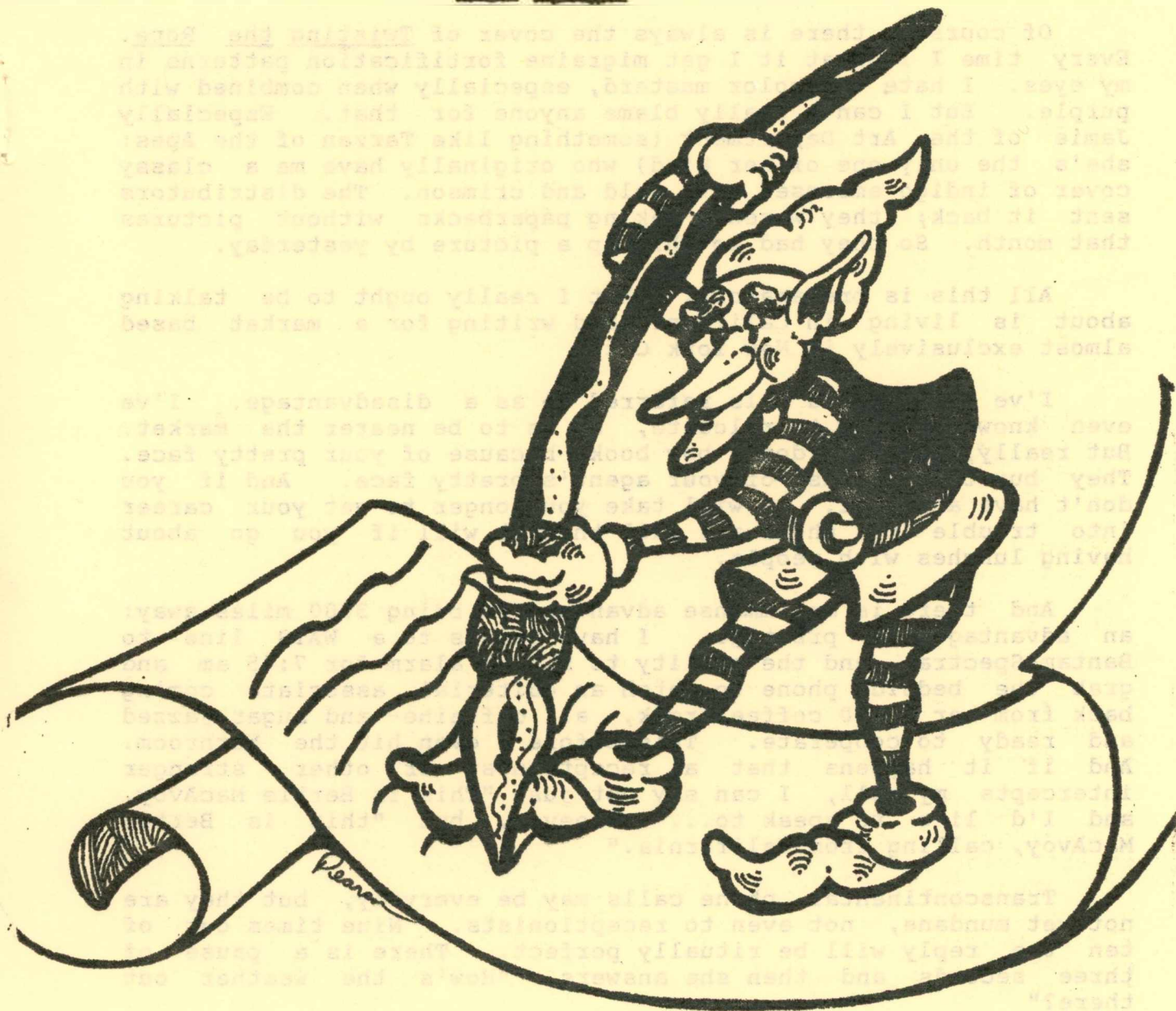
I changed it, but I missed some spots. My excuse is that I had never done galleys before, and besides, it never once occurred to me that anyone besides the proofreader and me would ever read the thing.

I still don't believe it. If I believed there was anyone listening, I could not write any of that pink-purple, naked embarrassing stuff which reveals so much more about the writer than about the characters involved. The stuff for which people who read books, read books. I think the writing of fiction and in fact all telling of stories is based on a "willing impression of disbelief" on the part of the writer. Or he couldn't do it. I don't know how actors survive at all.

But to get back to the Jezail bullet. Bantam is actually going to re-edit Tea With The Black Dragon for consistency. I didn't know that ever happened, in paperback. That means there is hope for Kells.

I only got one letter about the slip-up in Tea, (though I guess Bantam received more) but I got at least seven regarding the song "Barrett's Privateers" which was quoted in The Book of Kells. Some of them came damn near to containing death threats.

You see, neither my collaborator nor I had a suspicion that the song was of modern vintage, written by Stan Rogers of Canada. Wonderful song set in the eighteenth century. Neither the tune nor the words give away that it's not contemporary with its subject matter. We didn't give credit to Rogers, who died a few years ago, and that gentleman has many friends and followers. The last of the letters that came to me on the subject was



written by Valerie Rogers, Stan's mother, who said not to worry about it and sent me two cassette tapes of Stan's and Garnet's music. That's an error I'm glad to have made.

I think I'm the only writer I know never to have been done dirt by a publishers. Of course, there's time yet... The closest I ever came to suffering abuse was when an editor sat on a manuscript of mine for two years before returning it. It wasn't as though I was in pain about it for all that time, though. I quickly forgot he had it. When I came back to me I recognized it for the embarrassing limper it was and sent it deep six. Had he decided, for reasons of his own, to publish it, I might have been so dazzled by the thought that I'd have let him go ahead and now I'd be very unhappy about it.

Of course, there is always the cover of Twisting the Rope. Every time I look at it I get migraine fortification patterns in my eyes. I hate the color mustard, especially when combined with purple. But I can't really blame anyone for that. Especially Jamie of the Art Department (something like Tarzan of the Apes: she's the only one of her kind) who originally gave me a classy cover of indigo embossed with gold and crimson. The distributors sent it back; they weren't taking paperbacks without pictures that month. So they had to whip up a picture by yesterday.

All this is preparatory; what I really ought to be talking about is living in California and writing for a market based almost exclusively in New York City.

I've often heard this referred to as a disadvantage. I've even known people to relocate, so as to be nearer the market. But really, editors don't buy books because of your pretty face. They buy them because of your agent's pretty face. And if you don't have an agent, it will take you longer to get your career into trouble by phone and mail than it will if you go about having lunches with people.

And there is an immense advantage to being 3000 miles away: an advantage in prestige. I have access to a WATS line to Bantam-Spectra, and the ability to set my alarm for 7:45 am and grab the bedside phone to catch an editorial associate coming back from her 10:30 coffee break, all caffeine- and sugar-jazzed and ready to cooperate. This before I even hit the bathroom. And if it happens that a receptionist or other stranger intercepts my call, I can say not just "This is Bertie MacAvoy, and I'd like to speak to..." whoever, but "this is Bertie MacAvoy, calling from California."

Transcontinental phone calls may be everyday, but they are not yet mundane, not even to receptionists. Nine times out of ten the reply will be ritually perfect. There is a pause of three seconds and then she answers, "How's the weather out there?"

The formula hasn't changed since 1930.

To complete the ritual I must chuckle (as though California were some work of my own) and utter the words, "Oh, we don't have weather here. Only climate." In my own microsphere, the "climate" contains four months of torrential rains broken by freezes down to 15 degrees, but I am not to mention that.

Once this ritual is completed, neither the receptionist nor I is able to betray the other. The makeup of the human animal forbid it. This is all to my advantage, as I have no motivation to harm the receptionist at all, whereas she is ...well, a receptionist. I've been one, and the temptations are irresistible.

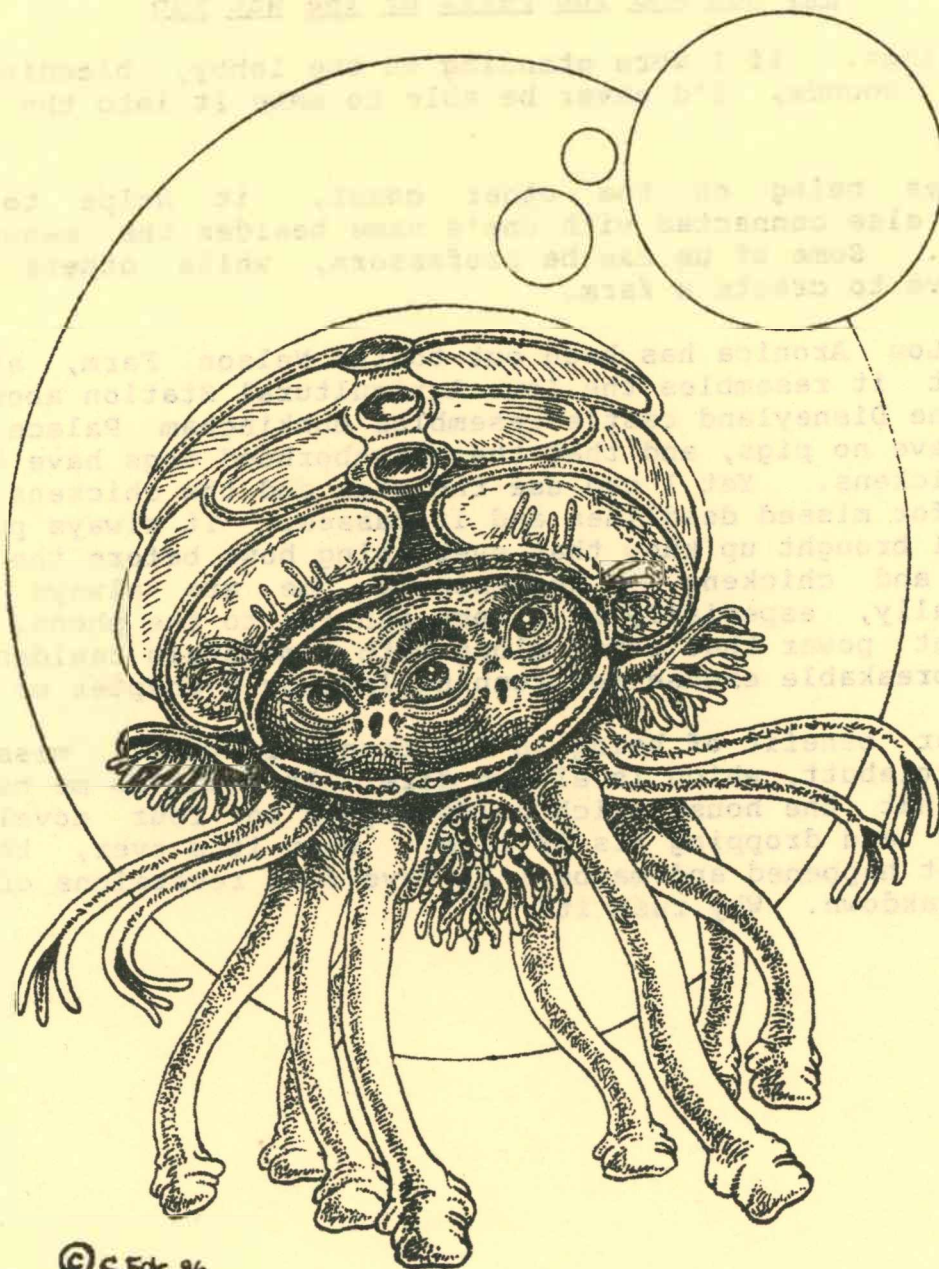
Using this ritual I can get through to people on their lunch hour (assuming they eat from a paper bag), or in the middle of

staff meetings. If I were standing in the lobby, bleeding from many head wounds, I'd never be able to make it into the front office.

Besides being on the other coast, it helps to have something else connected with one's name besides the manuscript turned it. Some of us can be professors, while others, like myself, have to create a farm.

Now Lou Aronica has been out to the Nelson Farm, and he knows that it resembles the Iowa Agricultural Station about as much as the Disneyland castle resembles Buckingham Palace. He knows we have no pigs, and that the neighborhood dogs have killed all the chickens. Yet I can use the pigs and the chickens as an excuse for missed deadlines and it passes. It always passes. We are all brought up know that everything bows before the care of pigs and chickens. Requests to me are always made apologetically, especially if I come panting to the phone. The intermittent power that comes along with a mountain residence is also an unbreakable excuse for running late by a chapter or so.

Another benefit of being in California is that I miss the latest scuttlebutt, which is always dire. It would do me no good to find that the house which holds rights to four novels is rearranging and dropping its SF line. When it's over, they'll tell me what happened and maybe I'll have four reversions or one nervous breakdown. Why rush it?



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MIKE GLYER

# A SINKING FEELING

When station identification ended at 8 o'clock, the network rolled tape of row-upon-row of sensitive fannish faces, men and women hanging over railings and slinging fistfulls of confetti like an extras call at the Love Boat set. A white plume of steam shot in the air as the ship gave a blast of its horn, and as the

### That Sinking Feeling

noise echoed away a narrator began, "Although they dreamed of colonies in space, for 48 years members of the World Science Fiction Convention had kept both feet firmly planted on dry land. Then they voted that in 1988 their convention would take to the seas on the SS Norway and cruise the Bermuda Triangle."

The camera focused on a bearded, long-haired man in gold-braided epaulettes wearing a Horatio Hornblower hat. "Chairman Neil Rest had a vision, of an old-fashioned Worldcon for just the leading writers and fans with the right stuff -- \$2,000 to book passage, mainly. But two days out of Miami, following a cryptic radio message, the SS Norway went to the bottom of the Atlantic." Dramatic theme music swelled loudly. Smiling Captain Rest was frozen as a rainbow of confetti swirled from his hand. Credits rolled: ALTERNATE TIME TRAVEL DOCUMENTARIES PRESENTS...

I was sure I had seen something like this before about another ship, but my memory was vague. Once again there was a famous passenger liner on the bottom of the Atlantic, and an expedition was going down to explore the wreck with cameras and retrieve valuable artifacts.

Before the expedition, scholars and marine engineers held a conference to discuss why the SS Norway disaster happened. Two leading theories emerged. One professor had reviewed the ship's manifest and noted 1600 crab mallets were brought aboard by the banquet staff. He contended, it being a ship full of fans, they had run out of food, that someone declared it was now a "catch-your-own" dinner, and when explorers found the wreck they would discover 1600 mallet-shaped holes in the hull.

An engineer denied even a shipload of ravenous fans could inflict that kind of damage on steel plate with wooden mallets. Instead, he argued the SS Norway was owned by the Metropole Group, and given their track record the ship was probably still under construction when it went to sea with the 1988 WorldCon.

The fans themselves tried to get an answer. Their New Age exploratory techniques were not entirely fruitful. Surviving members of The Cult attended the 1989 Worldcon and held a midnight seance to contact the spirit of departed Cultist George Scithers. Although they succeeded, the only message they received was "Glug, glug."

The L.A. Times story was typical of the mundane press' coverage, two inches on page 26 right above the female mud wrestling ad, given a very small headline, "Shipwreck Cleanup Continues." Datelined Galveston, the article began, "Texas authorities promise they will soon complete the beach sweeping operation begun shortly after the SS Norway disaster. Chartered for the 1988 World Sci-Fic Convention, the ship capsized and sank. The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey blames the convention for leaving a ring around the Gulf of Mexico."



Not discouraged by a complete lack of evidence, the fannish press in the aftermath of the sinking published its own speculations. Science Fiction Chronicle reported the Norway ran over a speedbump in the Bermuda Triangle and capsized. The memorial issue of SF Convention Calendar claimed its late editor, Filthy Pierre, had been trolling for submarines -- and caught one. Letter writers to The Philk-Fee-Nom-ee-Non wondered if all the filkers struck the same (off) note and shattered the hull with the force of their vibrations. The theory's detractors said that would have required them all to sing the same note at the same time, and that had never happened before. In a cover story for The Mad 3 Party, MIT graduates scientifically proved the ship's stores could have been used to mix a large batch of blog in the ship's pool, leading to a meltdown that would have done to ship's steel pretty much what the saliva of Sigourney Weaver's aliens would do to a spittoon.

The fate of these doomed slans, dreamers, futurists, and lifestyle innovators seemed ripe for documentation on television. Junior moguls pointed to the success of Telly Savalas opening the Titanic's safe, and Geraldo Rivera with Al Capone's secret vault. Perhaps an exploration would yield the SS Norway's safe full of fascinating valuables. A sponsor for the entire 60-minute special was promptly signed: McDonald's: The Next Generation (Billion 129-163).

When the Norway was located, the salvage ship sent down a submersible to survey the wreckage. Things appeared to be well preserved. The exterior camera picked over a gleaming metal and glass form on the ocean floor which was remarkably intact considering the force of its impact when it hit the bottom, and the pressures at that depth. Gliding across its patterns of framed glass, the camera lights pierced the darkness and illuminated the manufacturer's brand name, "Mitsubishi Diamond Vision."

Tape of the exploration was mixed with interviews of the

## Tiny Bubbles

survivors, including the unsinkable Charlie Brown, who commandeered a lifeboat and only picked up New York publishers who promised exclusive news. David Brin had been saved, borne away on the backs of a school of dolphins. Dave Klaus floated adrift for three days on his rubber checkbook before being rescued by American Express, who promptly threw him back. There was a well-known fannish attorney whom the sharks wouldn't attack out of professional courtesy. And, of course, all the survivors agreed when the Norway broached the last thing they saw hurtling up from the spume of steam and seawater was the 20-foot tall helium-inflated rubber Baroness, a larger-than-life character from L. Ron Hubbard's dekalogy brought aboard by Bridge Publications, that was caught by the jet stream and survived long enough to outrage the devout of Morocco, and inspire its own fertility cult among the tribes around Lake Victoria.

Artifacts were found littered all over the seabed in the vicinity of the SS Norway's final resting place. The camera located the engine room telegraph, brass still factory-bright, and the dial settings still readable: "All Stop", "Full Ahead", "Faster, Faster Oh-Baby!", "Warp Factor Three, Mr. Sulu", and "Tau Zero".

There were many items from the ship's galley, like the shiny copper pots (that experts declared had either been twisted into a fanciful shape by the impact and pressures of the ocean, or had been spot-welded into a still by fans with Bic lighters.) Dinnerware lay about in abundance, many items surprisingly unbroken. There were the butter dishes with Rotsler illos done in indelible ink. There were dinner plates with Rotsler illos done in indelible ink. There were barnacles with Rotsler illos done in indelible ink -- just how long could that guy hold his breath anyway?

As the submersible approached the main wreck, one saw the Norway's hull cracked in two parts like two ends of a party noisemaker. Every set of davits had a lifeboat uselessly chained in place. Why were the lifeboats locked up? The narrator explained, taking its cue from the Hotel Metropole at '87 WorldCon, the SS Norway had issued everyone a letter at check-in, something about "not compatible..." and "...please leave them for the next guests."

Astern of the galley the submersible's camera's located mounds of tiny, ghostly white seashells -- signs that a bonanza of marine life had briefly flourished there. The biologists speculated the edible parts of the ship's structure, like oaken panels and flooring, had come to rest there and been devoured by the worms and tiny parasites. Consulting the convention facilities plan left behind in the company files, scientists realized this had been the dealer's room, where 200 tables full of sf collectibles had been set up. A return trip was made in the submersible, with its tool arm attached. Rummaging in the

Tenth Anniversary File 770

mounds carefully to avoid clouding the water, the claw found only one kind of inventory had survived the ravages of the sea, and these were thousands of magazine-sized glassine pouches. The crew was excited, thinking they might be valuable fanzines. But when they got them to the surface and opened the plastic bags all that was inside were funny animal comic books -- which they disgustedly threw overboard.

In the Men's Room they found Wilson Tucker perfectly pickled, as always.

In the vicinity of the Con Operations staff room they found a brace of rubber chickens, a barnacle-encrusted bow tie, 240 cases of Classic Coke and one 6-pack of Pepsi. There was also an unexplained assortment of latex devices.

In a stateroom behind the Con Operations suite the remote-guided camera discovered the WorldCon treasurer's headquarters, and the safe, still locked shut and untouched since that grim day in 1988. The submersible grappled the safe with cables, dragged it free of the wreck, and floated it alongside the salvage ship where a team of divers and underwater cameramen assured that it was not tampered with until the moment it landed on deck in full view of a world audience.

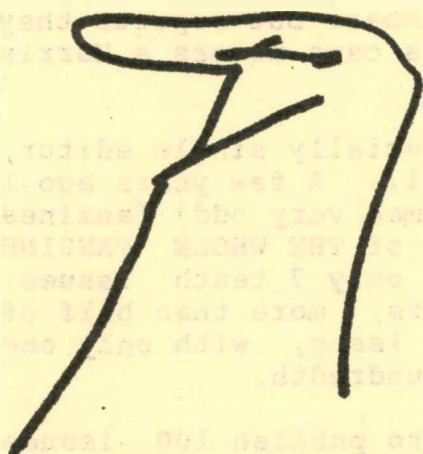
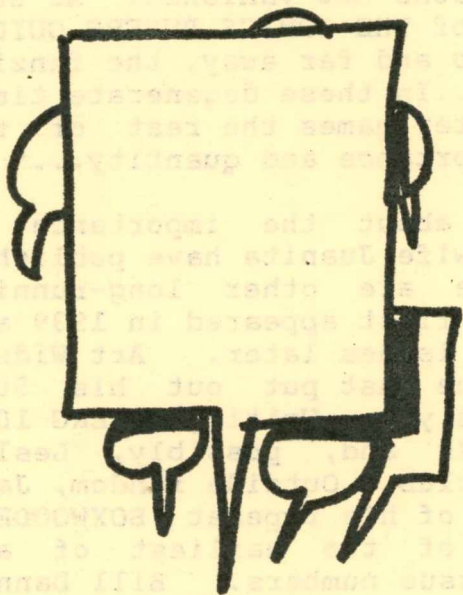
Several fannish consultants to the operation stood by looking scruffy and wistful. When the French safecracker and the Greek metallurgist took too long quarreling about the strength of the nitro charge necessary to take off the door without pulverizing the contents, one of the fans stepped forward. The shaggy-haired, 300-pound SCA-member with a broadaxe named 'Butterfly' declared, "Tjukka fix!" and took off the door with a swing whose ancestry must have included both a diamond-cutter and Willie Mays.

Ah, the treasures that were inside! A ship-to-shore 976-directory. The blooper reel from ST:TNG. Seventeen hundred unpublished manuscript pages representing a holiday weekend's writing for Piers Anthony. -- And there was the key to the lifeboats... Not to mention several rolls of nickels for the pay toilets (thereby exploding one consultant's theory how the ship had sunk when everyone aboard flushed the pay toilets at the same moment.) Last of all came a soggy pair of Dave Hartwell's plaid pants which had been set aside for auction because he wasn't wearing them.

All told, the insurance company valued the contents of the safe at \$6.49. After its ship made port, the salvage company declared bankruptcy. The producers were fired when the tv special finished fifth in the ratings behind The New Adventures of Beans Baxter. But Tjukka smiled happily as he walked barefoot down the gangway wearing his new pair of plaid trousers.

ERIC  
MAYER

CARRY ON  
JEEVES  
AND  
DANNER



~~SECRET~~ THOUGHTS

Eric Mayer's contribution to File 770's Tenth Anniversary is his appreciation of two fanzines that last year celebrated even more impressive anniversaries. Bill Danner's STEFANTASY and Terry Jeeves' ERG both published their 100th issues in 1987.

The newest issue of ERG was prepared by Terry Jeeves on his personal microcomputer. In contrast, Bill Danner's most recent STEFANTASY was printed from handset type on a press that left the factory in 1895. Despite their disparate printing processes, ERG and STEFANTASY have something in common. In 1987 they both turned 100.

STEFANTASY 100 appeared in June, ERG 100 on October 1st, Terry's 65th birthday -- just as Terry predicted over a year ago. "ERG 97 is shaping up," he wrote me. "Actually I feel pretty chaffed with myself that two months on dry dock and three operations only made one issue a few weeks late." You don't find many fans with that sort of dedication to publishing anymore.

Fandom isn't likely to see another year in which two fanzine reach the century mark. The occurrence has its roots in an era

that has passed, was born out of conditions now vanished. As Buck Coulson recently explained to readers of THE COMICS BUYERS GUIDE, "Once upon a time, in a fandom long ago and far away, the fanzine was the backbone of social interaction...In these degenerate times of conventions every weekend and computer games the rest of the time fanzines have declined in both importance and quantity..."

Buck is well qualified to speak about the importance of fanzines in Fandom past. He and his wife Juanita have published 258 issues of YANDRO, so far. There are other long-running fanzines, too. Harry Warner's HORIZONS first appeared in 1939 and is still running in FAPA more than 190 issues later. Art Widner has published YHOS for even longer (he just put out his 50th annish) albeit averaging only an issue a year. Writing in ERG 100, Mike Ashley adds Art Rapp's SPACEWARP and, possibly, Leslie Croutch's oft-renamed LIGHT to the 100 club. Outside fandom, Jake Warner has produced 213 monthly issues of his typeset BOXWOODER. And Arthur Harris, from Wales, one of the earliest of all "mundane" amateurs reached staggering issue numbers. Bill Danner recalls exchanging for Arthur's small (3 x 5) INTERESTING TIMES in the 1950s. He doesn't remember the issue numbers but reports they were high. They must have been -- Ned Brooks came across a Harris zine from 1934 numbered 603!

But for the most part, fanzines -- especially single editor, general circulation fanzines -- are ephemeral. A few years ago I went through the listing of 500-odd (sometimes very odd) fanzines Brian Earl Brown reviewed in the 1979 issues of THE WHOLE FANZINE CATALOG. I counted 75 first issues, but only 7 tenth issues. Judging from the distribution of issue numbers, more than half of all fanzines fold before they reach a fourth issue, with only one in ten reaching a tenth issue, let alone a hundredth.

It might take a special sort of person to publish 100 issues of a fanzine, but if Bill and Terry are any indication, the special sort of person it takes is not a full-time fan. For both fandom has been a hobby, among other hobbies, rather than a way of life.

Bill Danner was, as he puts it, "inoculated with printer's ink" 22 years before discovering fandom. In 1943 he took a printing course in high school, bought a 3 x 5 inch Kelsey handpress, and except for one 6-month period has possessed some sort of printing equipment ever since. "Sixty-four years at the type case -- that's not too many," says Bill.

Bill's interest in model railroading also predates his involvement with fandom. He's president of The Rockland and Western which, until a full-scale flood in 1982 washed away the tacks of the Oil City Assn. of Model Railroaders, boasted 10 steam locomotives, 26 truss rod freight cars, over 50 modern cars and 5 passenger cars, many built from scratch. (Some parts for model trains are cast from the same metal as is type.) Most have been rebuilt and I'm proud to say that I possess railroad pass #378. It's only good "till the end of civilization", but I'm not complaining.

Bill, who lives in Western Pennsylvania, worked in the metallurgical department of J&L's Aliquippa and later Pittsburgh steel works. A few weeks after his hiring in 1938 he was shifted from lab assistant to instrument maintenance because of his mention on his job application that he was a model railroader. Because he also mentioned his interest in photography he was given photographic and photomicrographic work, with a then-state-of-the-art Zeiss Neophat, of prepared specimens of steel. Unfortunately for Bill's career, fandom was still 7 years in his future, although it's doubtful that J&L had a spaceship department.

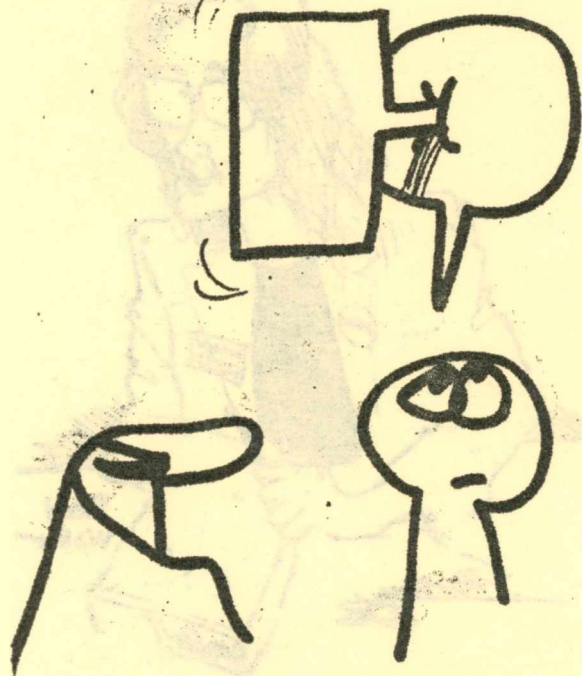
Coincidentally, Terry Jeeves shares Bill's interests in modelling and photography, although Terry's photographic work has tended toward animation ( he has twice won the Delta film award for animated sf films) and the models he builds are generally powered airplanes rather than trains. The latter may be explained by the fact that from 1941-1946 he served in the RAF. Terry, who lives in Sheffield, England, taught school from 1948-1980, specializing in math and art, thus proving that the ability to draw is not, as I'd always supposed, in direct inverse proportion to one's ability to count. (Or do I mean inverse direct proportion?) For 20 years he was a head of a Remedial Department.

In addition, Terry has sold hundreds of cartoons. We think of his "soggies" as archetypal fanzine characters, but one mundane magazine has been running them for 26 years. Terry has sold numerous paintings over the years, as well as short stories -- one to Pan -- and short articles on topics like computing and cine animation.

Neither Terry nor Bill has confined himself to a single fanzine. Terry co-edited, with Eric Bentcliffe, 17 issues of TRIODE and the first 4 issues of BSFA's VECTOR. With Bentcliffe and Jones he co-edited CON-SCIENCE (a one-shot). He's also published DUPLICATING NOTES, CHECKLIST OF ASTOUNDING 1, 2 and 3, ERG IN THE USE (1980 and 1982), and DOWN MEMORY BANK LANE, not to mention various taped versions of ERG.

For his part, Bill Danner published LARK, a mimeographed mailing comment zine for FAPA from 1951 to 1961 and since 1955 he's produced pages for Bill Haywood's IT'S A SMALL WORLD, an annual booklet featuring the work of amateur printers all over the





**REPORTER**

world. In fact Bill heads the list of contributors, having missed only 4 times in over 30 years.

Although a science fiction reader since he discovered Mark Twain's *A CONNECTICUT YANKEE IN KING ARTHUR'S COURT* at age 10, Bill Danner didn't become involved in sf fandom until 1945 when, at the suggestion of Virginia Kidd, he joined the Vanguard Amateur Press Association, founded that year as a rival to FAPA. In July he produced *A DANGEROUS THING*, 4 1/4 x 5 1/2, the cover printed on the Kelsey press, the inside done on a postcard mimeo. Among the recipients were Robert A. W. Lowndes and Harry Warner, the only two readers to have received every issue. A change to an all-type format and the larger press Bill still uses today soon followed, along with a change of name -- to *STEFANTASY*. "The VAPA members were supposed to be interested in science fiction and fantasy and I thought a name combining those two terms would be more fitting."

When VAPA died in 1950 *STEFANTASY* didn't. For two or three years Bill belonged to the National APA, although only one issue of *STEFANTASY* appeared in its bundles. Then he joined FAPA for more than a decade. Today he sends *STEFANTASY* to other amateur publishers with whom he exchanges, person friends, and correspondents. He's been publishing for so long that he has file cards for 40 former readers in the 'DEAD' section.

Among the highlights of *STEFANTASY*'s long run, he recalls the February 1958 issue featuring a spectacular multi-colored cover by the late Eric (Spider) Webb of Manchester, done by a trick process on Webb's own press and sent to Bill, in fine fannish fashion with no warning at all.

During 42 years of publication, *STEFANTASY* has never been in any danger of folding, although several times issues were delayed because of Bill's interests in other things, such as he 1930 Nash Twin-Ignition Six roadster he bought in 1951 and restored.

*STEFANTASY* 100 features the usual impeccable reproduction, raised to an artform, the crisp handset type interspersed with

decorative cuts of trains, cars, ships, and other objects, some no taller than a line of type, all the ancestors of today's popular rubber stamps. Bill has reprinted some items from SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN circa 1880 and, among other things, there is an article by Lowndes and an interview with Harry Warner.

Bill himself contributes an essay on his earliest memories -- ranging all the way back to 1910 -- and the lettercolumn is filled not only with names recognizable as fans but with the names of people who either were never fans or have forgotten they ever were. The covers are graced by ATom's specially designed pressmark for Bill's Skreugnbaul Press.

Terry Jeeves discovered fandom before Bill did. He started reading and collecting science fiction when he was 10 and got into fandom in 1938 when an ad in TALES OF WONDER led him to Wally Gillings' fanzine SCIENTIFUNCTION. ERG #1 didn't appear until April 1959 (as duly recorded in the VISUAL ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SF) but has appeared regularly, at least twice a year.

Terry chose the name ERG for two reasons. Since he then did all the art by handcutting the stencils he could do "Erg" all in straight lines using an alphabet he'd designed and it was relatively easy to repeat such a short name each issue. He's stuck with the name over the years because, as he explains, "I publish ERG the way I like it...other faneds keep changing names...but heck, it's the same zine most of the time."

The first issue of ERG went to, among others, Vincent Clarke, Archie Mercer, Bobbie Wilde and Ken Bulmer. A copy also went to the British Museum which, along with Terry, owns the only complete run. (The Sheffield Library didn't subscribe until later.) In the beginning, ERG, like STEFANTASY, was an apazine, part of the Off Trail Magazine Publishers Association (OMPA). During one short period Terry published three editions of ERG -- the standard edition, and separate editions for both FAPA and an Australian apa, Applesauce. But today ERG is sent only to those Terry wants to send it to and the name of the game is, he says, "response."

Along the way Terry has employed a staggering number of repro techniques, including brush stencil, hand-cut stencil, electrostencil, color mimeo work, spirit duplicator, lino blocks, photolith and screen printing. He's published work by pros like Tucker, Bloch, Tubb, Buffery and DeCamp and several of his own ERG pieces -- "Vengeance", "Moronic Menace", and "Upon Reflection" have found professional markets. Highlights Terry recalls are: issue 5, a spoof women's issue, "ERG incorporating WENCH"; issue 9, the all spacecraft issue, and the 21st annish.

ERG's run to 100 was threatened only once, during the period from 1962-1965 when Terry was virtually crippled by asthma. At times someone had to crank the duper for him, but he always found someone who'd do it.

ERG 100 was printed on Terry's personal computer. For the sake of tradition he had planned holding off computerization until

issue 101, but not surprisingly progress won out with issue 98. The current issue boasts some special features -- a four color wraparound silkscreened cover, a reminiscence by long time colleague Eric Bentcliffe and Mike Ashley's search for other 100 issue fanzines. But Terry elected to avoid a mammoth, celebratory issue which might have threatened his regular publishing schedule so the issue mostly contains the usually potpourri -- book and fanzine reviews, letters, the "Ergitorial." In addition to providing the artwork (26 drawings in and the cover!) Terry contributes an article on a set of cigarette cards issued in 1936 which depicted a "World of Tomorrow" filled with such wonders as railplanes, mid-Atlantic airplane refueling platforms and anti-gas rays.

Also included is the second installment of Terry's mundane autobiography (the sequel to his just-concluded autobiography in science fiction, DOWN MEMORY BANK LANE). "Carry On Jeeves" recounts his World War II experiences. With its mixture of personal nattering and science fictional material, ERG has always struck me as the prototypical fanzine -- the fanzine you could show a visitor from Mars in order to define the term.

What sort of general circulation fanzine reaches 100? ERG and STEFANTASY offer some clues. Both have remained around 24 pages in length, Bill and Terry resisting the fatal urge toward gigantism. Both have adhered to regular schedules. Both are largely editor generated. Perhaps most importantly, both ERG and STEFANTASY seem to me to be more reflections of their editors than of fandom. Neither has ever sought to be a focal point or to fill some fannish need or niche. STEFANTASY, born largely of Bill's devotion to type, is published "for the hell of it" as each cover proclaims. And Terry has pointed eschewed any official policies for ERG, choosing instead to print "Whatever takes my fancy and changing interests" which have embraced tape recording, model building, animation, duplicating, philately, bookbinding and computers.

The lack of trufannish orientation isn't surprising for Terry and Bill have never been full-time fans. They have maintained numerous interests outside fandom, have taken pride in their careers and non-fannish accomplishments. They have fitted fandom into their lives rather fitting their lives into fandom.

Of course, both love producing fanzines -- even down to the nuts and bolts of production which irritate many. Terry, having covered all the old means of repro in his DUPLICATING NOTES, is looking forward to developing new skills with computer repro. And Bill has "printer's ink in the blood."

Neither has been particularly honored by fandom. First Fandom aided Terry's 1980 trip to the Boston Worldcon. But there have been no TAFF trips, or Hugo nominations or Guest of Honor spots. As for Bill and STEFANTASY, he recalls the magazine winning some FAPA polls and he was voted best humorist several times in VAPA. Likely, the lack of recognition has helped rather than hindered the longevity of the fanzines. Still, fandom is so

quick to honor brief outbursts of activity, it is a shame it doesn't see fit to recognize long-term achievement as well.

And the achievements of Terry and Bill are long-term indeed. ERG and STEFANTASY are, in a sense, dinosaurs -- remnants from that fandom long ago and far away when fanzines ruled. ERG plied the mails with the likes of SPACETIMES, I, Banister's NECROMANTICON, Willis' HYPHEN and Lindsey's SCOTTISHE. STEFANTASY arrived in mailboxes along with Lowndes' AGENBITE OF INWIT, Blish's TUMBRILS, Norman Stanley's FANTODS and Warner's HORIZONS.

Did either imagine they'd publish 100 issues? "No," says Terry, and Bill adds, "If anyone had suggested it I'd have said he had rocks in his head."



# MILT STEVENS' SURVIVALIST BUREAUCRATS STRIKE BACK!

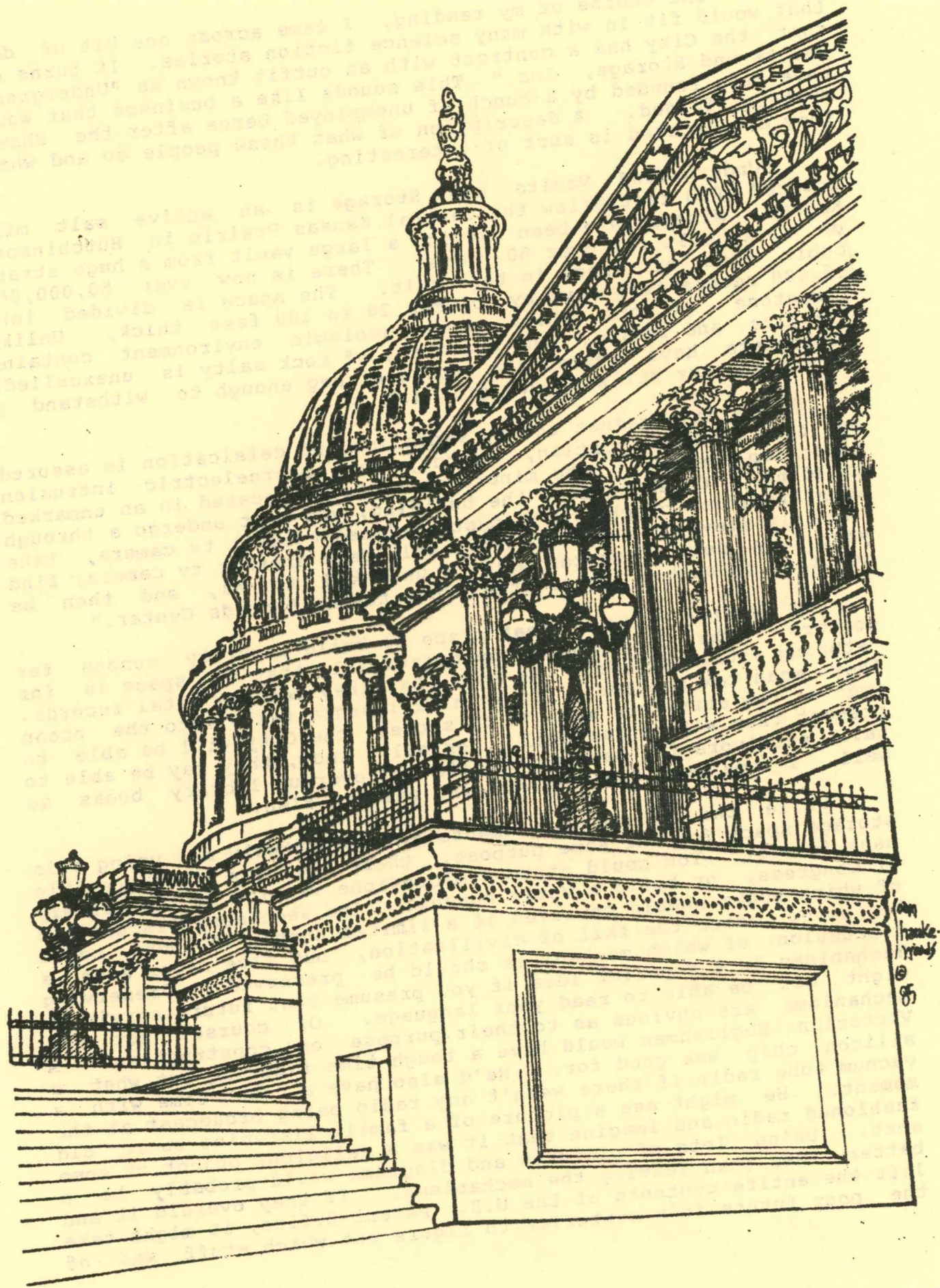
One of Milt Stevens' richest and oft-mined vein of fanwriting ideas has been his adventures in the seldom-civil service. Milt returns to that theme in the following article, which assures us that come Armageddon, residents of Los Angeles will still be guaranteed all the government they paid for, even if it does glow in the dark.

"Bernadette Bosky reads old psychiatric journals and Mike Glycer reads fanzines. In some ways they seem equally as weird. In the same category (of doing weird things) we find Milt Stevens -- he reads old pulps." So says Marty Cantor in HOLIER THAN THOU #25. I'm sort of glad I didn't send Marty my in-depth analysis of the complete works of Vargo Statten. Marty just has an underdeveloped sense of weird.

Presuming that reading old pulps is a little bit weird, it still doesn't compare with the stuff I have to read at work. Most of you know about the arson, rape and abnormal acts with chickens that I normally deal with. That stuff gets to be pretty routine after awhile. However, recently I've been studying for a civil service promotional exam. THIS involves pondering over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore. Some of this material is Really Weird.

Aside from knowing the air speed of a laden swallow, the "compleat" bureaucrat in Los Angeles has to know about all sorts of things. He has to know what the Board of Referred Powers really does. He has to know who owns the water rights to the Los Angeles River (if there was any water in the Los Angeles River). He also has to know about the process for granting streetcar franchises. There haven't been streetcars in Los Angeles for thirty years, but you never know when the issue may come up again.

The budgetary process is a perennial favorite in the bureaucracy business. While it is logically impossible to get something out of nothing, the budgetary process makes a valiant effort in that direction. As is theoretical physics, the first thing you must learn is to completely disregard common sense. After that, all it takes is a little mathematical jiggy-pokery to create something that absolutely nobody will ever understand.



In the course of my reading, I came across one bit of data that would fit in with many science fiction stories. It turns out that the City has a contract with an outfit known as "Underground Vaults and Storage, Inc." This sounds like a business that would have been founded by a bunch of unemployed Deros after the Shaver Mystery folded. A description of what these people do and where they are located is sort of interesting.

"Underground Vaults and Storage is an active salt mine located 650 feet below the Central Kansas Prairie in Hutchinson, Kansas. Miners have been carving a large vault from a huge strata of rock salt for over 50 years. There is now over 50,000,000 cubic feet of space in the vault. The space is divided into 15,000 square foot bays by columns 20 to 100 feet thick. Unlike limestone or ore mines whose geologic environment contains fissures and faults, the stability of rock salty is unexcelled. Geologists have termed the vaults strong enough to withstand a direct nuclear strike above ground."

"Security against theft, vandalism and defalcation is assured by the vault's location, guards, and photoelectric intrusion detection systems. The mine's entrance is located in an unmarked building. Once you find the building, you must undergo a thorough identification check, walk past a closed-circuit tv camera, take the only elevator down 650 feet, walk past another tv camera, find your way down a quarter mile of unmarked tunnel, and then be admitted through a locked steel door to the Records Center."

It sounds like a great place to build security condos for gophers. The City states euphemistically that the space is for "storing vital records." We know what they mean by vital records. They mean tax records. So when California falls into the ocean and a few survivors make it to shore, the City will be able to present them with a tax bill. For all I know, they may be able to nail survivors for parking tickets and overdue library books as well. I hope they don't mind being paid in fish.

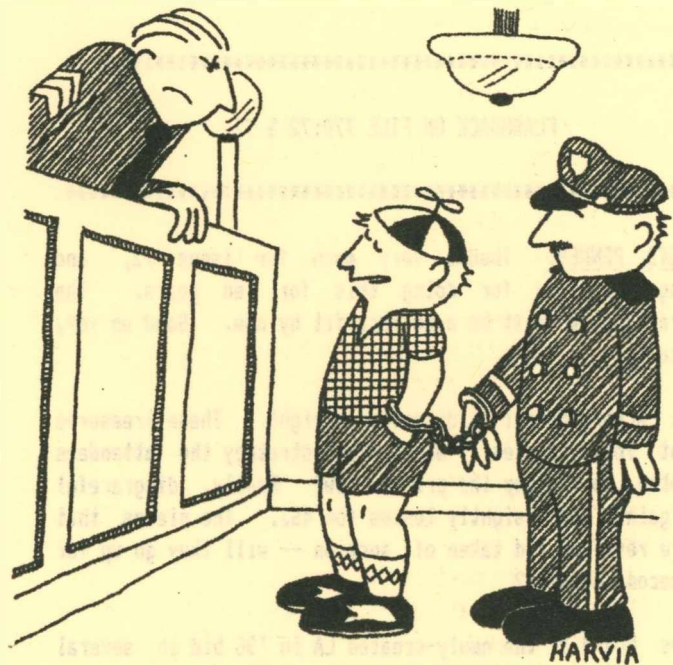
While the various governments are undoubtedly all using this storage space for the same purpose, there are many other possible uses for it. You could store a microfiche version of the Library of Congress, or build a Motie museum. I've seen many discussions of which books should be saved if a limited number of books could be saved after the fall of civilization, but I've never seen a discussion of which mechanisms should be preserved. Preserving mechanisms is a superior idea if you presume that future survivors might not be able to read your language. Of course, not all mechanisms are obvious as to their purpose or construction. A Victorian Englishman would have a tough time figuring out what a silicon chip was good for. He'd also have a tough time with a vacuum tube radio if there wasn't any radio being broadcast at the moment. He might see a picture of a family listening to an old fashioned radio and imagine that it was a religious object of some sort. Using lots of pictures and diagrams would probably be a better idea than leaving the mechanisms. If they overdid it and left the entire contents of the U.S. Patent Office, it might take the poor future folk centuries to figure out which stuff was of

any value.

There are also some possible free enterprise uses for all this storage space. It wouldn't be much good as a tomb, because there are lots of simpler and more effective ways of constructing tombs. It would be a great place to store lots of old comic books until they reached absolutely outrageous prices. That sounds like something they might already be doing. Judging by the huckster rooms, they're probably doing it with SF magazines as well. All this storage space could also be a great opportunity for someone with a limited mania. For instance, somebody who not only wanted to collect all the beer bottles in the world, but preserve them forever. That sort of thing is really going to confuse the hell out of future archeologists.

"Underground Vaults and Storage" isn't the city's only effort to survive a total disaster. The City has a large command center four floors below the civic center. All the police and fire dispatching is already done from that center. I've heard there is a private executive elevator from the Mayor's Office to get down to the command center in case of a nuclear strike. It's funny how politicians always figure that politicians are the most vital people in the world. There is one thing that I've always wondered about that command center. You survive a nuclear strike. So far, so good. Now you're buried alive under a zillion billion tons of rubble. This doesn't sound like a such a great idea to me.

It's nice to know that our governments are planning to survive even if we don't. Which leads me to wonder whatever happened to all those backyard bomb shelters that were built back in the Fifties.



I've been arrested before,  
but only in my mental growth.

# FAN MAIL

## FLASHBACK ON FILE 770:72 & 71

LLOYD PENNEY: Thanks very much for issue 72, and congratulations for doing this for ten years. The straitjacket must be a perfect fit by now. Good on yer, mate.

Re: Ackerauction: A disaster is right. These treasures went for pittances. Was there a strategy the attendees cooked up to keep the prices low? Really, disgraceful bargains and unsightly losses for 4SJ. The pieces that were reserved and taken off auction -- will they go up for a second auction?

I've heard of the newly-created LA in '96 bid in several places. Once you get an address, would you run it? Scott Dennis needs it, if nothing else. I'll write to the Phoenix people, and ask for more information. While San Francisco sounds great, Phoenix sounds warmer...

((There is a resolution for SCIFI to conduct an LA in '96 bid, which will not materialize in the form of a campaign until sometime after this year's Business Meeting when the disposition of several proposed zone and rotation reforms makes clear exactly which year after 1993 will be the first opening for an LA bid.))

ELIZABETH ANN OSBORNE: I was very sad to hear the story of Forrest Ackerman's auction. It is a shame that the man responsible for saving and caring for so much material would have to let it go at such prices that he could barely break even on it. The world of collection for profit is a tricky one and more than one person has gotten burned at an auction.

((Forry was disappointed at the prices, but I didn't receive the impression that he lost money in the sense you mean, selling things for less than they cost him.))

ALLAN D. BURROWS: The picture on page 2 [F770:71] was a welcome novelty. Could you tell me, please, what that oversized-toothpick-shape is that Joseph Nicholas is holding? If it is an Astral Pole, then I am happy never to have been anywhere near one while in Britain and I shall certainly not take part in the Astral League [sic]

initiation test in the future. I was fortunate to have made the acquaintance of a few British fans at Conspiracy but, I fear, none of these people, and almost nobody of any particular notoriety. Odd, isn't it, what fame does to people?

((The secret to finding the famous people is to follow Scott Dennis to his party suite -- I know that worked for me!))

HARRY WARNER, JR. There was just one passing reference to a minor matter in File 770 that made me wish desperately I'd have gone out of character and attended [Conspiracy]. I might have been able to rectify my one fall from grace as a trufan. I've always been a packrat of the most extreme degree in fandom, saving virtually everything (except the staples that hold together the jiffybags in which FAPA mailings come; Jack Speer saves them, contending they are part of the mailing). But a quarter century ago I had a fit of worry over the way things were piling up in the house. I decided one evening I'd have to start being selective in preserving fanac, and I actually and truly did throw out two or three issues of Ken Slater's Operation Fantast catalog, telling myself it was mostly advertisements with a little news and commentary scattered here and there. Of course I was appalled at such heresy by the next evening but the garbage truck had already done its thing. I've never repeated such an awful transgression. You told how some Operation Fantast relics were being distributed in Brighton and I might conceivably have replaced the immolated publications and thus considered my fannish soul saved thanks to this second chance.

Another assumption I'd been making was ruined by your report on the Masquerade. I'd thought this was just about the only amateur aspect surviving in worldcons, but I assume the thousand pounds of prizes from New Era went in part at least to the winners in various categories. Costuming doesn't interest me at all but I'd given the masquerade participants in the past a lot of credit for doing something which could bring them nothing but egoboo. I was surprised to come across the name of Sylvia Starshine in the list of winners; I assume it's the same young lady who visited me years ago while living in York, PA, of whom I'd heard absolutely nothing for a long time.

G. M. Carr, the stormy petrel of fandom in the 1950s and 1960s, was hospitalized [in January] for "an angiogram or

something, to be followed, if necessary, by either a 'balloon' or a bypass" operation. I haven't heard anything more recent about her condition. To the best of my knowledge, G. M. has been the oldest person currently active in fanzine fandom. At the age of 80, she had 45 pages in the January SAPS mailing, mostly about her travels last year in the Holy Land. (She is still in Seattle.)

I was sorry to learn about Forry's disappointment over receipts from the auction. However, I thought the prices paid were about as good as could be expected for an auction attended primarily by dealers, in view of dealers' fondness for astronomical markups when they sell. The large quantity of items sold must also have had an effect on the bidding. Science fiction collectibles aren't yet as much in demand as the top rarities in the art world or philately. Maybe they will reach astronomical prices if major museums and the richest men in the Middle East ever become competitive for old fanzines and cover art originals, but not yet.

I hope you manage a longer obituary for Ossie Train (that's the way I always remember him spelling his nickname) in a future issue. He may not have been too well known to the modern generation of fans. But he was also one of the top collectors of H. Rider Haggard materials and I believe he had been quite active in recent years in specialized publishing, in addition to his earlier achievements as a fan in the Philadelphia area. He bobs up on twelve different pages of The Immortal Storm, one good indication of his importance in fandom's earliest years.

On the other hand, I'm thankful you went into enough detail to tell us that it was an expensive hotel in which Mike Glicksohn fell and broke his ankle. I probably wouldn't have suspected Mike of patronizing a mediocre hotel's dances, but it's still good to be reassured on that point.

I think I'm going to find it necessary to write a letter of correction myself. I'm pretty sure I listed Ross Pavlac among recently deceased fans for the benefit of a fanzine editor who was trying to track down former readers. I must have confused him with someone else, since he certainly sounds sufficiently alive in his contribution to this issue.

**JOSEPH NICHOLAS:** Speaking of Corflu, I note that I -- and Judith -- will be on a panel entitled "Politics in Fanzines: Left, Right or Wrong?", at which the subject of Fuck the Tories will inevitably be mentioned -- by the audience if not ourselves (although I shall try to get in first). This means that I shouldn't say too much in response to your note about the postcard in File 770 71,

but I can't resist pointing out that if Fuck the Tories did adopt a similar approach to the postcard it would soon cease to resemble a fanzine at all, and come to look more like a political tract. Allegations that it's already a political tract I vigorously refute: we're quite clear about what we're doing and the way we want to do it, but (as remarked upon by both Judith and I in the fourth issue) other people will insist on erecting a frame around what we said and trying to stretch or compress our remarks to fit a preconceived mold. After all, we're on the political left. Therefore (runs the reasoning) everything we say must be left in its orientation. And if it isn't then it ought to be. And so, in turn, it must be. This just proves things...

((Joseph adds that a year has passed since the fourth issue, and time to do the planned fifth issue has never been available, nor will be in the foreseeable future. "This means, for all practicable purposes, that the fanzine should now be considered as extinct."))

#### THE LIGHT OF OTHER DAYS

**ANDREW PORTER:** You missed the point of Ted White's letter. Or, rather, you missed the unstated fact. That is, the fanzine/semi-prozine with the largest readership wins the Hugo. Readership is determined through several factors. The simplest one is taking the circulation and multiplying it by the frequency. Thus a fanzine with a circulation of 200 that comes out six times a year ( $200 \times 6 = 1200$ ) is seen more often and impresses itself more on the readers than one with, say, a circulation of 250 that comes out quarterly ( $250 \times 4 = 1,000$ ).

Another factor is pass-along circulation: how many people actually see the issue. A copy of File 770 or SFC that goes to NESFA is seen by many people, and the circulation or readership is thus larger.

So, a newzine which is published every month or so, which is passed among readers, will also be a Hugo winner. I'm not even going to mention the fact that a major news item -- the death of an author, for example -- is more memorable than a really good article by Doc Lowndes, for instance.

"Hey, I just read in File 770 that Dean Blattstein died!" says Joe Phann.

"Really? I want to read that after you're done with it," replied Wilhelm Hackfan.

Et cetera.

Another unfortunate fact is that massive circulation wins every time. Which is better, Whimsey or Locus? Which is

better, Locus or F&SF? In competing with each other, circulation is the telling factor.

Finally I note your mention of the "Locus/SFR/SFC" era of the early '80s." There was no such era. SFC never won a Hugo during that time, so should be noted, if at all, as another nominee outvoted by Locus' massive circulation. Anyway, Hugo awards are nice, but circulation is nicer. A bigger circulation means more readers, more advertising, etc. more money with which to pay terrorists to wipe out Ebrown---

((Let's not confuse my reluctance to deliver a snappy salute to Ted's pronouncement with 'missing the point'. Ted was airing his faithfully-held opinions about the fanzine Hugo, explicitly claiming they were supported by fanzine circulation statistics, all without actually possessing any of the facts that might confirm or deny his views.

((Turning to your LoC, the statistical trends that are applicable to mass market magazines are observably false with respect to fanzines. There are many fanzines that would score highly on your multiplication table and by your reasoning should make the final ballot, yet receive no support at Hugo time. Of course, pass-along readership obviously exists: many clubzine editors list the zines they receive in trade and announce they are available for members to borrow and read. You assume only certain ones are actually borrowed -- where is your evidence? Once more opinion masquerades as fact.))

ROBERT LICHTMAN: As a footnote to the, uh, discussion between you and Ted White in the letter column, I wish to disclose that Trap Door's circulation for most of its existence has been in the 230-250 range. The peak was the first issue which went to 285 people, and the smallest run was the 4th issue, going out to around 220. I'm pretty sure this is the smallest circulation of last season's Hugo nominees. The closest is probably Texas SF Inquirer, which I've heard goes to around 300. I appreciated Ted's brief history of the fanzine Hugo nominees and winners over the years and -- as you might suspect -- my sympathies lie with him in this matter.

HARRY WARNER, JR: If I remember correctly the voting statistics on fanzine Hugos at recent Worldcons, it would still be possible for a fanzine with small circulation to win. I don't believe the number of voters is so large that near-unanimity by devotees of a small-circulation fanzine would fail to get it a Hugo. I can imagine the kind of loyalty that Title used to inspire among its readers resulting in an all-out successful effort to vote it a Hugo over much more widely distributed nominees. But I can't think of any current fanzine that inspires as much love and loyalty among its readers as Title did, unless we

count as a special case the new issue of Hyphen. Obviously, if nobody takes the time to campaign for a Hugo for this or that fanzine, the fanzines with the larger circulation will stand a better chance of getting nominated and then voted the Hugo.

DAVE CLARK: Just a note on Ted White's letter on the New Age/Bridge Hugo Awards party at Brighton, where he says that the "photo opportunity" was staged "exclusively using their photographers." I wouldn't call that accurate, since Jane Jewell and I comprised somewhere between 33% to 50% of the photographers. (I don't remember the number of cameras, but I do remember there were not that many, and it was real easy to get position for the shot.)

I imagine that anyone with a press badge could have gotten into that party; I say this because that's the only way I got in, since I didn't have an invitation.

MAIA COWAN: I've just finished writing a letter to Susan and Jim Satterfield, Hugo administrators for NOLACON II, asking them to print the addresses of Best Fanzine nominees on the Hugo ballot. If they do, voters can request copies of any fanzines they haven't already seen, and so vote more knowledgeably. I doubt this will eliminate much of the controversy surrounding the Best Fanzine Hugo, but it's a step in the right direction.

Speaking of controversy, I see as Ted White's major problem is that other people do their fanzines differently than he does. Judging from his fanzines that I've read, he publishes for a small, select audience with narrow, uniform interests. Their main purpose seems to be showing how clever they are. (In other contexts, this might be called "lit'ry" or "arty".) The notable aspect of the writing is style, not content.

Other people publish for a broad audience, with a wide variety of interests. The content of such fanzines is more important than the writing style. Understandably, the articles in these other fanzines are very different from what Ted would choose to publish. The standards for judging quality, rather than the actual quality, are also very different.

Consistently, Hugo voters choose these broad-based fanzines over the narrow-interest fanzines Ted praises. Ted blames the results on sheer force of numbers, but he doesn't take that argument far enough. Why do File 770 and Lan's Lantern have a large circulation? Because the editors have nothing better to do with their money, so they shamelessly force their publication on defenseless postal patrons? Or because more people want to read them? I humbly suggest there is nothing at all shameful or shady about large-circulation fanzines winning Hugos. The editors aren't just sending out hundreds or thousands of copies at random,

to people who don't want them. The votes indicate that people appreciate the issues they receive.

Obviously there are fanzines out there that deserve to have large circulations but are limited by the editors' incomes. It is unfair that these fanzines have to compete against fanzines whose editors can scrape together more money for postage (or get away with charging for subscriptions, eh?) But finances are not the only reason a fanzine's mailing list is small. An editor may choose to keep the copy count down to limit the work involved or because the fanzine is aimed at a limited audience. Or, the fanzine may simply not be good enough to attract that many readers. Every week requests for Lan's Lantern come by phone or mail. Three in the last week were from Brazil, Yugoslavia, and the Soviet Union. Lan doesn't solicit these "subscriptions": it's all word-of-mouth. The size of the letter column is a good indication that people really do want the issues they receive.

I suspect your circulation, too, is large because people ask for File 770, not because you send out piles of unsolicited copies.

I'll grant that popularity is no measure of quality. I'll also insist it's a better standard than an obvious contempt for anybody who doesn't agree with your own tastes, which is the only standard I can see Ted White applying in his diatribes.

((While I thank you for your kind words about F:770, the assertion that at 450 copies F:770 has a "large circulation" only renders the term meaningless.

((You are right to point to individual taste as the real issue. I have often asked myself, if we could distribute all the year's fanzines to Hugo voters would fans like Ted, who argue that low circulation places quality fanzines at a disadvantage, endorse the voters' choice if they still gave the Hugo to Lan's Lantern? I don't believe they would. So the argument is not over the fairest way to administer the Hugo, but whether a popular vote can really pick the "best" fanzine, a debate in which individual value systems, not facts about circulation, are of most importance. Even though Ted's "facts" were disproven, and his conclusions about the Hugo Award were shown to be illogical, you'll never see a letter from Ted here admitting he was wrong, because he can't separate those defective factual arguments from the personal values -- that popular awards do not choose the "best" -- which prompted him to make them. I respect many of Ted's fannish values, but he doesn't appear very tolerant of different opinions about what the "best" fanzine is.))

BEN SCHILLING: Regarding the Fanzine Hugo. Doesn't the WSFS Constitution state that the award is open to

generally available publications? Of the five nominees from last year, one refused/was unable to send me a copy, so I had to put it last on my ballot, because I didn't see that it qualified for the award.

ALLAN D. BURROWS: I note with interest the "Other Forms" Hugo which Nolacon II intends to present. What a wonderful idea! It will, of course, compete apples against oranges, but this in itself should prove interesting, if only as a study in which "other forms" are more or less popular. It should also create a fannishly confused menage; tarot decks competing with comic books and computer games? Where else but fandom! (Of course, the award itself might show up on the Hugu ballot....) If nothing else, it will have to be interesting.

A. JOSEPH ROSS, J.D. I was reading in File 770 about Worldcon Atlanta Inc.'s decision not to send money to the Frank Kelly Freas fund, and your point that an IRC 501(c)(3) entity cannot make such grants to an individual for his medical bills, and that many pros and fans may have such difficulties.

It occurred to me that perhaps fandom ought to establish a charitable fund for fans and pros in such serious trouble. As a public charity, it could be so organized as to avoid any tax problems. This would be a worthy project for some Worldcon committee to undertake.

P.L. CARUTHERS-MONTGOMERY: In light of your report on the Southern Fandom Confederation, it seems I need to take a few minutes from the task of preparing the SFC Bulletin for its early January deadline and send you some info and comments. ...I'm surprised by [Joyce Scrivner's] report that Cliff Amos took in any dues at all! I certainly wasn't informed of it when the reins changed hands. It's my impression that, whatever personal reasons he may have had for his nonaction, Cliff Amos did nothing with or for the SFC during his term of office. Actually, I find the fact he only accrued four members more said than 'terminally tickling'. (But then, I'm not familiar with Rick Katze, either, so perhaps I'm missing the joke.)

((P.L. sent along a copy of the SFC membership list showing 79 dues-paying members of SFC as of last December 23.))

The January issue of the SFC Bulletin may not look as good as I'd like it to (time has worked against me), but it'll be packed with info and mailed out to 3,000+ addresses all over the South -- and to others beyond our metaphorical boundaries. By May (The next publication date) I should have the database cleaned up; we will mass-mail possibly as many as 4,000 copies of the next issue.

BILL BOWERS: Ref. File 770:71 - I wasn't aware that it's illegal to send money out of [Brazil] -- but there is

another Brazilian fan (of some duration; he's been getting Outworlds since the early '70s): Alexander Yudensitsch, Caixa Postal 9613, 01057 - Sao Palo SP BRASIL. I'm not quite sure how they transfer funds, but when the dreaded 'X' goes on an envelope to Alexander, sooner or later I get a check from Buck Coulson to renew the sub. (I hate to be the one to correct a Glicksohn news item, but someone has to do it!)

MARTYN TAYLOR: [Re:Brighton] I hope you enjoyed your trip over here despite LA disappointments and Metropole/organizational cock ups (and the New Era influence). Marty Cantor put his finger on why the event remained pleasurable despite everything. Like you I found that conversation epitomized why we were all there -- old friends (I hadn't seen Ian and Nick in 5 years) and new passing the time in civilized conversation. What more could anyone want?

That said, I don't get on too well with milling throngs (or thronging mills for that matter). I can handle a purposeful crowd, but random movements throw me. (It's a form of claustrophobia, I think, and really just a minor irritant) and there was a lot of seemingly random movement in Brighton. I found that by Saturday night/Sunday morning I was remembering why I got into fandom in the first place. It was a consequence of writing, and remains a pleasant adjunct of writing. By that time I wanted to get back before the green screen and write. Most of my writing friends there who were experiencing their first Worldcon said they felt much as I did, and certainly the months since seem to have seen an explosion of productive activity in that direction. It will be interesting to see how fanzine production reacts -- at the moment it looks like British faneds have got dem ole post Seacon blues again, again.

#### THE SHAFT

EVE ACKERMAN: When I first encountered Fandom I was told "If you want to know who's getting the shaft in Fandom, read File 770" They were right.

LLOYD PENNEY: Re: Early Stocking Stuffer: And another fannish legend is born. Such fun. A whole new definition of the term "bulk mail." Then again, this is also called giving various fan groups the shaft.

ALLAN D. BURROWS: I enjoyed your recounting of the travels of the NESFA (?) Shaft. Never has a white elephant been so slender, nor a (hoy?) ping pong ball so heavy. I thank the Kinder Fates that the Shaft was never mistakenly, or

maliciously, addressed to a Toronto fan. While it might have proven an interesting exhibit at a couple of local conventions there is, as you know, no organization here to take responsibility for its disposition or freight costs. The poor Shaft might well have been stranded forever in in Toronto! (Indeed a horrendous fate!)

((I wanted The Shaft to be nominated for the Hugo in "Best Other Forms", myself.))

#### FINAL 1987 WESTERCON DISSECTION

ROBERT LICHTMAN: To answer Janice Murray to the best of my recollection, Debbie Notkin's appearance as moderator of the Terry Carr panel comes to mind as the only female on the fan-oriented programming. And in my mind a case could be made for that not being strictly fan programming, given Terry's professional reputation as well.

DAVID BRATMAN: It's a compliment to your reporting, but I'm still sorry to have to say that your portrayal of Westercon 40 is essentially accurate: particularly sorry since, as a member of the concom myself, I was really hoping that things would turn out better than this.

They key to explaining how this happened is contained in a sentence in your report that's clearly labeled as rumor: "Co-chairman Lisa Deutsch was allegedly relegated to a figurehead some months before the convention, leaving to Jean Moffett the perceived task of 'saving the convention'." (Incidentally, they're usually known around here as Lisa Deutsch Harrigan and Jean Adams-Moffett.) The statement is literally accurate: these things were alleged and perceived. But they didn't actually happen.

The allegation that Lisa was a figurehead was a side-effect of some wishful thinking on the part of a dissident faction on the con's board of directors, but their intent was not to remove her power, it was to fire her outright. They persisted in this effort right up to the time of the con itself -- long after there ceased to be enough time left to "save Westercon" (bearing in mind that several other committee members might have been fired, or would have resigned, if Lisa had been ousted) and even after the board had passed a formal resolution supporting the chief committee members, specifically to put a halt to this sort of thing! Corey Cole, the chief dissident, went round Westercon with the word "mutineer" printed on his nametag and that about sums up their attitude.

They did have a point, of course. Westercon's problems -- ones involving site liaison significantly excepted -- were

largely the responsibility of people supporting Lisa, or neutral. Some of them were woefully inexperienced for their jobs. But frequent interference, often hostile, from the mutineers did not help matters, nor did constant problems (shared all across the committee) interacting with the site liaison -- the same Jean Adams-Moffett who was perceived as "saving the convention". Frankly I doubt she did anything of the sort. Jean had her competencies -- so did other committee members -- but as I understand matters, site liaison problems contributed to other problems, including the confusion at registration.

I was quite amused by Mary Mason's efforts to get some credit out of this. Mary -- who is the only person I know who calls Bob Silverberg "Robert" -- was a sort of standing joke around the concon, the joke being "Who appointed her?" She was never a committee member, but was consulted on some matters in winter 1987. When her advice proved unhelpful, she was dropped as a consultant, but she gravitated towards the group who wanted to destroy Westercon in order to save it, and generally acted as if she belonged on the committee.

This three- or four-way tug-of-war, not any single person's or group's incompetence, is what ruined Westercon 40, and I attribute the problem to some large egos whose owners forgot who wore the chairman's hat. Lisa was a figurehead only insofar as she was willfully ignored. Things might still have gone badly, but they would definitely not have been disastrous if some people who didn't know any better than Lisa hadn't acted as if they did.

Fortunately for me, my department of the fanzine room and fanzine programming was mostly independent, and I was able to run it without much interference from anybody. My goal in having a fanzine room was to provide a place where the fanzine fans could hang out, far from the madding crowd, and it seems to have worked. A couple people were kind enough to call it the most successful part of the convention. Some people also mentioned the program book in that regard -- it was designed by Nancy Cedeno and John McLaughlin. (John, who was a late appointee to the board of directors, was the person who saved Westercon if anybody did, which he accomplished by being the voice of sanity, and staying out of all factions.)

**PATRICK NIELSEN HAYDEN:** Janice Murray wonders if there's "any truth to the rumor that all of the fanzine panels at Westercon there was nary a female panelist," and demands to know "what in the name of Robert Bork is fandom coming to?" As someone whose attendance at the 1987 Westercon was desultory in the extreme perhaps my expertise is suspect, but my impression was that fan program organizer David Bratman had his hands full simply ensuring that "fanzine panels" happened at all, faced as he was with

near-total apathy toward the idea from an SCA-dominated central committee and an unusual level of vagueness from some potential panelists as to whether they'd actually be at the con. In point of fact I know he asked Teresa to be on some programming, but she didn't feel up to it just then. Considering the sum total of "fanzine panels" ultimately wasn't much more than the three you, Mike, attended, it doesn't seem to me impossible that circumstances could accidentally conspire to make the participants all male; I don't think it's necessary to impute a deep-seated and revolting sexism to David Bratman (well-known macho redneck) to account for things as they worked out.

Sunday night after the con, Teresa and I were in the kitchen at the home of some East Bay friends, listening to a number of local fans -- all of them experienced conrunners -- as they seriously asked each other whether their standoffish attitude toward the 1987 Westercon committee had really been justified, despite the extent to which they'd all felt personally put off by that committee in its early stages. After considerable breast-beating on this topic it was decided that David Bratman deserved a hell of a lot more egoboo than he'd hitherto received for having actually stuck it out on that committee, weathering their byzantine politics and patent ignorance in order to provide an otherwise indifferent Westercon with some decent fan programming and a fan room. Accordingly, about half an hour later, David was nonplussed to find himself the recipient of loud and prolonged applause when he showed up at these fans' house and walked into the crowded room. Many of the fans bestowing this acclaim were people who consider themselves more or less radical feminists, but it never seemed to be an issue that, what with all the other hassles David had faced, the few fanzine panels which took place were entirely staffed by males.

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**ROBERT LICHTMAN:** A minor point. The new Hyphen is not the 40th anniversary issue of that fanzine, but rather the 40th anniversary of Irish Fandom. Hyphen started in 1952, so this issue is its 35th annish. Just to set the record straight, Meyer.

**BEN SCHILLING:** Regarding Brian Earl Brown's report on ConFusion, I've dug out my copy of the program book for ConFusion 1985. At the bottom of page 11, "No crashers will be allowed in the Con Suite or function areas." I've yet to be in a hotel that didn't have its staff do things to people sleeping in the lobby, so I don't see how this is a major change to anything ConFusion had done before. I

also wonder what the heck his third paragraph has to do with Confusion at all.

DENNY LIEN: Speaking of (minor) scandals -- Terry Garey says that she didn't write the letter you printed in #72, correcting the typo you inserted into the letter you printed from me a couple of issues back. In fact, Terry doesn't even read File 770. The letter as printed may have been written by me, as I'd planned to scribble off something like that, though I have no memory of actually having done so. Maybe in some other dimension, or while sleepwalking?

.....

((File 770 doesn't lend itself to the publication of five page letters of comment, but sometimes people write them anyway -- and sometimes they're fascinating. Ohio fan Franz Zrilich, who lived in Southern California long enough to attend the creative writing program at USC, read about enough conventions losing money in the early 1980s to put his skills to work on the following dire warning. And to think he wrote it two years before Noreascon 3's problems with the Sheraton Boston!))

#### Letter of Comment on FILE 770 #50: (January 6, 1985)

The number of cons in financial trouble (ConStellation, V-Con) may explain the decision of San Diego and Phoenix to go to NASFiC rather than Worldcon on their bids. I also understand that a number of cons around the country (names do not come to mind) are beginning to have problems with hotels, et. al. -- such as being told to pay in advance as a result of a few cons that have gone busto. On the other hand, Westercon, as you reported in #50, had a damn good surplus recently. Possibly it might not be a bad practice for those who hold successful cons and those who hold cons that go broke to analyze each other and issue their findings in some sort of annual manual. (Yes, it is alliterative!) Possibly this manual could be backed up by a quarterly newzine. Eventually, an organization could be built up that would offer to grant a "seal of approval" to cons whose policies, practices, personnel, and procedures follow that organization's guidelines. The approved cons would then be able to boast in their flyers and elsewhere, "This convention has been found to be satisfactorily in compliance with the fiscal and management guidelines set forth by the (name of organization) and is hereby granted permission to display this statement on all flyers, letterheads, etc." If properly carried out, such a

practice might within two or three years become de rigueur, due to fan pressure. (Two fans read in Locus: "Hey! This group doesn't have that there thingy about approval -- should we go?" "I dunno, if it doesn't have the gizmo, it's probably a sleazecon run out of a mobile home or something worse. Let's go to the Glycercon instead -- it's got the approval.")

Why should fandom want to do something like this? After all, it is regimentalization and all that -- and think of the reports and added expenses that the approving organization will require. Fandom should press for such minimal restrictions in face of the very real threat of what will happen if a big regional (or ghod forbid!) WorldCon really screws up -- and screws up into the hundred thousand dollar-plus range. Future cons will be saddled with paranoid hotels and printers insisting upon money up front and who-knows-what appalling practices. While I am not a lawyer, I have had enough painful experiences with the law to know that ugly things can happen. Herein follows a scenario:

Central City, US, has for years been sponsoring an annual CENTERCON -- decades in fact. The Center City Science Fantasy Association (CCSFA) has in the past sponsored four Worldcons and a NASFiC. With an ostensible membership of three hundred, regular weekly attendance of fifty, and a Steering Committee of seven "Old Men" who have been in charge since Technocracy was still a hot subject in the press, everything seemed fine for the opening offensive of the 199X Worldcon/NASFiC Bid. Then disaster struck.

Two of the Old Men died within a week of each other. Three more had reached retirement age and left -- to Florida and Arizona, where they would join the Orlando and Phoenix SF groups. The removal of these four key men left the other three in a peculiar situation -- their informal structure of management had disintegrated, as did their own patterns of responsibility and specialization.

Attempts to fill the vacancies from within the group of fifty regulars lead to acrimonious dissension. One of the remaining three Old Men had a mild stroke and left fandom for good. The other two, embittered and confused, withdrew from CCSFA.

(If all this seems like a casebook example from a management textbook, I plead mea culpa!)

CCSFA is taken over by a pack of bickering showboaters and egomaniacs (much like the city government of Cleveland under the Dennis Kucinich and George Forbes administration). (Which is where I got this analogy from). None of the members has any management experience, tact, disciplined ability to follow things up, etc. Each member has a small clique of sycophants, and each clique fights

for prestige against the other cliques.

A symbol of this fight is a violent three-way war over the disposition of the special Hugo Award CCSFA won in the mid-50s, a Hugo that had been sitting in a display case in the lobby of the dumpy HQ of the CCSFA. The new President and Membership Chair claim that the Hugo is not safe from theft and want to donate it to their alumnus library -- CCSU. Another group feel threatened by this "emasculatation of the Club" and insist that it (the Hugo) remain in its case. A third group wants to increase the membership fees from \$10 a quarter to \$25 in order to buy a jeweler's theftproof display case for the Hugo. The membership vehemently objects. The entire issue leads to a long, drawn-out court fight, two mysterious pipe-bombings (no one is hurt, but the Hugo is dinged) and a newspaper investigation that reveals the Vice-President has a petty theft record and the Treasurer is revealed to be a compulsive child molester.

Little of this reaches the world outside of Central City, except for the sharp eagle-eye of a fanzine editor who specializes in the goings-on of convention fandom. Regrettably, since most fans are now media fen and do not read anything except TV Guide, fandom knows not the disaster about to happen at the Worldcon CCSFA has successfully bid upon. (Based on word-of-mouth knowledge that "Hey, Central City always has run smooth cons.")

Not having any experience in negotiating contracts, the Steering Committee (which is also committed to sponsoring a ten-day, two-weekend "super-Worldcon" -- with heavy media tie-in) signs a formal two-week contract with the CC Sheraton and adjacent Central City Convention Complex. (CCCC) Several films are booked at regular rates, including first releases. Actors, producers, directors and projectionists are hired, under contract, to appear for regular commercial rates rather than nonprofit rates or gratis.

There is virtually no management structure in existence, except on paper, to handle in advance the thousands of details needed to successfully run a con. Enthusiastic high schoolers are told "You're the Head Gopher," and given no supervision. A few of the kids actually write to chairs of other cons in the US and Canada asking for pointers, and the kids go to a few mini-cons outside CC and boast they are "in charge of art security at the 199X WorldCon", "Banquet head", etc. The Banquet Head has committed all possible fifteen thousand -- attendance goal of Steering Committee -- 199X WorldCon members to the most expensive banquet the CCCC offers, \$150 a head: that's right, \$225,000 just for the meal!

At first, the Chairs of the local mini-cons and tiny regionals in the smaller cities and major college towns

within a day's drive of Center City assume that these awkward, embarrassingly boastful, high-schoolers are merely trainee/flunky types assigned as aides to more experienced managers. But, at a major regional three hundred miles from Center City, the CCSFA Steering Committee members who are still talking to each other turn out in force to promote their 199X WorldCon to be held in eighteen months. It is at this con that leading lights of fandom and condom (joke: in poor taste) realize to their horror that a pack of twits are running the Worldcon.

At the same con the average fan is jolted by unexpected price increases in membership for that upcoming WorldCon. A fee of \$50 eighteen months ahead, and \$90 at the door has been jumped up to \$90 eighteen months ahead and \$150 at the door. The CCSF Steering Committee has done a bit of very crude paper and pencil calculations (few know how to balance a checking account very well, and none has ever seen a spreadsheet) and has belatedly realized that "the largest con ever" is racking up high bills, and needs a very high cash flow rate even early on. What the Steering Committee does not know is that it has obligations that make the banquet fee seem trite in comparison. The hotel negotiator, a junior-college dropout living on unemployment with his family, has agreed to have the hotel's bar open 24 hours a day for ten days for con members only. That's another \$240,000.

A month after the major regional at which fandom began to become uneasy, the CCSFA releases further revisions in its membership schedule. It will now be \$125 seventeen months in advance, and \$250 at the door. (Someone realized that the banquet fees had to be incorporated into membership in order to guarantee payment.)

Belatedly, the regular members of the CCSFA and some of the old Steering Committee members still in town try to salvage the mess the 199X Worldcon is walking into. The banquet deal is negotiated out of for a \$3000 penalty. The insecure and unstable President flies into a rage and fires the returned Old Men over the \$3000.

I will spare you the details about what happens at the Central City WorldCon. Suffice it to say that the Central City Science Fantasy Association, which had failed to set up a separate legal entity to protect itself from just this sort of mess, finds itself in debt for well over \$3.5 million dollars, with several thousand fans utterly in pique over what is now being called the "Non Con" by the gentle, and "The Horror Con" by the more honest, and even worse things by others.

Two things immediately occur as a result of this fiasco. One, hotels and convention centers and printers and the like throughout the United States now insist on payment in advance for all SF and genre conventions. The cash-flow

demand results in a reduction by 90% of the number of cons in the US and Canada during the following calendar year. The event made Time, Newsweek, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, and The MacNeil/Lehr Report. Twenty dissertations and theses in management organization, psychology, popular culture and sociology are written within two years about the event.

Secondly, a sharpie found an interesting and horrible way to benefit from the fiasco. He bought up the con's debt at 40 cents on the dollar and sued the World Science Fiction Society, the people who grant the Hugos, but had nothing to do with the 199X WorldCon. Or so they thought. The sharpie's lawyer used a seldom-used legal point in its case before the court, which found WSFS at fault for not having properly supervised the CCSFA 199X WorldCon. The court ordered WSFS to pay the sharpie 40% of the \$3.5 million dollars: \$1.4 million. WSFS, not having the money, is declared insolvent, and its assets turned over to the sharpie, who has just bought a tiny sleazeball paperback publisher that previously dealt in hardcore pornography.

The sharpie, now owning the rights to the words "Hugo Award" and likeness of the famed rocket, begins to buy slush manuscripts at vanity press prices, and slaps the immortal phrase "Hugo Award Winner" upon the more "literate" books, and "Hugo Award Nominee" on the remainder. Soon, 95% of all fans (those who buy four to six paperback per month) who don't know at all about the change in who awards Hugos, begin to buy such great classics as Adolf Hitler Conquers the Asteroids, Mosquito Boat Dance and Other Tales, and even \*blush\* (my thesis) Fear of Fire.

It takes several months for several hundred thousand hard core readers to realize that "Hugo" now means junk. SF sales for all publishers plummet. (Coincidentally, the SCA, which rents meadows instead of hotels for its meetings, has begun to grow immensely popular in light of the collapse of SF cons. One bright SF publisher even reprints all of the Waverly tales and a complete new medieval fantasy fandom soars into existence. And as SF dies, so does a popular interest in science, sadly.) The other publishers band together to sue the sharpie, who disappears, only to reappear one year later for one last fling with the formerly magic words, "Hugo Award Winner." And then disappears forever from the face of the earth. Later estimates are that he cleared over \$30 million in profit, none of which was paid in taxes.

And in Florida and Arizona, three old fans die quietly of broken hearts.

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 ((ROUNDFILINGS, continued from page 8))

ROBERT RUNTE: (Edmonton: January 22, 1978) I believe that a good newzine is the lifeblood of fandom, for it not only keeps us all in touch with fannish happenings elsewhere (and when you live in an isolated fan center like Edmonton, practically all fannish happenings are elsewhere) but provides the interaction and continuity -- the common focus, for lack of a better term -- that even the best and largest circulation genzines cannot give fandom.

....As a big time newsletter editor you'll have to start spelling everything out for the dummies, not only because you'll have more of them in your audience, but because your word will begin to take on the force of THE TRUTH. When I was a neo, I certainly went by the reasoning that "It must work this way because Linda Bushyager says that's the way it is," and I still tend to give her opinions perhaps undue weight. You know what I mean?

BOB BARNES: (Boise: January 28, 1978) I agree with you that many get p.o.'d by fannish journalism. Do the best you can to keep the facts straight and at least you will accurately piss them off. I don't know about how you feel about several of the trends in fandom, and that is not good. One of the things that makes/made Karass so interesting was Linda's willingness to air her own opinion. I didn't always agree, butthaslife.

JOHN BERRY: (Seattle: January 23, 1978) In general I approve of your personal approach, and of your intent to keep it obvious whose opinion or word is whose; there is no such thing as keeping "the facts" separate from "opinion," but it's important to distinguish sources. And interpretations. ....A final caution: don't confuse "fan politics" with fannish news. ((Dops!))

\* Laylor replied, "Columbus in '85." Smith insisted, "That's supposed to be a secret." Mike told him, "What do you mean 'a secret' -- you're having a party down here." \* David Schlosser: "I took K-Y jelly to Minicon instead of shaving cream." Mike Glycer: "What were you shaving?" Janice Gelb: "Matthew Tepper." \* Joe Celko: "I have, too, worked on a Worldcon. ...I believe I registered you one year back when I still had hair..." \* David K. M. Klaus became the third person in the history of the Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society to have his membership terminated. \* The legendary Claude Degler, travelling eofan, was prevented from joining the LASFS by rewriting the rules (so he was not actually expelled). However, Peter Kranold was booted out in the 1950s after filing a lawsuit against Forrest J Ackerman for "actions detrimental to the well-being of science fiction," and George Senda was ultimately prosecuted and jailed for his 1972 theft of a fellow LASFSian's comics collection. \* "Funny how I enjoy Instant Message much more after it's been edited by you." (Pascal Thomas) \* Ed Bryant's science fiction-oriented radio show "Imagination" was axed literally overnight to make way for ex-Black Panther Bobby Seale's "Cooking and Community Issues" show. \* Bill Patterson did offer to sell for me \$10 a thick publication containing the history of Phoenix fandom. \* Kyger, who has graduated to bigger things, like the Dr. Pournelle dunk at a recent L5 convention. \* "Bullets, not ballots," suggested Seth Breidbart. \* "I have come to doubt that the City of Los Angeles has any serious intention of building a science fiction museum. However, they do have the serious intention of raising money." (Milt Stevens) \* RPM in Forest Lawn. \* Candice Massey was burning up the phone lines in an effort to find out [who published Aunt Leah's Big Thing]: she dragged her telephone extension cord across the stove in the middle of cooking dinner. \* Estoteric Order of Dagon Wants Fresh Blood: Yours. \* Ross added, "They won't be selling them [pythons in the huckster room] tomorrow -- they violate both the weapons policy and the 'no pet' rule." I pondered, "How do you peace-bond a python?" Lise Eisenberg knew: "Tie it in a knot." \* Biggest WorldCon Goes Into Biggest Hole. \* It is assumed that fans will entertain themselves if the convention committee gets out of hand, or even if the convention committee performs brilliantly. \* "I won 'Most Prolific'." (Darrell Schweitzer). \* As we continue with the special All Robert Sacks issue of File 770. \* "All the current 'fudes' carries me back to the 1930s when some of us did it for fun, and some who lacked a sense of humor did it seriously." (Bob Tucker). \* DUNEGATE. \* In a Tax Court Memorandum Decision published April 2, 1985, Chief Judge Dawson administered the kiss of death to St. Louis Science Fiction Limited's hopes.... \* "Harlan Ellison came over to where I was talking to Ed Ferman, grabbed me by the throat, shouted ungrammatically, 'This one's from Larry Shaw, motherfucker, who's dead', and hit me on the jaw. ...Such is the level of violence in modern America, the incident attracted little attention (although Jerry Pournelle did take time out to give me a friendly lecture on weapons for personal defense, and entertained me by quoting line-for-line from Kipling at some considerable length." (Charles Platt). \* The trouble with scandalous, juicy gossip is that too many faneditors are tempted to investigate whether it has a basis in fact. \*