

# ScientiFiction

## THE FIRST FANDOM REPORT

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## FIRST FANDOM REPORT

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## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Greetings

*It's been a great summer so far! I am very pleased with the response to the voting this year it was a great turn out. You will find out the results of the voting in the next issue.*

*Don't forget First Fandom is the featured fan group at Marcon 40 over memorial day weekend in 2005. The web site to look at the con information is*

*<http://www.marcon.org>.*

*Contact me if you are interested in going to Marcon.*

*I will be attending the Campbell conference this year at KU Lawrence. They have for many years given the Science Fiction and Fantasy Hall of Fame Award at the conference. It is the last year that the awards will be given at the Campbell conference. Next year the award will be given in Seattle at the new Science Fiction Museum. Here is the web site if you want more information on the Campbell Conference.*

*<http://www.ku.edu/~sfcenter/campbell-conference.htm>*

That is all for this issue

*Joan Marie Knappenberger*

## DINOSAUR TRACKS

### MOFFATT HOUSE

Dear Jim & Barbara,

There certainly is a connecting bond between science fiction and mystery fiction—and their fandoms. The first mystery fiction convention, the Anthony Boucher Memorial Mystery Convention aka BoucherCon (and nowadays it is also called the World Mystery Convention!) was created and put on by science fiction fans who also happened to be mystery fiction fans.

That was back in 1970 in the Los Angeles area. The next two were also put on by the same crew (Bruce Pelz, June and me with help from various fans and the local MWA chapter), the fourth was in Boston with Bob Briney chairing it, and the fifth in Oakland with Adrienne Martine-Barnes as the chairperson.

On the pro side, a number of pulp magazine authors wrote both s-f and mystery or crime fiction and some wrote in other genres too, such as westerns and adventure fiction, etc. Our late friend, John D. MacDonald is a good example. He wrote for a variety of magazines before he made his name and fame in hardcovers and paper-

backs as a suspense writer. As such he said that he wrote "Why-done-its" rather than "who-done-its" but the stories he once wrote for the pulps and the slicks included s-f, mystery and suspense, westerns, adventure, etc.

When I was young I wasn't passionately devoted to reading. Science-fiction, fantasy, and mystery fiction have been what I liked to read for as long as I can remember, as well as westerns, sea stories, high adventure, historical novels, and on into the night. I won't take up time and space to mention my preferences in non-fiction.

One of the main similarities between s-f and mystery are the stories where problems have to be solved in order to arrive at a satisfactory ending. One uses some sort of super science (or pseudo-science) and the other uses detection, deduction, or sometimes dumb luck, or all of the above.

We hope that you two had as good a time at Left Coast Crime (mystery fandom's version of the WesterCon) as we did. We certainly enjoyed your radio show panel and seeing old friends like Dick and Pat Lupoff made the convention even more enjoyable for us.

I know you have space limitations so I'll keep this short. June sends her best wishes as does your friend,  
Len

*Bruce Pelz recalls for me the first days I came to LA, joined the club, met you and Bjo Tremble, and the rest, and first met my future wife Barbara. Bruce was an abrasive personality but smart, and ahead of the rest of the world on "Lord of the Rings". JH*

### BOB PETERSON

I just received the most recent First Fandom Quarterly. Here is a letter for the next issue. I am having to quit publishing my *Notes from Bob Peterson* due to macular degeneration. It started last summer with a burst blood vessel in my left eye, and until January I could still drive and read with a magnifying glass, but in early January my right eye started going bad and I had to quit driving and I now have a magnifying machine to read by. Even large print books I have to use the machine for.

It has been an interesting 20 or so years I have had with *Notes*. I have corresponded with several old timers, including E. Hoffman Price and Ross Rocklynne. I always heard from Harry Warner

before he died and also heard regularly from several others.

I had planned to come to the World Con this year in Boston. We will be visiting our son John and his family in Wallingford, Connecticut, in early September, and I was going to go over to the convention for two or three days. However, I will not be able to now.

Reading with the machine is much slower than normal. I got rid of all the books I had read (250 or so) and also sold most of my magazines, except for *Analog*.  
Best,  
Bob

*I hope you will consider continuing Notes and your other writings by recording onto a cassette tape. Before my cataracts were diagnosed and I had lens replacements, I could only read on the computer by enlarging the image. I know how frustrating insufficient vision is, but it is important for you to compensate and continue. I will personally transcribe your submissions to this column from a voice tape.*  
Barbara

### SAM J. LUNDWALL

Dear Jim,

Many thanks for Scientifiction -- always a great pleasure to receive,



living as I do far away in the North. Makes me rather nostalgic, too... I first found fandom and became active more than 50 years ago. Of course, in those days there were no US science fiction anywhere; I didn't know there existed any such thing. The big names SF names were (and are still for me) the French (Jules Verne, André Laurie, Camille Flammarion), the British (H G Wells, John Wyndham), the Germans (Kurd Lasswitz, Hans Dominik), the Hungarians (Maurus Jokai), the Russians (Belayev etc). And of course the Scandinavian sf authors, of which there were quite a number in those days. Oh well.

What I really wanted to do, was to notify you of an address change. My wife and I have moved from central Stockholm to a house in more rural surroundings, and my address is now: Sam J. Lundwall, Radhusallén 21 S-167 54 Bromma Sweden. Again, thanks a lot for Scientifiction. Keep up the good work!

Sam J.  
e-post: [sam.j.lundwall@faktasi.se](mailto:sam.j.lundwall@faktasi.se)

*The Scandinavians and the Irish are among the most generous people on earth, I know from experience. A fan in your country was interested in US radio drama and I was sending him some tapes*

*for cash. I mentioned my interest in the radio and movie versions of Tom Mix and he began sending me valuable old Swedish editions of Tom Mix comics for free. After several, I told him I couldn't have him giving away so much to me. JH*

## RON SMALL

Good issue! And for those members to appreciate Arthur Clarke's wistful references to his dogs, I recommend that they read his short "Dog Star"....a highly moving story.

Ron Small

*Clarke has always been one of my favorite authors. We appreciate his sending letters to our - let's face it - tiny circulation fanzine. JH*

## TERRY JEEVES

Dear Jim and Barbara,

Many thanks for the latest issue of the good old magazine, but I'm afraid the photos rather let the side down unless I just got a bum copy.

I enjoyed ACC's letter, but at 71 I'm older than him but I can still walk. However Val has to put on my socks and shoes as I have a gammy left knee which hates bending.

Like you my e-mail was defeated by spam with an average

of 120 pieces a day which was costing me both time and money just deleting the stuff. SPECIAL NOTE I'll put this in most e-mails for a while. Do not use my old address (erg40 etc) as it is choked with spam. For some reason my new address tends to send out the old one, so please make sure you are writing to the following one .... Please use my new address

[terryjeeves@madasafish.com](mailto:terryjeeves@madasafish.com)

I met Hal Clement at the 1980 Noreascon when he met Val and I at Logan airport and ferried us to the Sheraton. He also offered us the run of his house, but we declined his generous offer as not only was it out of town, but we had

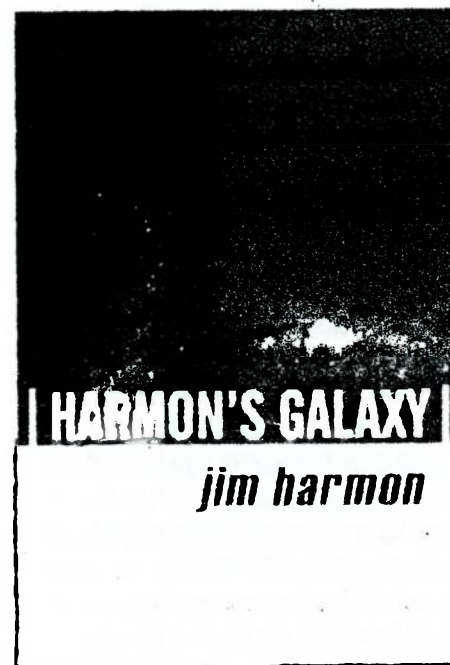
booked in at the Con Hotel.

The piece on fanzines covered one I had never heard of, but that's not unusual.

Many thanks for another good issue.

Terry Jeeves

*Emails with attachments came in from people whose names we knew but if you open them - BAM - you got the Virus. It goes into your address book and sends all a copy of itself. Our Norton Anti-Virus prevented anything going OUT, but kept the computer too busy for anything else. A professional removed the virus for \$65. Suspicious attachments still come. ... My two new books below. JH*



*Edited by Jim Harmon*

## HARMONY

### A Column in Its Fifty-Seventh Year

By Jim Harmon

Charity is getting harder to do.

Even when I was a writer struggling to pay the rent, the one act of charity I could manage was to donate my old clothes, books I could part with, maybe an old TV whose picture was getting a little dim but still worked to some thrift shop. Today, after book royalties and Social Security there may be more clothes and books and appliances that still work a bit better. But it isn't as easy to donate them. The thrift stops *edit* your donations.

The Salvation Army is the worst for this practice (although a fine charity in other ways). A couple of years ago Barbara and I phoned the Army to come over and pick up tables and chairs and other items. A truck pulled up and a muscular young man was escorted to the back yard where we had the furniture piled out. He rubbed his nose and thought "This stuff looks used."

"It is used. We generally don't buy brand new furniture to immediately turn it over to charity.," I told him.

"Well, I run the store and I know this stuff won't sell in my store. It wouldn't bring much."

"I thought you could sell it cheap then – for people who would be glad to get any kind of tables and chairs. I've been there."

"Yeah, but if it sells cheap, I don't make any money. Haven't you got anything newer looking?"

I offered him some other things – lamps, clothes, shoes. He took nothing. Apparently some of these Salvation Army places are managed on the basis of a per cent of sales for salary.

Only the DAV – Disabled American Veterans – take whatever you offer them with a cheerful smile and try to sell it. A few weeks ago I edited my collection of BETA video tapes. I still have two Beta players that work, but I have duplicated many titles on VHS and a growing collection of DVD. These duplicates I donated to the DAV – mostly science fiction and fantasy. I hope there are still a few people out there who have working BETA VCRs and can relive some Saturday afternoons with Buster Crabbe

as Flash Gordon, and skulk along with The Shadow and the Spider and join Gene Autry in the underground Phantom Empire. Probably at fifty cents a crack.

It was a problem giving these treasures to a waiting world, but I found out about the DAV. I learned the way to do it.

I hope you readers will be charitable enough to let me talk about TWO new books I have out. Both are connected to science fiction. One is exclusively SF and is called *HARMON'S GALAXY*. These are short stories and novelettes by Jim Harmon, some from *Galaxy* and other magazines of the fifties, sixties and seventies, and some from much more recent sources, and one story written originally for this book. The book is some two hundred pages long, in a soft bound trade edition with full color cover, and an introduction by my old friend and noted author, Richard A. Lupoff. The price is \$15 from Cosmos Press, or directly from me, Jim Harmon, 634 South Orchard Dr., Burbank CA 91506. Check or money order. I can't handle credit cards.

Some of the older stories are "Name Your Symptom" and "The Place Where Chicago Was" that have appeared in some previous, out of print anthologies. "Chicago" was in the best *Galaxy* stories of all time.

The new story is "Pyramid of the Visitors", the story of a structure in Old Mexico where strange things happen. After years of writing about radio, it should be no surprise that this story resembles certain old radio thrillers like *The Mysterious Traveler* and *I Love a Mystery*.

The other book is *It's That Time Again* – Vol. 2, edited by Jim Harmon and with two stories by me. The whole book and my two entries are new stories of the shows and characters from Old Time Radio.

My first story is about Sherlock Holmes, and a real radio story, since it is about a radio broadcast of Holmes. My theory is that Dr. Watson himself did introduce each show, although an actor took his part in the dramatic portion.

And on this night, Sherlock Holmes visited the show.

My other story is about The Avenger, an invisible detective just like The Shadow. Perhaps he will find out – too much like The Shadow.

FF is also represented by Jon Swartz on *Jimmie Allen* and Barbara Gratz on *My Friend Irma*. Also represented are William Nolan, Richard Lupoff, Michael Kurland, Martin Grams, and others. The book is the same price, from the same address, as *Harmon's Galaxy*. -- JH



## SCIENCE FICTION FOR THE SERVICEMAN: THE ARMED SERVICES EDITIONS

Jon D. Swartz

Members of First Fandom are of an age to remember many of the events of World War II. Undoubtedly, some even remember the Armed Services Editions (ASE), the paperback reprint books that were distributed free to servicemen by the Council on Books in Wartime. The Council was formed in 1942 by a group of publishers, booksellers, authors, and librarians who wanted to do their part in the war effort by mobilizing all sections of the book industry.

### A Brief History of the Armed Services Editions

To refresh the reader's memory, the ASE series began in 1943 with publication of Leo Rosten's *Education of Hyman Kaplan* and ended in 1947 with Ernie Pyle's *Home Country*, by which time some 123 million copies of 1,300+ titles had been distributed to servicemen in Europe and the Far East, the largest free distribution of books in the history of the world. The project continued for an additional two years after the war ended in order to serve the millions of GIs who were still on active duty overseas. All types of books were represented: adventure and historical novels, biographies, classics, cartoon books, current bestsellers, travel books, drama, humor, history, current affairs, poetry, science, self-help/inspirational, sports, westerns, mysteries, music and the arts, etc. In short, there were books to appeal to everyone who wanted to read. Most of the books were staple-bound, 5½ by 3¾ inches in size, although some were printed in a larger 6½ by 4½ format (e.g., *Selected Stories of Edgar Allen Poe*). But all were designed to fit easily in a serviceman's pocket. While the great majority of titles were published unabridged (with the cover statement: "This is the complete book – not a digest"), a few very long books had to be issued in abridged editions (e.g., the novels of Thomas

Wolfe). Abridged books carried statements such as "Condensed for Wartime Reading" and "Condensed for the Modern Reader." The covers of the ASEs featured small illustrations depicting the dust jackets of the original hardcover editions. Some authorities report that this was done in the hope that servicemen, after they had been discharged and were once again civilians, would seek out and purchase the original editions.

The Council was non-profit, but authors and publishers each received a royalty of one-half cent per copy printed. Since the first titles were published in print-runs of 100,000 copies each, several authors had more than one of their books selected, and some titles were reprinted during the course of the project, the royalties for a few authors were substantial. The books were distributed overseas only, and thus kept out of the civilian market and competition with book sales at home.

Most of the books were printed on presses used for producing digest magazines and catalogs and which had not been operating at full capacity because of wartime shortages. These fast rotary presses produced magazines "two-up" (i.e., two identical copies at a time). The ASEs were printed "four-up" on these presses: four books completely different in title and content, but with exactly the same number of leaves and attached to each other at top and bottom. The books were then separated from each other with three horizontal slices, producing four pocket-sized books, each with its spine running parallel to the short side of the cover.

The demand for short reading material also resulted in collections of stories and verse, which existed as such in no other form. These specially prepared anthologies were popular since short stories could be quite brief, a valuable attribute to service personnel on the move. The special "made" collections included the amusing and macabre farces

of John Collier (*Green Thoughts and other Strange Tales*), the fantastic tales of Stephen Vincent Benet (*The Short Stories of Stephen Vincent Benet*), and the satirical works of "Saki" (H. H. Munro). The Saki collection carried the title *Selected Short Stories*. In this case, the cover illustration depicted the dust jacket of a book that never was. The cover design was the work of Sol Immerman, art director at Bantam Books for nearly 30 years. Back covers usually carried laudatory reviews of the books' contents. Brief biographical information on authors also was included in most books.

### Science Fiction and Fantasy Titles

Several ASEs were science fiction or fantasy. In addition to those already mentioned, these included *When Worlds Collide* (Edwin Balmer & Philip Wylie), *Selected Short Stories of Algernon Blackwood*, *Tarzan of the Apes* and *The Return of Tarzan* (Edgar Rice Burroughs), *Sleep No More* (August Derleth, editor), *Mr. Adam* (Pat Frank), *Guerrilla* (Lord Dunsany), *She and King Solomon's Mines* (H. Rider Haggard), *Green Mansions* (W. H. Hudson), *Sam Small Flies Again* (Eric Knight), *The Dunwich Horror and Other Weird Tales* (H. P. Lovecraft), *The Cadaver of Gideon Wyck* (Alexander Laing), *The Great God Pan and Other Weird Stories* (Arthur Machen), *The Enchanted Voyage* and *Portrait of Jennie* (Robert Nathan), *Frankenstein* (Mary Shelley), *Donovan's Brain* (Curt Siodmak), *The Edge of Running Water* and *To Walk the Night* (William Sloane), *The Night Life of the Gods* and *The Glorious Pool* (Thorne Smith), *The Crock of Gold* and *Etched in Moonlight* (James Stephens), *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde and Other Stories* (Robert Louis Stevenson), *Dracula* (Bram Stoker), *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* and *Mysterious Stranger* (Mark Twain), and four SF novels by H. G. Wells: *The Food of the Gods*, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*, *The Time Machine*, and *The War of the Worlds*. Some of these titles were reprinted, most notably *Dracula* and *The War of the Worlds*. The selection committee obviously did a

good job finding classic SF/fantasy books that had been published by the early 1940s. On the other hand, there were two curious omissions from the list of authors whose books were selected. Not a single book by Arthur Conan Doyle or Jules Verne was reprinted in the project.

### Collecting Armed Services Editions

Complete and partial collections of ASEs exist today. The Library of Congress has a complete set of the 1,322 titles printed, as do the Universities of Alabama and Texas. Other universities – California, Columbia, Notre Dame, Princeton, South Carolina, and Virginia -- have partial collections. The University of Virginia currently has a virtual catalog of its 1996 exhibition of ASEs, "Books Go To War," online. The collection exhibited was the property of Philip Van Doren Stern, a one-time editor at Pocket Books, who was a member of the Council as well as the general manager of the Council's publishing program.

In general, prices for these books are low, as almost all of the remaining ones are not in very good condition. Most copies were read and re-read by GIs, then brought back home crammed into duffel bags. Indeed, the intention of the Council was that the books be "read up" and not brought back home to compete with the hardcover editions of these works. The hardest title to find (and most expensive to collect) is generally acknowledged to be George Lowther's *Adventures of Superman*, currently selling for around \$1,000 in good condition. Collectors seem to be most interested in the science fiction/fantasy titles and in the "made" books. There were more than 60 paperback originals in this wartime series. The true treasures for collectors are books by major authors published only as ASEs, such as *A Rose for Emily and Other Stories* by William Faulkner, *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and *Selected Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*. These qualify as the first-and-only



editions of these books and are viewed by some collectors as mandatory items for complete author collections.

### **The Significance of ASEs**

Despite the interest of universities and private collectors, the importance of ASEs has never fully been recognized. First Fandom's own Frederik Pohl once wrote that ASEs might have played a part in the postwar growth of the American paperback book industry. Prior to World War II there were only a couple of American publishers doing mass-market paperbacks. Ian Ballantine, an American who had been studying in England, returned to America with the task of improving the American distribution of Penguin Books. In doing so he came to believe that there was a place for American publishers of paperback books. The success of the ASEs may have been one of the factors that encouraged him to found Bantam Books just after the war, and later to found Ballantine Books, his own company. The sales of Bantam Books soared after the war, and the popularity of Penguin Books also increased in the United States. These increases in sales may have been due, at least in part, to the liking for the paperback format acquired by the millions of GIs in the military. Others have seen the ASE series as important to American culture in general. Professor Brucoli, for example, has written: "The importance of giving away books to young men who had never had the opportunity to read before in their lives, together with the G. I. Bill, was a turning point in American literacy." Whatever the overall effects of the ASEs, science fiction certainly benefited from this change in popular reading habits. In the 1950s Ace Books and Ballantine Books both proved to be very important outlets for the publishing of paperback science fiction books in the United States.

### **New Armed Services Editions**

Why a renewed interest in these wartime books now? For the first time in nearly 60 years, new editions of ASEs are being published! Hyperion, Simon & Schuster, and Dover

publications have joined together in publishing and distributing free ASEs to American troops throughout the world and on U.S. warships. Four new titles, all on military themes, have been printed. The first was *Medal of Honor: Profiles of America's Military Heroes from the Civil War to the Present* by Allen Mikaelian -- with commentary by Mike Wallace -- published in 2002. Already, more than 100,000 copies of the four new titles have been sent abroad. The accompanying statement that "more titles will be published as funding permits" holds out the hope that even new science fiction and fantasy titles may be forthcoming.

For those interested in reading more about these unique publications, *Books in Action: The Armed Services Editions* is recommended. This illustrated reference work contains the essays "The Armed Services Editions in Publishing History" by Michael Hackenberg and "Recollections of an ASE Collector" by Matthew J. Brucoli, plus a comprehensive list of the ASE titles. The book's editor, John Y. Cole, was executive director of the Center for the Book at the Library of Congress when this history was published in 1984.

## **DISCORD**

**Barbara Gratz Harmon**

When I joined Los Angeles Science Fiction and Fantasy Society in the late 50's, the major cost of convention attendance was the transportation to and from. Now the cost for two to attend rivals the profits from some books. The last convention I didn't attend was the World Con in San Jose in August 2002. We didn't register, but had dinner with President Joanie, her husband and daughter, Dick and Pat Lupoff, and some other fans in San Jose. We do see many of the California-based FF members at mystery conventions and paperback shows, which are free or moderately priced.





EXCERPTS FROM A FAKE FAN'S DIARY

1950 - - 1959

by Robert A. Madle

January, 1950: Attended the regular bi-weekly Sunday meeting of the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society. The usual gang was present: Jim Williams, Hal Lynch, Jack Agnew, Sol Levin, Dave Hammond, Al Pepper, L. Sprague de Camp, George O. Smith, Milt Rothman, etc. Since I started college in 1948 the PSFS remains just about my only science fictional activity, except for the Pantascience Literary Society. After the meeting we all filed up to Jim Williams' place for several rounds of night-caps. It is interesting to note that Jim usually has more people at his place after the meeting than actually attended the meetings.

March, 1950: The regular bi-weekly Tuesday evening meeting of the Pantascience Literary Society was held last night at 1366 B. Columbia Avenue, in my bedroom. This time the following showed: Agnew, Pepper, Charles Watson, Sol Levin, Hammond (Somebody said last night that his name is something else -- like Ginrot or something), Harry Alsdorf, Russ Swanson, and two or three others. With my collection lining the walls, plus a bed and a desk, the place was pretty crowded. Anyway we accomplished the following intellectual activities; drank two cases of beer, smoked couple of dozen cigars, figured out who would be the next PSFS officers, Agnew told dirty jokes, Hal Lynch suggested we do something constructive like standing at newstands and when a youngster purchased a sf mag, grab him and talk him into joining the PSFS. This was voted down as it would cut into our beerdrinking time too much. Lynch then suggested we make a tape recording of an sf story. This was ok -- so long as it wouldn't interfere with beerdrinking. A "panel" discussion ensued on the subject, "which church is best for the people?" Madle took Catholicism, Sol Levin selected protestantism, and Jack Agnew defended the Jewish Church.

This proved so popular that other such panels are planned, such as: "which Union is best for the people?", "which grocery chain is best for the people?", "which Republican paper is best for the people?" and based on the results of a political questionnaire held at a recent PSFS meeting, "which member of the PSFS is the Republican?". (The vote was 21-1 -- with the Democrats nosing out the Republican.)

May, 1950: Although the monthly stipend I receive from the US Government isn't too large, my wife and I decided to do what everyone else is doing -- and we now own a real George 16-inch Admiral TV. Several other PSFS'ers have recently purchased TV sets, also. I guess active fandom will never know we exist now.

June, 1951: Gee! I'm a college graduate now.