

Spring

1999

SCIENTIFICTION

The official
publication of
First Fandom



TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Cover	"Julie, Ed and Jack" by Paul McCall	pg. 16	Godzilla: a movie review
pg. 2	Table of Contents	pg. 17	Dragon*Con Report
	Some News / New Members / Indicia	pg. 19	John Millard info / photo
pg. 3	Dinosaur Droppings	pg. 20	Millinnicon facts / map
pg. 6	Editor's Comments	pg. 21	Starship Troopers: another movie review
pg. 7	Revenge of the Sci-Fan	pg. 23	About the Cover
pg. 15	Presidents Message by Ray Beam	pg. 23	Necrology/Deadlines

SOME NEWS:

FIRST FANDOM REUNION, 1999

The 1999 First Fandom reunion will take place at Millenicon in Blue Ash, Ohio, on March 19-21, 1999. Blue Ash is a suburb of Cincinnati, and the reunion will be held at the Blue Ash Hotel & Conference Center, 5901 Pfeiffer Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45262-4821 (Phone: 513-793-4500). Rooms cost approximately \$75 per night.

The winner of the Hall of Fame polling was A. Langley Searles, the winner of the Moskowitz Award was Forrest J. Ackerman.

NEW MEMBERS:

Catherine Mintz
Apartment 1708
1810 S. Rittenhouse Square
Philadelphia, PA 19103-5837
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Jon D. Swartz
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DINOSAUR DROPPINGS:

Joe Martino, by way of Mark S. Paul:

I got this from Joe Martino, and assume it's a letter for inclusion in "StF."

Mark (Schulzinger)

Joseph P. Martino wrote:

Mark:

I regret having to miss DragonCon and the reunion. I liked your piece in the current SCIENTIFICTION. Those things needed to be said.

Joe Martino

I may as well take this opportunity to ask that all letters intended for publication in StF be addressed to SCIENTIFICTION care of me Paul McCall, 5801 West Henry Street, Indianapolis, IN 46241. Thanks

Catherine Mintz

Subject: Scientifiction Loc

Date: Wed, 25 Nov 1998

From: Catherine Mintz
<cmintz@grip.cis.upenn.edu>

To: pmccall@indy.net

A very good-looking issue. I'm looking forward to seeing you develop your own style of editing and design, particularly since you use a Mac, which is what I own, too.

I'd like to join the protests against First Fandom dying with the last of its full members. The idea of the tontine does have a certain appeal even though it is more usually associated with murder mysteries. I can see the last two first fans, armed with ray-gun water pistols, dueling it out for a complete run of <Amazing> plus lifetime subscription, neither willing to let fate make the ultimate decision.

No, I think the associate members should be allowed to carry the spirit forward into the next century, just as long as we don't become FF:TNG, First Fandom: The Next Generation, something that decidedly would not headed in the right direction.

Speaking of the spirit of things, I am working on a project to design and illustrate a limited edition of Merritt's "The Metal Emperor." I have received permission from the last person to publish it to use his text, which he created by xeroxing the magazine publication then cutting and pasting to fit. It should be accurate.

It is my hope to, one way or another, access an OCR and have

the text in digital form, so I can concentrate on the pictures and layout. Helpful suggestions from any of you with experience with this kind of project would be appreciated. I'd prefer not to lose too much money nor to print more copies than are likely to find people pleased to own them. I had thought about a hundred to sell at cost plus postage.

Mere vocal support would also be welcome. I still think Merritt's stock is going to go up eventually. He is, after all, an enjoyable read and one of the best of his period, even qualifying as a science fiction writer, for he used the information available in his own time to create his fantastic settings.

But I've written about that elsewhere.

Catherine Mintz

What's wrong with becoming First Fandom: The Next Generation? The uniforms look better, the scripts got better (if you space the first season) and I already have the Picard hairstyle! Ask and ye shall receive - you wanted to see my own editing style and here it is - smart ass! Seriously, I expect the organization will continue as long as the membership continue to show an interest. (How's that for a non-statement? Dammit, Jim! I'm an editor, not a politician!) [Actually, I'm an artist, I only play an editor on the computer!]

As far as an OCR recommendation I've already told Catherine what I use, OmniPage Pro, and it works quite well for me. Not perfect, but what is in the world of computer software?

Terry Jeeves

Dear Paul,

Once again many, many thanks for an very good issue of Scientifiction. I particularly liked the numerous and excellent illustrations which added immeasurably to the text by preventing it hitting one in solid blocks. Liked the photo cover as well although I couldn't find any key saying who was who.

Re the "who invented the inertialess drive," I recall reading somewhere that Schneeman (the best ever SF illustrator) gave the general idea to Doc Smith. How true that is I couldn't say. On the Kyle controversy, I'll step discreetly aside as I don't know any of the details and I have met and like all the participants. It does seem a shame however that as our number diminish, the remaining members differ so strongly.

Lots of interesting letters, but nothing to make me leap up on the soap box and beat a drum in support, argument or comment, so I'll add on some personal details.

...Last week I had to get a builder in to replace our gatepost, a three foot tower of bricks which Val had re-arranged with the aid of the car. Only a scratch or two on the car fender, but I'm afraid a builder was needed for the gatepost.

This has been a period of "what next?" The washing machine went wonky and took two visits and a new pump to repair. The dishwasher also got stropky, then the back door of the car developed a jammed catch, the vacuum cleaner also jammed and

then the cooker went on the fritz. It seemed as if everything was going kaput at the same time.

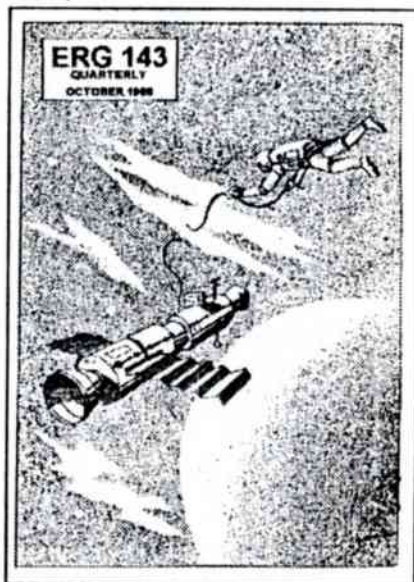
Then of course visits began, we just had Sandra and Karina up for a week, I put them on the train back only an hour ago. Val went off to York with them to help Sandra change trains there. She'll be ringing me up for collection once she gets back to Scarborough. Apart from that we were looking to an afternoon and evening to rest before more duties arrived — Val is on Church Reading Room duty tomorrow, on Friday we have a mid-day concert and an afternoon Thanksgiving Service in Pickering and Saturday a coach trip to a Sheffield theatre.

What can happen next? I'll tell you when I got back from the station there was a message on that answerphone — "Hi, this is your grandson Marc, I'm in London and will ring again later." so there, out of the blue a pending visit of x days from a grandson we have never seen and not heard from for about two years. Looks as though we'll have to sort out the spare room and cancel sundry arrangements over the next week or so.

Oh yes, I forgot to mention that we all had some nasty illness over the weekend and had to call out the emergency doctor to check on Karina. Talk about a hectic weekend. Anyway, as you can see, life has been rather complicated for a while, hopefully it will settle down again for Christmas. but time presses and I have chores to do, so I must reluctantly sign off at this point.

Thanks again and all the very

best,
Terry



Above is the cover to Terry's fanzine which he graciously sent along with his LoC.

Roy Tackett

Dear Paul,

Oh goody, a fan feud. It's just like the old days. I even recognize the names. All that is missing is Moskowitz. Come on guys. You ought to be old enough by now to settle things. Or does this foolishness make you all feel young again?

Roy

Ben Indick

Dear Paul:

The issue of STF just received is really pretty! My congratulations, Mark did well, but this is, by gosh, professional! I would vote as soon as possible for it to cease being another "non-profit" effort for

letters continued on pg.12

editors comments

by paul mccall

I'll begin by addressing an oversight on my part from last issue. I failed to provide a guide to the people I chose to include in the cover montage. They are, from top to bottom, left to right: Harlan Ellison, Dave Kyle, Julius Schwartz, Ray Harryhausen, Mel Schmidt, Murphy Anderson, Ray Bradbury, Mary Martin M.D., Ray Beam, Earle Melvin Korshak and Forrest J. Ackerman. I should have made note of the names which were thoughtfully written on the back of the photos by John Coker who



shot them and allowed StF the use thereof. Thanks to Ray Beam for providing this listing.

If you will recall, I mentioned two issues past that a publisher was in the process of reissuing E.E. Smith's Lensman series in large paperback editions. At that time I had only been able to find the first two, Triplanetary and First Lensman and those at a convention dealers table. I have since seen the later volumes in a Borders book store (a chain of pretty good book stores for those of you not familiar with the name). But, in the spirit of the future, I went on the internet to see if they were available at two of the electronic book outlets I patronize. Both Amazon.com and Buybooks.com listed the whole series as being available. The list price is \$15 per volume, Amazon.com had them at 12 dol-



Editor's comments continued on pg. 11

REVENGE OF THE SCI-FAN:

by mark schulzinger



FAILED INVASION

I was listening to Jeff Wayne's "War Of The Worlds" while roaring across the Bisti on New Mexico Highway 371 the other night. The sky was clear, the moon so bright I had my sun visor set to block it. On the southern horizon lightning

flashed, creating red eruptions within towering thunderheads. On the CD player the Martian war machines were destroying Earth.

Of course they blew it. Several times, in fact.

Herbert George got it right the first time. The poor Martians were pushovers when it came to attacking Earth. We've got some pretty virulent critters on this planet, and they don't take kindly to newcomers. As a matter of fact we humans have had a rough time of it fighting against them now and again.

The life forms on this planet are so versatile that it's amazing humanity even got a foothold at all, much less climbed to what we think is the top of the food chain. It turns out that in the case of Kuru or Jakob-Kreutzfeld disease we don't even have to be fighting a "slow virus" whatever that is. We're actually up against a self-replicating protein which doesn't even know it's waging war against anything. It isn't even as intelligent as tobacco mosaic virus, but it does one heck of a number on homo sap.

Now and again, though, we run around in circles over something that turns out to be nothing. Ebola scared us so much that we kept a spare set of underpants around when we even read news reports about it. Turns out, of course, that the way to get ebola is to eat a monkey. I don't think the fast food chains have quite



gotten around to tapping that meat source yet, so we're safe for a while.

And then there was the scare that backfired, or was it the other way round? The Second Martian Invasion.

Back when we were doing overflights of the USSR, when U-2s were coasting lazily up at the fringes of the atmosphere, the Soviets kept complaining to us that they were seeing strange lights in the skies.

"Oh," we commented, "you're seeing them too?"

And before long everyone was seeing em. They zipped over Lubbock, Texas, crashed in Roswell, New Mexico and even allowed folks to take their pictures. The hue and cry over them lights in the skies actually forced the Air Force to create Project Blue Book just to keep protecting its overflight program.

Of course we were so gullible that we forced ourselves to see

those strange things in the sky. I recall that, as a teenager in Cincinnati, I watched a small red dot pass noiselessly over my house. Many years later I watched a small white dot do the same thing, but then I knew I was watching an orbital vehicle. The first time, of course, I was seeing a U-2 in flight. I saw a few other peculiar things in the sky after that first "sighting," but all of them were easily explained.

Now, when I race through the Bisti, I know that the most unlikely thing I will see in the sky is Aurora heading back to Area 51. The second most unlikely thing I will see is a B-52 using me as the target of a low-level bombing simulation. In either case I am assured that them pesky Martians blew it again.

Unfortunately so did the gum-mint. That little bit of prevarication helped win the Cold War, but it sure unleashed a barrellfull of monkeys.

DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY:

With the new year it's time to give you the financial highlights of the old one. We took in \$1,288.95 in dues and interest on our checking account. We spent \$1,266.61 for printing, postage, awards, and whoopee. We have \$1,946.37 in the bank, so we can afford to print and distribute this issue.

DEPARTMENT OF REALLY BIG SHEWS:

Well, "Babylon 5" has finally come and gone. And it only took five years to do so! In retrospect they were a choppy five years, marred by the Fox network's inability to deal with a show that didn't have at least some soft-core pornography in it and J. Michael Straczynski's decision to toss in some stories that had nothing to do with the plot. All in all, though, the series was a resounding success.



It was, as many folks have pointed out, the first science fiction video series in which the characters actually developed and matured as the story progressed. Delenn changed from a Minbari leader to into a human leader, and tended to lead from behind (despite the fact that by the end of the story there was a version of her floating around somewhere in time). Vir, whose name in Latin means "man," changed from an ineffectual bumbling embarrassment to a self-actualizing person who eventually becomes emperor of Centauri. G'Kar starts out as an ambassador who swaggers his way around and rather fancies a bit of human crumpet now and again, but becomes a most unwilling prophet and teacher to his race.

Londo Molari, the pathetic ambassador shuttled off the Centauri homeworld to give him

something to do with what was left of his life, dreams of former days of glory, sells his soul to the Shadows and becomes a Faustian figure who can only free himself by killing and being killed by his best friend. Michael Garibaldi struggles with his alcoholism over and over again in truly alcoholic fashion, and finally manages to make something of his life with a lot of help from one man he truly hates.

The tale has convolutions in it that make it a bit more than a concatenation of all the science fiction plots ever written. The Shadows and the Vorlons are shown to be two sides of the same counterfeit coin. Bester, the sinister head of Psicorps security, is a true hero who knows that eventually the non-*psis* will build concentration camps for his kind and is determined that his people will not be exterminated. Even Mordan, the Shadow emissary, is not evil — he was just rebuilt into what he must become.

Images from great sf of the past become those of the present in the program. The Climactic Battle with the Shadows brought to mind of the Battle of Tellus as thousands of jump gates opened to let ships emerge. Tellurian...er...Earth destroyers plowed threateningly into position, weapons blazing, command modules rotating majestically. Vorlon semi-living ships spread sails like the petals of some amaz-

ing flower, Shadow cyborg-ves-sels were infuriatingly and invincibly sinister.

When the first movie was shown I was pleased with the overall effect, but disappointed by the basic mechanical flaw in the plot. When the series began I was delighted by the depiction of a collection of beings who were pleasantly unlike anything depicted on the "Star Trek" series. The universe of Babylon 5 is much like our own, it's a place where humans and aliens plot and plan, where things don't necessarily go well, and where the best laid plans...well you've been there.

An amazing discovery was that Straczinski had originally written the story for "Star Trek," and it was supposed to be a prologue to the warmfuzzy ST universe. Fortunately, and I suppose I should have put that word in italics and all caps, the ST folks rejected it. For that I am most glad; they created their own version of the story and called it "ST: Deep Space Nine," and I found it claustrophobic and annoying. By turning their backs on a new idea they opened the way for "Babylon 5" to explode onto the toob.

I can only hope that sf on video will never be the same again.

Now, though, I have seen "A Call To Arms," the third of the Babylon 5 movies commissioned by the Turner Network. I am not amused. J. Michael seems to have had it too easy over the past five years. He managed to write and get produced a blockbuster of a science fiction series with

tremendous scope and appeal. He successfully managed to switch networks when Fox failed to renew the show three years into the story line. As frosting on the cake he got TNT to commission three additional full length movies set in the same universe.

So, enough already. We watched the show, spent five long years watching the show. We saw it end and it wasn't arf bad. But enuf is quite enuf, time to go on to something else.

But, no, J. Michael has decided he likes the idea of job security for half a decade at a time. So he created a new five year plan, a search for the cure to a genetic plague the Drak (drek?) have injected into the Earth's atmosphere.

Sigh. Come on, now, we know how it all ends. This is a blatant push for the very thing Babylon 5 was not — another ST — and it is a discredit to everything the original series was. It seems that stf on the toob will forever be STf on the toob and the creativity which flourished for a brief and shining minute will turn into must once again.

ms

editors comments continued from pg. 6

lars and change each but Buybooks.com offered them at \$9.90 each! I ordered volumes 3 through 6 that I needed from Buybooks.com, 3 and 4 arrived, 5 and 6 are on back order. If you are connected to the internet and have overcome the fear of ordering online (always use a secured server, make sure that little key in the lower left of the screen is complete, not broken) I would recommend checking both of these outlets for the best price on any books you may want that they have in stock.

There is a company called

by Hubert Rogers which graced the pulp cover of Astounding October 1939 and the subsequent book publications of the novel! I have to wonder if that was a case of licensing or simple lifting. True, they diddled with it, adding a pale blue "V" shape on the front of the tunic and a letter F emblem on the left breast and added a new background. I was in need of a suggestion for a birthday gift at that time so my wife bought it for me. The face of the watch is a bas-relief representation of a bulbous space ship with a planet-like grid behind. Fairly useless as a time piece since it has no num-



Fossil that markets character wristwatches. Several years ago, perhaps as many as five now, they offered a "Captain Fossil" watch that immediately caught my eye. As you can see in the photograph the image they chose to represent Captain Fossil on the tin containing the watch is actually the Gray Lensman as painted



bers and the hands don't stand out against the gun metal grey of the ship. I also have their "Mighty Mouse" watch which is much more useful having numbers as well as Mighty Mouse on the dial!

The letters section fell off this time from last issue. I want more letters and I want more articles from a vari-



ety of members. Of all the of articles I receive I will use any and all that have relevance to the topic round which First Fandom orbits, Science Fiction and the Fandom that sprang up to celebrate it. Stray into politics or other sundry unpleasantness and I will either edited heavily or put it aside. You may very well lament the current state of the field, I cannot in truth disagree with you on that point. But there have been a wealth of wonderful books and short stories written since this whole field took off. Tell me (and thus the membership at large) about your favorite novels, short stories and authors. Dust off those book reporting skills! Tell us all the story of when you met your favorite author at such and such convention, and just how drunk did you and he/she get? Spin the tales of that fan-rivalry that resulted in bruised egos, torn clothes, broken bones and expulsion from the conven-

tion hotel!
I'm waiting!

pm

letters continued from pg. 5

you, and a salary be stipulated -- except our dues would immediately skyrocket! So, although being myself an inordinately wealthy fan (my apazines bring me in bagful of money) I must consider our members in straitened circumstances, and urge you, in lieu of hard cash, to accept my humble and long-winded thanks.

Now, having been a good guy, I must take you to task for not including an index to those photos of superannuated old codgers on the cover! Yes, I know Forry, and Ray B., and there's that rebellious Dave K. over there, but I don't know the others. Anyway, it is good to see them alive, whoever they are (probably some ringers rounded up at the local geriatric salon).

I agree with Terry that FF should not, indeed, should NEVER be disbanded. Those "Sustaining Patrons", after all, even John Clute (see below), are a bunch of young whippersnappers, and why should they find themselves disbanded and sitting forlornly on the curb ("kerb" for John) in 2000 or 2001? When I first sought to join, long ago, I was rejected briefly. I was disdained for having been unassociated with any fanac prior to 1940. Eventually, I proved a minor but genuine group of three or four of us had chatted regularly about

the pulps, which the dad of one of us often provided until we could buy our own. I was in such high dudgeon, meanwhile, that I formed my own group, which I named "First and A Half Fandom". I was the President and sole member! Once I was accepted into FF, I put FAAHF into abeyance. Now if FF disbands for lack of any old timers, the survivors are welcome to use my group name. Obviously it can only have Associate Members, Sustaining Patrons, whatever, for it never allowed for Regular members!

Is Rich K. related to Dave K? I saw Dave only a few months ago at Joe Wrzos' home. Dave looked fine and other than some minor fustian only discussed the DragonCon and not FF, of which I was the only member present anyway. I had to leave early with my wife for another appointment, so I missed Dave's last four or five hours. Anyway, I am in favor of amicability. I know Dave's gripes at upstarts, as he considers them, but I vote he be urged to rejoin, pay his dues and accept both the honor in which everyone holds him as well as what appear to be the facts of the situation, stated in Mark(?)'s article. The facts about the Worldcon, relegating FF to the "salon" mentioned above, are shocking, sad and disrespectful, but Science Fiction today is also disrespectful of its beginnings.

Good luck to Dan (sic) Dailey in his non-profit but important Archivist Job. I hope to read occasional gleanings of interest he comes up with.

Paul, your drawings, caricatures, I guess, were darned good. Anytime you want to send some to my apazines I am ready to use them.

Oh yeah, John Clute. First, I own and love his colossal encyclopedias (and yes, I got a line for my Bradbury book, but, alas, none for my Borgo Effinger book.) However, recently I was Cluted! John reviewed Shaw 17, a Shaw annual, for Science-Fiction Studies. This volume was devoted to the relationship between GBS and SF. John caught me in a dating goof - - darn, I caught it too, but after it was in print. However, he must have quit reading my article right then, because he complained, amongst other complaints, a few of which I agreed with, that certain plays were not mentioned. Had he kept reading, that was the purpose of my article, and, I did mention them. This is especially painful coming from a fellow member of FF.

Speaking of Shaw, I recently wrote and co-performed a play about GBS and H. G. Wells. I am pleased to say it went over very well. It was my debut in the theatre; imagine, at 75, the oldest ingenue! Until I get other offers, I am hoping to see the play in another venue. I enclose the flyer for your interest.

Good luck to the gang. Dave and Mrs. Calabash too, wherever they are.
Ben Indick

EUGENE J. BIANCHERI

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Dear Mr. McCall,

John Coker suggested I write to you and request that you print this inquiry in your newsletter.

I am doing family history research on my father-in-law **Herman C. Koenig** (1893-1959), a fantasy collector and a member of FAPA (charter member), NAPA and The Fossils, Inc. He published twenty issues of a fanzine **THE READER AND COLLECTOR** between August 1938 and October 1946. There were none in the Koenig family files, so I have been trying to locate copies through various contacts, here and abroad.

So far, through Doug Anderson, A. Langley Searles and John B. Speer, I have received several copies of **The Reader and Collector**. Still **missing**:

Volume 1, Number 6 (Dec. 1940)

Volume 2, Number 1 (Mar. 1941)

2 (Jun. 1941)

3 (Sep. 1941)

4 (Dec. 1941)

5 (Mar. 1942)

6 (Jun. 1942)

Volume 3, Number 1 (Dec. 1942)

2 (Jun. 1943)

Does anyone have any of the missing issues of **THE READER AND COLLECTOR** that could be copied? If so, I'll gladly reimburse the copying and mailing costs. Also, if anyone has other material related to H. C. Koenig, please contact me. Any help is greatly appreciated.

Thanks, Mr. McCall for considering this request.

Sincerely,
Eugene Biancheri
Thank you notes regarding the awards presentations:

Pat Baltadonis

November 16, 1998

Dear Mr. Beam,

Thank you for the award plaque.

Bob Madle sent it to me and it arrived this morning.

Jack was very involved with school and art. He loved his early years in Science Fiction. In his later years he realized some wonderful times once again with Science Fiction and his old friends.

Once again, thank you.

Sincerely,
Pat Baltadonis

Dr. Christine**Haycock/Moskowitz**

November 14, 1998

Dear Ray,

It is a beautiful plaque and I will treasure it always. Thank you very much. I miss him more than anyone can imagine.

Who will receive the first award? Let me know once you decide. And where. Perhaps I can be there.

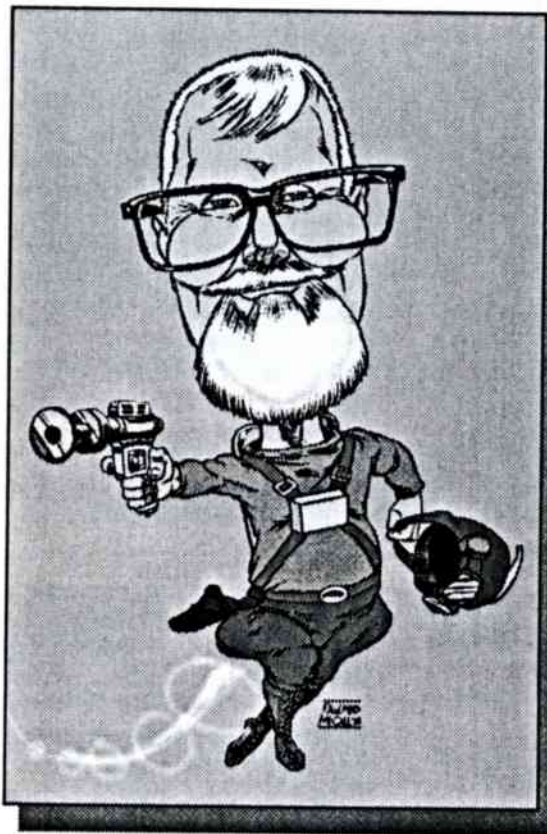
My best regards,

Christine

The first recipient of the Sam Moskowitz Archive Award for Excellence in Science Fiction Collecting will be Forrest J. Ackerman. The First Fandom Award winner will be Lynn Hickman, the Hall of Fame Award winner will be A. Langley Searles.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:

by ray beam



Not much has happened since the last issue. I attended Octocon in Cincinnati. It was the usual low key Relaxicon as usual. Lots of nice conversation. One thing I did notice, several people were carrying around Mystery paperbacks they were reading. I didn't see any S-F other than in the dealers room. I bought some Avenger and Doc Savage paperbacks.

Mary Ann and I went back to Cincinnati New Years Eve for Roger Sims New Years Party.

Mary Ann took a course at The Culinary Institute early in 1998. She showed off some of what she had learned. She prepared several different kinds of hors d'oeuvres, all of which disappeared immediately. This is the one time of the year that I put on a Tuxedo. The Cincinnati Fantasy Group always have several parties covering the New Year's weekend. Rogers was the only one we attended this year because of the weather reports coming in. We left for home early on the 1st., and am very glad we did.

Hope to see many of you at Millennicon, March 19 - 21 in Cincinnati.

Ray

A Short Book Review SCIENCE FICTION, THE GERNSBACK YEARS

by Everett Bleiler

with the assistance of Richard J. Bleiler

Published by
Kent State University Press
Kent, Ohio 44242-0001
"ISBN # 0-8338-604

This is not a book that you set down and read from cover to cover but is a tremendous refer-

ence work. It is one of the most thorough works that I have seen. It is 731 pages covering all aspects of the S-F magazines of the 1930's. It is a must for collectors like myself or anyone interested in the field of that period.

Ray Beam

GODZILLA a movie review

by mark schulzinger

My wife has a sweet tooth for monster movies, so when Blockbuster opened shop nearby, I went out and rented this bigger-'n-life goshwow-full-of-special-effects epic for her.

What a mistake.

Where, oh where, is the cuddly man-in-a-monster-suit who used to rampage through Tokyo? Instead we get some sort of half-robot half computer generated toon that stomps and chomps its way through 130 dreary minutes of gloomy film.

Where does the film get 130 minutes of action? Let's just say that this movie has more climaxes than a porn star. Every time you think the action is over and done with — whoop, here's a new twist. Either the monster is just taking a nap, or the clutch of eggs he (sic) laid have begun to hatched, or he wasn't really dead or...you get the idea.

And them eggs. There are so many eggs it's obvious that the Godzilla-critter laid more than its own body mass worth of eggs - much more. Heck, did another critter lay all them eggs she'd a-

letters continued from pg. 14

Nancy Shaw: final update

Date: Tue, 22 Dec 1998

Misti Anslin Tucker wrote:

Nancy has checked herself out of Heartland and will be home as of Wednesday at 11am or so. Her brother, Larry, and I are worried that her decision was pretty impulsive, but she's an adult and old enough to make her own decisions, so we're backing her up.

On the bright side, Nancy is getting pretty good with her walker, although she still has to be supervised when she uses it since she's still prone to losing her balance. She's been making several trips per week to her home and has practiced on the carpet and does much better with the walker than with the wheelchair.

Exhaustedly,

Misti

been skun down to the size of a veritable grasshopper. Apparently Godzilla's innards bear a striking resemblance those of Nadreck the Palanian in that they obviously have an extension into another dimension.

About half way through the film you, the by now bored to tears viewer, notice that something else is happening. The actors don't seem to be taking themselves seriously any more. They repeat every line two and even three times, there seem to be strange non-sequitur comments. As a matter of fact the film starts to become a parody of itself. Finally (and I refer to the ultimate climax) the monster is sold the Brooklyn Bridge, and everyone

gets to awaken to the closing credits.

Even my wife said that "Starship Troopers" was marginally better than this bow-wow.

ms



DRAGON*CON REPORT

by john l. coker, III

FIRST FANDOM REUNION

The 1998 First Fandom Reunion was held at Dragon*Con, in Atlanta, GA, September 3-6, 1998. Among the 'Dinosaurs' in attendance: Forrest J Ackerman, Murphy Anderson, Ray Beam, Ray Bradbury, Fred Brammer, John L. Coker, III, Mel Korshak, David A. Kyle, Roy Lavender, Mary M. Martin, William C. Martin, Paul McCall, Melvin Schmidt, Mark Schulzinger, Julius Schwartz,

Dragon*Con is North America's largest annual convention for

fans of Science Fiction, Fantasy, Comics, Games, Art, Animation, Science, Music, Television, and Films. Activities included an Art Show, a Masquerade Costume Contest, Filk Singing, Slide Shows, Auctions, Robot Baffles, and Exhibits. It featured over 500 hours of panels, workshops, demonstrations and discussions, including dedicated program tracks for Star Trek, Star Wars, X-Files, Babylon 5, Doctor Who, Sliders, Xena / Hercules, Highlander, Pern, NASA Space Science, and, in 1998, First

Fandom.

Programming, which focused on the interests of First Fandom included discussions and readings on such topics as: "What I Read As A Child", "How Science Fiction Portrays Research", "Selling To The Pulp", "FJA Slide Show", "Galaxy and the Advent of the Silver Age", "Remembering Sam Moskowitz and Conrad H. Ruppert", "Science Fiction in the Comics", "Great Cover Artists From the Pulp", "A Conversation with Ray Harryhausen", and "Looking Back on the Future".

This year we featured late night movies, and an assorted selection of short films were screened: "Jerks of All Trades" (3 Stooges), "The Genie" (Fritz Leiber, Bjo Trimble, Forrest J Ackerman), "A Profile of the 1939 World Science Fiction Con and World's Fair", "A History of Science Fiction in Film" (Forrest J Ackerman, James Gunn), "Amazon Women on the Moon" segment, and an AMC "Bradbury Appreciation of Harryhausen". Among cartoons offered were "Somewhere in Egypt" (Gandy Goose and Sourpuss), "The Mouse of Tomorrow" (first Mighty Mouse), and "The Talking Magpies" (first Heckle and Jeckle). Our classic feature films included: "Things to Come" (1936), with an introduction by film historian Joseph Grillo, "Metropolis" (1926), with an introduction by FJA (who else?!), and "King Kong" (1933), with an introduction by Ray

Harryhausen.

All First Fandom programming was held in one room at the convention hotel, and a suite was available for members to gather and relax. During the weekend, an interesting assortment of fan items were on display in the programming room, including original signed photographs and an exhibit of rare 1930s fanzines, letters, and pulps. Prior to the banquet, an informal reception was held for convention attendees to meet and get to know some of the members of First Fandom.

The First Fandom Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to John V. Baltadonis, Jack Agnew, and Milt Rothman. The First Fandom Posthumous Hall of Fame Award was given to T. L. Sherred, and the first Sam Moskowitz Archival Award was given to Christine Moskowitz. In 1998, Dragon*Con established 'The Julie', an award to be presented annually in honor of living legend Julius Schwartz. Harlan Ellison presented the inaugural award to Julius Schwartz, then Julius presented the 1998 Julie Award to Ray Bradbury.

jc

John Millard photographed at Rivercon XIX,
Louisville, KY, July 1994
photo: © John L. Coker III 1994



John Coker sends this quote from Locus, January, 1998:

"In memory of John Millard contributions to the Friends of the Merrill Collection are suggested. The Friends will accumulate all contributions and use them to purchase an appropriate book or piece of artwork which will be donated to the Merrill Collection in John's memory. Please send your contributions to:

**The Friends of the Merrill Collection
3rd Floor, 239 College Street
Toronto, Ontario CANADA M5T 1R5"**

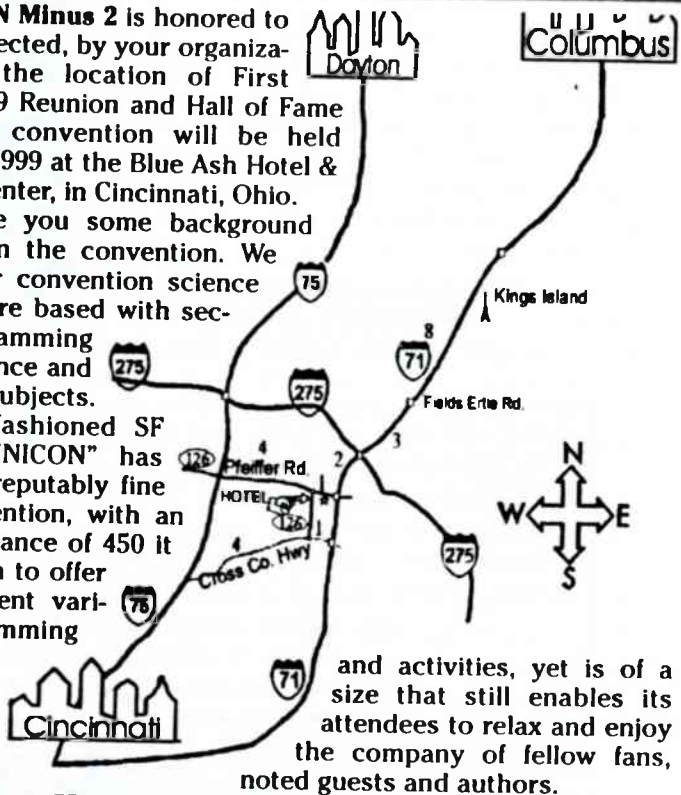


**Arthur C. Clarke - 16 Dec 1997
With the Ekanoyaka's (Hector, Valerie, Cherene, Tamara & Melinda)
in Sri Lanka celebrating Sir Arthur's 80th Birthday
photo: "provided" by John L. Coker III**

MILLENNICON Minus 2 is honored to have been selected, by your organization, to be the location of First Fandom's 1999 Reunion and Hall of Fame Awards. The convention will be held March 19-21, 1999 at the Blue Ash Hotel & Convention Center, in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Let me give you some background information on the convention. We have kept our convention science fiction literature based with secondary programming on space, science and fan interest subjects.

It's an "old fashioned SF con". **MILLENNICON** has grown into a reputedly fine regional convention, with an average attendance of 450 it is large enough to offer fans an excellent variety of programming



and activities, yet is of a size that still enables its attendees to relax and enjoy the company of fellow fans, noted guests and authors.

Getting Here From There

The Blue Ash Hotel and Conference Center is located just off Interstate 71 at Exit 15. It's one mile south of I-275, Cincinnati's outer belt, which also connects I-75 and I-74. I-75 is only 10 minutes away.

From Dayton and the North.-

Take I-75 south to I-275. Go East on I-275 to I-71. Go south on I-71 to Exit 15. Turn west on Pfeiffer Rd., * OR Take I-75 South to Rt. 126. Take

Rt. 126 (Pfeiffer Rd.) to 5901 Pfeiffer. The hotel will be on your right.

From Columbus:

Take I-71 South to Exit 15. Turn west on Pfeiffer Road.

From Kentucky:

Take I-71 North to exit 15. Turn west on Pfeiffer Road.

Take I-75 north to I-275. Go East on I-275 to I-71, Go south on I-71 to Exit 15.

* The hotel is located to your immediate left (At the BP Gas station & Bob Evans Restaurant) Turn left to 5901 Pfeiffer Road.

For further directional assistance or airport shuttle service, call the Blue Ash Hotel at 513-793-4500.

(Taken from the Millennicon flier sent out to all FF members)

STARSHIP TROOPERS

another movie review by mark schulzinger

Why, oh why, does Hollywood keep insulting me? I suppose I should also add, why does it keep on insulting Robert Heinlein, but it's obvious he and his heirs and assignees have received their weregeld even though the amount paid is far too small to compensate for the injury.

Paul Verhoeven is a hack of the worst kind, he takes silver and turns it into dross. Even the best of stories is not enough to convince him to make a decent movie, instead he creates stuff not even fit for morons and thinks he has done something fine.

This is an example of the kind of mindless reductionism practiced by the tinsletown creeps in their ever-escalating attempt to pile on the panem et circenses they think the public demands. Usually they happen to be right, but *Starship Droopers* is a beautiful example of what happens when they fail.

Heinlein proposed a kind of libertarianism at the core of his original book, and he carefully explained why it was that citi-

zenship had to be earned in his society, what happened to finally disenchant the military with their civilian masters to the point where they revolted and took over the reins of power. I recall when the book came out and many fans were up in arms that such a suggestion might even be made; it seems that some folks can't even consider science fiction to be a genre of ideas.

Verhoeven perceived libertari-

**HOO-
YAHN!!
ANOTHER BAD REVIEW!!
PREPARE TO FIRE!!**



anism as fascism — and how this can happen is quite beyond my limited comprehension — and set out to create some skinhead wet dream out of a perfectly good yarn. The entire film is presented as a commercial for the Mobile Infantry with citizenship held out as a carrot for those who will volunteer to be cannon fodder. All uniforms are more than reminiscent of Nazi Germany, and there is even a definite hint that the arachnoids of Klendathu are simple, happy bugs, and that the entire bug war has been created by the Federation masters as an excuse to keep the population happy. After Buenos Aires is creamed we see newsreels showing schoolkids stomping on cockroaches while their teacher looks on with delight.

But fascism is not the story, it's just the background. The take is simple: a young man's rite of passage from childhood to responsibility. And it is here that Verhoeven insults us. Juan Rico, a Filipino youth who become in the film an Aryan poster boy from Buenos Aires, is caught up in some sort of improbable romance with two girls — Carmen Ibanez and someone else with remarkably nize tits — and he appears to volunteer for government service just because he got into Carmen's well-fitting pants.

Whoopee, so he got into gum-mint service. So he was put into the MI. Verhoeven seems to have forgotten why he was made a cap trooper: because he had no other skills or abilities or even the gumption to be anything else. His

training is sketchy. Yeah, he gets his stripes, but for getting a buddy killed in basic training — what hooley. Finally he decides to stay in service because his parents get wiped out when a bug-driven asteroid hits their home.

It's in that particular episode that we discover just how bad the science is in the film. If an asteroid of the size shown in the movie were to hit this planet, there would be a hell of a lot more gone than just BA. Namely most of South America. Instead we are treated with something that looks like a large forest fire, and subjected to more government manipulation of our emotions. Did an asteroid really hit BA or was this something trumped up by the global Masters?

So Juan Rico doesn't stay with the MI because of any growing awareness of the duties of a citizen, the responsibility of a member of the human species, but because he was pissed off that his folks died — and he never learns any better. He gets to roll in the hay with the gal with the nize tits, he gets to shoot at bugs a lot, the bugs do him a favor by sucking out the brain of a competitor for Carmen's affections, he even gets to be an ossifer. But he never, never grows up. He just learns to mouth platitudes, and silly ones at that.

Special effects, you ask? Yeah, there are tons of em here. Remember that the release of the film was delayed close to half a year because of all the special effects crammed into it. Verhoeven likes special effects.

They're pretty. They, make the audience go "Ooh!" How nice. That means that they will supposedly swallow the rest of the garbage without thought. Yawn.

But look at it this way. In the last part of the film Verhoeven destroys the "Rodger Young." He blasts into nonexistence the namesake of the man who fought for "the everlasting glory of the infantry." He makes hash of the Queen of Battles, turning her into an instrument of despair and agonizing death rather than showing her as the fine scalpel of foreign policy.

This is not the first time Hollywood has done wrong by science fiction, heck, it isn't even the first time it's done wrong by Robert Heinlein. It may, however, be the first time that the alien enemy has been depicted as an innocent species singled out as prey by rapacious humanity. Alien has become innocent of sinister designs (that parasite living

inside you is just an Easter egg), the Martians just wanted to say "howdy." In fact, it's now Us that are the villains, the pox on the universe.

How refreshing.

ms

About the Cover:

This issues cover is my caricatured rendering of a photo published in James Gunn's ALTERNATE WORLDS of Julius Schwartz, Ed Hamilton and Jack Williamson, possibly from the 1940s. I would like to make this the first in a series of caricatures of notable SF figures. If anyone has photos they would like to see filtered through my gentle caricaturing fingers feel free to send them to me. I'll make a sketch or scan it in and send your photos back to you.

Thanks,

pm

NECROLOGY:

John Millard
Jim Broderick

DEADLINES:

Scientifiction:

April 18, 1999 - Closing date for
Summer, 1999 issue

July 18, 1999 - Closing date for
Autumn, 1999 issue

October 17, 1999 - Closing date for
Winter, 1999 issue

January 16, 2000 - Closing date for
Spring, 2000 issue

First Fandom:

March 19-21, 1999 - Reunion at
Millennicon, Blue Ash, Ohio.

May 31, 1999 - last day for nomi-
nations for the 2000 Hall of
Fame and Sam Moskowitz awards.

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