

Sci-Fi Fiction

Autumn, 1995



The First Fandom Report



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On the cover: This happy pair of rogues, Joe Hensley and Ray Beam, review their appearance at a local church. Note how their shoulder holsters barely show.

Photo by Mary Lu Lockhart

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News

EISENSTEIN PLANS EMSH PROJECT

INFORMATION NEEDED

Alex Eisenstein is palnning a book on the artwork of Ed Emsh-willer. He needs information for this. If you own any of Emsh's artwork, if you know anyone who owns any, if you have memories of old con auctions, or any other information that might lead to little-known holders of his art, Alex would like to hear from you. He would also like to know if anyone knows where he can contact Robert Guinn.

To contact him write to Alex Eisenstein, 6208 N. Campbell, Chicalo, IL 60659.

guest at Inconjunction XVI to be held July 5, 6, and 7, 1996.

As part of its invitation the con has extended the following:

1. Free membership for each mamber and companion;
2. A suite for a Saturday night private party;
3. A programming slot for the posthumous Hall of Fame presentation;
4. Programming slots for panels, slide shows, and discussions throughout the weekend.

The con will be held at the Indianapolis Mariott Hotel, 7202 E. 21st. St., Indianapolis, IN 46219

Inconjunction draws fen from most of the eastern part of the country and has been traditionally well-attended. It has most often been held at the Adams Mark, but that hotel is badly in need of refurbishing. The Mariott hotel appears to be close to the Indianapolis International Airport, and transportation there should be no problem.

Indianapolis itself has emerged from its cow-town past into a vibrant, modern city. Monument Circle is the centerpiece for a downtown complex that includes shops, theaters, and the renova-

1996 REUNION IN INDY

INCONJUNCTION MAKES INVITATION

Inconjunction, the long-run-ning regional con in Indianapolis, has asked First Fandom to be its

ted Union Station. Excellent food is available almost anywhere in the city, and shopping opportunities abound. No, I didn't pick this up from some Chamber of Commerce brochure. I spent my twenties shuttling between Cincinnati and Ray Beam's home just outside of Speedway.

Additional information can be obtained from the conchair Rebecca J. Chike, 649 College Way, Carmel, IN 46032.

NEW MEMBERS

The following Founding Member has joined:

Katherine MacLean West

RR4, Box 592B Mountain Road

Arundel, ME 04005

The following associate member has been accepted:

Jerry Gray Corder

917 University Blvd., N.

Jacksonville, FL 32211

Welcome Dinosaurs!

SUSTAINING PATRONS

We have new sustaining patrons, to wit:

Robert Beerbohm

Steve Bolhafner

John S. Brooks

Gene Bundy

Jonie Knappenberger

Ricia Mainhardt

Nancy Shapiro

Richard W. Zellich

Samuel J. Maronie

Welcome aboard!

DUES

Dues in First Fandom remain \$5.00 per year. The number on your mailing label will tell you to the end of which year your dues are paid. Please keep your dues current if you possibly can.

APPLICATIONS

The following have applied for associate membership:

Arlan K. Andrews, Sr.

BOOK REVIEW

by

Mark Schulzinger

Glimpses, by Roger Alexander, Delphic Publications, Inc., 362 Gulf Breeze Parkway, #107, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561. 310 pages; \$24.95.

Alexander Rojas, part Hispanic, part, Native American, a veritable melting pot of humanity, finds himself vastened within the Mainframe along with a flock of other dead people in the year 2515. The job of the Mainframe is to recreate humanity on other worlds, Earth having been made uninhabitable through human stupidity.

All goes well until the first stellar probe is launched and Rojas first has a mystical experience with a non-existent passenger named Timothy, then finds the ship taken over by an evil entity who has never existed within the vastened space before. He puts a number on everyone and the rest is predictable.

This book is a good example of religious writing attempting to masquerade as science fiction. Every now and again someone gets the notion that he has figured out what John the Divine really meant in his polemic against the churches of Asia Minor and just has to tell everyone about it. Rather than write a biblical com-

mentary, the person figures he's going to write a science fiction story instead.

Roger Alexander is a bad writer. He is certainly able to write coherent sentences, but he is incapable of developing a character or a plot. The background of his protagonist has nothing to do with the story, and he certainly does not grow throughout the novel. His knowledge of matters scientific is adequate, but his imagination is sadly truncated; almost nothing he posits makes any reasonable sense.

Of course there are those who maintain that I should treat such a "story" as prophecy or as a moralistic tale. Nope, can't do it. When a writer wants me to convince others to shell out twenty-five smackers for his *samizdat* he had better come up with something that's worth it. As science fiction this book doesn't make the grade; as fantasy it's an insult. If your religious leanings are such that fundamental Christianity makes sense to you then you might find it interesting, but I think you might enjoy re-reading the Epistles instead.

REVENGE OF THE SCI-FAN

REUNIONING

The third First Fandom Reunion is now officially over, but it was a dandy while it lasted. Despite the conflict with Midwest-con, about 28 First Fans attended, and it was one of the most congenial groups I have seen yet. I'm going to name some names further on, but I won't try to mention everyone who was there; I'd never manage to recall them.

Archon is held in an extended location in Collinsville, Illinois. The entire convention complex consists of three hotels and a convention center. This is nice, but the main hotel and the convention center are at least two blocks distant from one another, and our more frail members had to be shuttled from one location to another.

Adding to the confusion was the weather. That area had a massive low trapped over it and storms were boiling in from Ohio, directly opposite of the usual weather flow. As a result things were hot, humid, and decidedly soggy. I was in an auxiliary hotel and found myself having to walk at least six blocks several times per day. I need the exercise, but the humidity had me longing for

my new mountain home within hours.

Archon is one humongous con. Estimated attendance was about 2,000 people (counting fans), and events had to be scheduled at both the convention center and the main hotel. One of the first events, on Friday afternoon, was a panel entitled "First Fandom -- Yesterday And Today." It was at 1630 hours and was sandwiched between a panel on fannish hoaxes at 1600 and Julie Schwartz's slide show at 1700 hours. Martha Beck, Hal Shapiro, and Bob Tucker decided not to have their earlier panel, our later one was attended only by First Fan types including Leigh Couch who slipped in almost unnoticed. Ray Beam, Mel Schmidt, and I decided there was no use in preaching to the choir, so we all adjourned to the convention center (now walk this way...) to see what Julie was serving.

Julie was serving vintage wine in cut-glass goblets. His slides had been made from old prints dating back to at least 1931 and showed First Fans, First Authors, First Editors, and First Illustrators. Julie, as usual, provided the ever-running commentary in such quantity that he almost lost his voice over it. I suspect he could have gone several hours has his voice permitted. This was the finest historical slide show I've ever seen.

The extremely thoughtful con-com, in addition to providing us with airport shuttle service, con shuttle service, meal money, and con attendance, had an entire suite set aside for First Fandom use. It was liberally stocked with liquor and munchies (food was available in the VIP suite just one floor down), and provided the locus for two birthday parties and an Event. Friday nite was the birthday party for Sam Moskowitz. A cake with a Jurassic scene had been prepared, and we all over-indulged. I did so with Jim Tibbetts while we reminisced -- hard to do while scarfing up good cake.

In the midst of everything the Van Vogts appeared. A.E. has a bit of difficulty now and then, but his lovely and charming wife Lydia filled in the gaps. I was extremely pleased to see that Van's works are being reprinted, and Lydia told me that Hollywood is interested in some of his stories. Van was gracious enough to autograph one of his books for me, and spent much of the con signing innumerable volumes that the fans brought with them.

The banquet was held at noon Saturday, a luncheon buffet. That made a lot of sense to me, since it allowed us to have a good time while we were still reasonably alert and recovered from the trip to the con site. I blush to say that the posthumous Hall of Fame awards took over 20 minutes, but

SaM quite rightly observed that a man should not spend all his life writing and then be limited to three minutes of comment. Julie told outrageous stories about Mort Weisinger, and SaM presented Cyril Kornbluth to yet another generation.

The reception of the awards was so great and heartfelt that SaM wondered to me later if it wouldn't be better to move the entire Hall of Fame award ceremony from Worldcon to a regional con. I see his point and am certainly inclined to agree.

Saturday evening was Julie Schwartz's birthday party complete with a Superman theme. It was capped by a phone call from Arthur Clarke in Sri Lanka. Arthur was supposed to have called Friday nite, but the rules of the hotel forbid connecting a caller to a room number; he must specify an individual who is registered at the hotel. Arthur specified a name, but that individual as not registered. He then tried to tell the staff he was Arthur Clarke, which is kind of like trying to tell an Australian aborigine that you're Josep Broz Tito. A horrified Jonie Knappenberger just happened to wander past the desk in time to hear the hotel operator complain: "It's that darned Englishman again. I wish he'd stop calling." But it got straightened out, and Arthur exchanged pleasantries with all of us.

There were other happenings at the con as well. Sustaining Patron John L. Coker, III had an excellent exhibit of First Fan fotos, all signed, in the art show. Paul McCall, who had been selling his paintings to *Amazing* as interior illos (no wonder they went broke) was a little concerned as to the fate of his artwork, but sold a most unusual painting to some obviously demented fan. I say that because of the content of the painting -- a nude Betty Page astride a space ship. Sally's aboriginal stone carvings sold as well. Now she's busily working on more.

I wish I could say I enjoyed the huckster room. There were two book dealers and one comic book/pulp dealer. Everything else was weaponry, games, buttons, and other stuff. I could see why Bob Guccione closed *Omni* down -- he's gone into the production of a glossy comic book he calls an illustrated pulp. Sorry, but I won't pay money for something like that.

As a matter of fact I bought exactly two books at the con. I passed over Volume II of Perry Chapdelaine's collected letters of John W. Campbell because it was devoted to the Van Vogt/Campbell correspondence. Too narrow a topic for me. Also, at \$45, too dear a price.

This was a wonderful con for First Fandom. We wound up with at least half a dozen new sustain-

ing patrons and several requests for membership applications. Most of our events were well attended, and I got many compliments on *ScientiFiction*. Maybe SaM is right, maybe First Fandom's future lies away from the huge worldcons and in the lap of the regionals.

All in all we were treated with amazing generosity and consideration by the concom. We wanted for nothing, were lionized, flattered, listened to, feted, and in general treated like first-class citizens. It was a good con and a great reunion.

By the time you read this the Summer dues mailing has gone out along with the roster, the Hall of Fame ballot, and a request from Ev Bleiler for information. In response to requests from the membership we are going to start publishing the telephone numbers of those members who give their permission to do so. We know that some of you out there don't mind phone calls from fans at all hours of the day or night, but some of you do. Remember, if you want your phone number to appear in the roster, write it on the ballot.

Ray suddenly realized that there would have to be some changes made to the roster of representatives. Since I moved out of the Midwest, it's impossible

that I continue to be the rep for that area. Hal Shapiro made the mistake of opening his mouth at Archon and is now Vice-President of the Midwestern region. Other reps remain the same: Bob Madle is Vice-President of the Eastern region, and Martha Beck is Vice-President of the Western region. Me? Well, I'm the Last English Speaker in Gallup.

For those of you who follow such things, McDonnell-Douglas's DC-X made its seventh successful flight at White Sands in June when it climbed to over a mile, executed a 180 degree flip, and settled back onto the pad again. The success of this experimental space ship has led the New Mexico government to start exploring the feasibility of building a commercial spaceport. While the final version will probably be located on Indian lands and have both a gaming casino and nuclear waste storage facilities, it looks like my new abode is eager to become the future home of commercial space travel.

A few folks were concerned that my usual aggressive comments didn't appear in the last ish. The problem, friends, involved the very nature of space itself. Because of the half-sheet size of *ScientiFiction* and the fact that it's saddle stapled I'm constrained to

page limits that are divisible by four. Figure it out: each full-size page is actually four half-size ones. Last ish had more than enough material for 24 pages, but not enough for 28. In fact it had so much less than 28 that I couldn't even pad sufficiently to add the extra pages. I could only make everything fit by drastically shortening my editorial and omitting all comments from the lettercol. So you see it was very much a bad news/good news situation.

I'm not even certain you'll be reading all of this editorial. My second constraint has to do with print size. I'm constrained to use 10-point type because none of us can see as well as we used to. I go to a smaller type in the information box, but that's because it only holds basic data. With the two size constraints I often find myself at deadline time frantically writing more material or ruthlessly deleting it. Some of you think I add too much, others that I delete too much. Everyone agrees that I'm aggressive. No excuses, folks, my title is Editor, not arbitrator.

I've gotten good response to pubbing fiction -- and paying for it. You'll be seeing more stories, maybe one an ish or every other ish. I've got some great articles lined up. We're discussing some photo spreads. All of this costs you the usual: \$5.00 per year. That's cheap at twice the price.

Back in the days when a burlesque show was pretty risqué and an eight-pager was downright obscene the Cincinnati Fantasy Group published a famous and rare document entitled "Lost Limericks and Bar Room Ballads." This letter-size volume contained 69 numbered pages, blank covers, three staples, and an amazing collection of material which was so blue for the period that the mimeograph stencils were destroyed after the run was completed.

Included with limericks, songs which were later recorded by folk singers, and prose items, were classic verses penned by Charles Tanner whose aping of the style of Newman Levy started rhyming fandom down a brand new path. "The Saga of Helga Helgesdatter" is only one of the gems that appeared in this document.

Some years back I had occasion to remove the staples from my copy and make a photocopy of the volume for one of our members. If the membership is interested I will go through the process again to make copies available for those who wish a memento of those heady years when you really could see something dirty in the crotch of every tree if you looked hard enough. I think I can produce it for \$7.00 a copy, which price includes shipping. If enough are interested we may be able to do it for a dollar or

so less. Let me know.

Department of Loose Screws: Stu and Roberta Friedman announce that the original cover painting for "The Martian Chronicles" is available. This cover, painted by Arthur Lidov, is 11 1/2 X 10 inches, and is egg tempera on gesso over masonite. It is framed and reproduction purposes are included. The price is \$20,000, obo. If interested contact the Friedmans at P.O. Box 49, Granit Springs, NY 10527. Phone (914)245-8642. The offering does not specify if this is art for hard or softcover editions, nor the publisher, nor the date of publication. It does note that the artist was self-taught and received a patent in 1867 for an Insertable Spokeless Wheel, a plastic bicycle that ran on ball bearings and was impervious to flats. No information was given on how much this marvel would cost.

The British postal service, which has been recently privatized, issued a stamp commemorating H.G. Wells and his "Things To Come." Our postal service appears to like wither factual material or out-and-out fantasy. It's a shame that while Jules Verne and Wells have been commemorated on stamps, Verne in many countries, we have yet to come out with a stamp that honors anyone connected with science fiction.

DEADLINES

The deadlines for First Fandom events and *SciFare* as follows:

First Fandom:

December 31, 1995 -- Last date ballots for HoF voting will be accepted.

May 31, 1996 -- last date for nominations for 1996 Hall of Fame award.

SciFiction:

October 22, 1995 -- Closing date for Winter ish.

January 20, 1996 -- Closing date for Spring, 1996 ish.

April 20, 1996 -- Closing date for Autumn, 1996 ish.

July 20, 1996 -- Closing date for Winter, 1996 ish.

FROM SCIENCE FICTION TO REALITY IN SIXTY YEARS

by

Conrad H. Ruppert

Ten days in bed, what a horrible thought for an active ten year old boy! But, as I look back

after sixty years, it did serve to introduce me to a lifetime interest -- science fiction. Among the books and magazines my mother bought me was a copy of Hugo Gernsback's *Science and Invention*. All of the various articles fascinated me (and also started an interest in science that I have never lost) but, there was an installment of a story by Ray Cummings which gripped me the most.

After that I haunted the newsstands for each issue of *Science and Invention*. I also found that *Argosy All-Story* magazine frequently ran science fiction stories. I read all of the H.G. Wells and Jules Verne books I could get my hands on. I also acquired quite a few of the Tom Swift books. My hunger for reading science fiction was really insatiable, and, of course, finally *Amazing Stories* was issued and I had a constant source.

However, as I think back, the most wonderful thrill of all is that I lived to see much of science fiction become commonplace!

Radio (my mother also bought me a kit with which to build a crystal radio set, and I remember hearing the Happiness Boys, the Gold Dust Twins (Hey, Conrad, you are digressing -- get back to science fiction!)) was already a fact -- *but* I watched television (yeah, at an electrical exhibition I saw early television with the rotat-

ing discs) grow into the pervasive force it is today!

Avidly I read about rocket experiments -- and finally saw Neil Armstrong land on the moon in 1969. Believe me, for a man who had read about these things in H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, that was the thrill of a lifetime!

Back in 1928-1929 I joined the International Correspondence Society, and met, by mail, Ray Palmer, P. Schuyler Miller and several others who were to play an important part in science fiction.

1933 saw my partner and myself print (hand set type on a hand press) a booklet reprint of A. Merritt's "Through The Dragon Glass." It was an artistic success, but a financial failure.

Yes, "The Time Traveller" was the first printed science fiction fan magazine -- and I printed it! There was an agreement with the editor of the magazine (no name here), Julius Schwartz, Mort Weisinger, and myself -- but the editor reneged -- and Julius Schwartz, Mort Weisinger, Maurice Z. Ingber, and myself decided to issue our own science fiction fan magazine -- "Science Fiction Digest." We also recruited Ray Palmer and Forrest J. Ackerman as co-editors. Later the publication became "Fantasy Magazine." All of the type was set my hand, by me. (I

recently received a First Fandom Achievement Award for that.)

Charlie Hornig wanted to put out "The Fantasy Fan" and I printed that for him also. Among other science connected printing jobs I did were early issues of "Astronautics," the magazine of the American Rocket Society; some work for Willy Ley; the Stanley G. Weinbaum memorial book "Dawn of Flame;" and one souvenir journal for a Science Fiction World Convention.

The ironic part about the previous two paragraphs is that today I don't have a single copy of the magazines I printed! Sam Moskowitz bought out most of my science fiction production.

I remember going to meetings of a science fiction fan group, gotten together by Will Sykora (either in Flushing or Corona, on the north shore of Queens) and being there when a young college student named Isaac Asimov came in with some friends.

Perhaps I'd better stop with all the nostalgia -- but I can't help it -- we had a great time in those days. We were First Fandom!

Now to get to the real point of the essay. When I was a youngster -- boy and man -- I used to read about all these marvels: television, robots, computers, rockets, flights into space, and so forth. I've lived

long enough to see many things evolve into reality.

I saw talking motion pictures when they were in their experimental stage -- my family was among a group of people asked to invest in the Dumont sound-on-film process. I was an avid movie fan and was thrilled by the earliest "talking pictures." I often wished that science fiction could be brought to the silver screen. I believe I saw the best (to that time) science fiction movie ever when "Star Wars" debuted. I'm looking forward to seeing more.

I read about, and also saw, some of the early rocketry experiments. I lived to watch the Eagle land on the moon, and subsequently the moon walks (on television, of course). Also every time the shuttles take off I watch with great interest, and also their landings in the desert.

In *Argosy All Story Weekly* I read a novel (can't remember the name) by Fred MacIsaacs about how the United States prevented a second World War by exploding an atomic bomb over the desert in the West! The year escapes me, but it was in the thirties, and nobody else had written about the subject before. In 1945, after an appendicitis operation, the first thing I was in the headlines was about the atomic bomb over Hiroshima!

Of course science fiction took

on the theme of electricity generated by nuclear power long before anybody ever planned such reactors. Then that reality also emerged -- they actually began to build nuclear plants to generate electricity. The sadness, to me, is that very vocal groups are trying to shut down nuclear plants, and also ban them forever -- I wonder if we will go back to the Dark Ages?

Airplane flight was also a science fiction dream. Since Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic we've seen the development of daily trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific flights!

In conclusion, all I can say -- it's been a wonderful, progress-filled time to have lived. I'm glad I've been here for the last sixty years. My most fervent wish is that I can live to see more of my science fiction dreams become reality.

ON LINE?

Send in your e-mail address. Let others bother you in the privacy of your own computer!

OBITUARY: AMAZING STORIES

by

Donald Franson

The news of the death of the world's all-science fiction magazine may be just another false alarm, like that of Mark Twain or Bob Tucker; but as one of the last of the subscribers I am inclined to believe it is true. I received a letter from TSR, the publisher, in May, informing me that the Winter 1995 issue, which I had received in January, had been the last; and that I was entitled to a refund on my subscription.

I had been reading *Amazing* since 1930, but my current subscription started with Cele Goldsmith (later Cele Lalli) as editor, went through the reprint era, the Ted White years, later ups and downs, large size, small size, crisis after crisis, but none more fatal than the first one in 1929. That history is not new to most of you, so I am not going to give my feelings on the end of it all. You may say, after all, it was only a name. But what a name!

This must be the last of the titles with exploding adjectives. Quite a few other magazines still exist, despite economic problems for all magazines in the age of the paperback, but their titles don't promise amazement. Why not?

I want to be amazed. I want to be astounded, thrilled, astonished, at the fantastic, imaginative, wonderful adventures of future science I am reading. Sense of wonder is not dead!

I am amazed these days, not by the SF magazines, but by *Science News*, *Ad Astra*, *The Planetary Report*, even by the *National Geographic*. If science is amazing, why not science fiction at its cutting edge which is the magazines?

Maybe it is the result of the dictum of John W. Campbell, Jr., that SF should present the marvels of the future as if they were common everyday occurrences, familiar to the characters of that day. Ho-hum.

As a premium for refusing a refund for the six issues left on my subscription I promptly received a big package via UPS that contained this coffee-table book, *Buck Rogers: The First 60 Years*. Though it is priced at \$24.95 it is not a bargain at \$15. The only things worthwhile in it are Ray Bradbury's introduction, written in 1969 (this book was published in 1988, hence the 60 years) and the reprints of selected comic pages from the thirties through the seventies. But I am not a comics collector, and the rest of the book disappointed me. I expected it would give the inside story of how the idea of Buck Rogers came about, since it was edited by the

granddaughter of John Flint Dille.

How Anthony Rogers became Buck is told elsewhere, but I'll summarize it. Philip Francis Nowlan published a story in the August 1928 *Amazing* featuring the adventures of Anthony Rogers called "Armageddon -- 2419 A.D." John Flint Dille, involved in newspaper syndication, was scanning a newsstand and was attracted by the garish cover of that issue.

This cover is shown in full color (mostly red and yellow) in this book, without explanation. That is unfortunate because readers will automatically assume that the cover, by Paul, illustrates Nowlan's story, and shows Buck Rogers in action. But the man on the cover doing tricks with a flying belt is *not* Buck Rogers. It is Richard Seaton.

I know this, Dave Kyle knows it, as may anyone who has a copy of the magazine and will look at the contents page where it says, "Our cover this month depicts a scene from the first instalment in this issue of the story entitled THE SKYLARK OF SPACE (sic).

My theory is that Mr. Dille picked up the magazine and began flipping the pages, looking for the story illustrated on the cover. He came upon those cute little outline drawings, almost

comic figures, that are in the middle of Nowlan's story (pages 427, 430 and 437 in the magazine, pages 24, 27 and 34 of the book). He saw their possibilities for comic strips, contacted Nowlan, and the rest is history. But if he had only looked at the contents page, he might have contacted Doc Smith instead...

In that alternate history we early SF fans might have been laughed at for reading "that crazy Dick Seaton stuff."

So *ave atque vale*, *Amazing Stories*. Hail and farewell! May you forever remain on that great newsstand in the sky where it is always 1926 and the spirit of Hugo Gernsback reigns supreme.

Editor's Note: In a reply to a letter from Ray Beam, TSR, publisher of Amazing Stories, stated that it was considering a final anthology issue of the magazine to appear next year. At this time, however, it appears that the magazine is up for sale and any offer will be considered.

Twenty Years On

by

Terry Jeeves

The Mad Scientist was old, but so was The Accuser. A Devil of a problem, what?

Henry Grimes, biochemist, was a genius, millionaire and a monomaniac in waiting. At school he has been hated by his peers. His teachers disliked the him but were quick to claim his abilities as testimonials to their teaching skills. Henry breezed through college with top marks in every lecture subject and bottom barks in popularity. Barely has he graduated than his genius devised an infallible, one tablet, oral contraceptive suitable for men or women. This made him a millionaire and financially independent. At that point his monomania took over.

Grimes began a relentless search for the unwanted factor in the human make up which leads inevitably to ageing and eventual death. Not that he thought all the

human race was worth preserving, just a part of it. To be precise, a very small part, namely Henry Grimes. With typical determination he devoted years of research to nailing down the wayward gene which writes *finis* to every life just when the money starts to pile up and things get interesting.

He followed numerous blind alleys and fascinating lines of research to their ends before he abandoned them as useless. One by one Henry eliminated possible routes to his goal until at last he discovered what he knew must be the right track. It would take time, but his ultimate success was certain. Given another decade or so he knew he could isolate the killer gene, neutralise its power over his body and become immortal.

There was just one little

snag. By the time he reached this point in his research Grimes was seventy years old. He might not live long enough to grasp the glittering prize.

After much deep thought the monomania struck again. He spent precious time to study occultism, witchcraft, black magic and Satanism. He consulted forbidden books, grimoires and archaic writings. He purchased eyes of newts, blood of bats, tongues of toads and other unlikely ingredients. Virgins' tears proved particularly hard for him to find, although the tears part was easy.

With his new knowledge and raw materials Henry attempted many weird concoctions. His progress was slow, his indigestion frequent, but eventually he discovered and learned the correct spells, drew a pentacle and called up the Devil.

Beelzebub proved to be a crusty old fellow in a threadbare scarlet robe, very deaf and wearing rimless bifocals. It wasn't an encouraging sight, but Grimes wasn't going to give up at this stage. He came straight to the point.

"I'm seventy years old, and I want another twenty years," he said to the ancient one who crouched within the confines of the pentacle.

"Speak up, don't mumble,"

the Evil One grumbled.

"I said I want another twenty years," Henry gritted.

"You want what?" Beelzebub quavered.

"ANOTHER TWENTY YEARS!"

"Well, if that's what you want, then it's granted," the Devil cackled. "In exchange, of course, for your immortal soul, claimable on your death under my 'no refunds' policy." He eyed Henry's wrinkled features and added, "and that shouldn't be too far away."

Reaching inside his robe, the Devil withdrew a sand-filled timer which he inverted and placed on the table between them. He also withdrew an old-fashioned ear-trumpet which he held to his right ear.

"Now, once the sand has flowed through," Ancient Evil wheezed, "your wish will be granted and your soul forfeit."

Grimes gave a malicious grin.

"Just one thing you might like to know," he gloated as he watched the sand flow swiftly into the lower half of the glass. "You'll never collect my soul because by the time my extra twenty years are up I'll have discovered the secret of immortality." He rubbed his hands gleefully as the last few grains began to slither through the timer.

"An extra twenty YEARS?" Satan gasped. "Twenty YEARS, and you planned to fool me by becoming immortal." He gave a rheumy laugh. "This is the first time I've been glad to be a trifle deaf..."

The final particle of sand dropped noisily into the lower glass and the Devil's bargain was sealed. Sound washed over Henry like ocean waves. He heard grass growing, flies walking, clouds bumping. Above the sudden cacophony he made out the Devil's last words.

"...I thought you said you wanted an extra twenty EARS!"

DINOSAUR DROP- PINGS

Dear Mark:

The personal stuff in *ScientiFiction* is always interesting, but if you want to count heads, my three are very strongly against including fiction. I'm interested in the doings of the archeopteryxes (plural archeropteryges?) and smilodons, or material really connected with the old days. There are plenty of other places where one can get stories. Also, I think

the basic concept is wrong: the old days are gone, and imitations of the old days are bound to be false. Even if well done.

Best regards,

Ev Bleiler

(Sorry, Ev, around here we only give votes according to the body count -- Mark)

Dear Mark:

Many thanks for the latest issue of *ScientiFiction*, the mag goes from strength to strength. Even fiction now! I really enjoyed "Spookball." It started off in similar vein to a story I once read, but went into so much more interesting realms. No wonder you decided to run it in StF.

I also enjoyed reading Bob Madle's bit of history and the letters were interesting even if my query about the *ScientiFiction* title didn't get answered. Doesn't anybody know?

Re my comment on the vanishing of Standard 8mm cine film. I've located a source -- one little snag, the guy wants £20 for a 50ft. reel, plus £7.50 processing, AND you must buy a minimum of four reels. I shall not be making any more animated films until I can afford a video camera which will do stop motion.

Had a good trip last week, a conducted tour of the Fylingdales

BMEWS system a few miles from here. Very interesting and very high-tech and high security.

I see Conrad Ruppert mentions *SF Digest* Was that the one published by Henry Burwell back to back with *Cosmag*?

All the best and keep 'em coming.

Terry Jeeves

(Terry, the last ish was filled to overflowing and I had to delete my usual comments to the locs. There is a difference between a copyright and a trade mark. A trade mark is a word, phrase, symbol or design, or a combination of them, which identifies and distinguishes the source of the goods or services of one party from those of others. A copyright protects original works of authorship. Neither overlaps the other. The titles ScientiFiction, First Fandom, and such are all descriptive of the organization and are trade marks. All that aside, I was unaware of the military significance of Fylingdale. It gives new meaning to the Jethro Tull piece "Fylingdale Flyer." -- Mark)

Dear Mark:

Many thanks for the latest *ScientiFiction*.

Kindest regards to all hands whom I rarely see, regrettably! But I do keep up with Bob Peterson as well as with Connie Willis,

whose latest I await with bated breath!

Sincerely,

Ron Small

(It's always good to hear from you, Ron -- Mark)

Hi, Mark,

Congratulations on a beautiful issue. (Except, of course, for those two old farts on the front cover.)

ScientiFiction is really going back to our beginnings. A vintage story and a letters column.

And a pay rate from to the same period. No, that's not a put down. Now they don't pay that well. There are many, many that pay only in copies and some that even want you to pay for your copies.

Even the top pay of around \$1 per word (*Omni*, *Playboy*, etc.) isn't all that great. Suppose you managed to sell 3000 words to one of them four or five times a year. You get the picture. Don't give up your day job.

No, the ET laws have more to do with making sure there will be a net of red tape ready to enmesh the horse when he arrives in the barn yard.

'Things that ain't here any more.' (Like 8mm movie film and reel to reel tape.)

When I was in high school, the eight page porno comics known as Tiajuana Bibles were the best the period offered as a sex ed. text. They were so poor, in fact, that the school authorities went to considerable effort to eliminate them from the curriculum.

Now the proprietors of the few remaining dirty book stores have never heard of them.

I haven't made up my mind if their disappearance is good or bad. It's just a niggling little twinge, like the departure of Burma Shave signs.

I read that Florida passed an "English only" law. It's just my left over Fortean sense of humor that makes me chortle (I like that word) when the Dade County Zoo promptly removed the Latin names from the signs in front of the cages.

Hope to see you at Archon or Libertycon.

Yours,

Roy Lavender

{Roy, thank you for sending me a softcopy of your letter. It made it extremely easy to paste to this file. This old editor appreciates the courtesy. Now that you have my e-mail address, you can just send future letters to me direct and bypass the USPS entirely. The Tiajuana Bibles have been reprinted by an outfit called Eros Comix, P.O. Box 25070, Seattle, WA

98125. You can write to them for their latest catalog. Please let them know if you're over 21 years old. -- Mark/

Dear Mark:

I see that I have been accepted as an Associate; thanks, it's gratifying. Also thanks for printing my letter to you, though it probably doesn't make a lot of sense to other people; needs to be put in context with its immediate predecessor. So: I'm 62 years old and have been a devoted reader of sf since age 12; got interested in fandom shortly thereafter and even had a few letters printed in the old *Planet Stories* during the late 1940s. Nowadays I'm a retired Army Master Sergeant after having spent 30 years and a bit in Signal Corps as a communications electronics technician. If any of you folks remember me, the young teenager from Boone, North Carolina, I would love to hear from you.

It's good to see that Horace Gold is now a Founding Member, and I hope there will be a revived *Galaxy*. I used to buy it regularly when I was stationed in Germany and Japan. Couldn't keep all those issues, though; had to contend with weight limitations on how much I could ship.

Interesting bit of history there regarding the Hugo award; seems to be a bit of debate too. Wonder

which side is right?

Enjoyed "Spookball" in spite of the fact that I don't usually like short fiction; this was exceptionally good. These days I rarely buy mags because I prefer the longer novels; they allow more in depth plotting and character development. In addition, shelf space and finds are somewhat limited.

Enjoyed the Dinosaur Drop-pings more than anything else. I like to see others' viewpoints, and I keep looking for names of pen pals I had back in the old days when I was a high school teenager. Sean Donnelly's letter was certainly pertinent. If membership isn't open to younger people, this club will eventually, and inevitably, go defunct. We old geezers aren't going to be around forever. Sean and I carry on a regular correspondence; he is an avid SF devotee and is doing quite a bit of work as an SF historian. Commendable in my opinion.

Regarding Terry Jeeves views on firearms, here is the other side of that coin. I find it noteworthy that cities with the most stringent gun laws are those with extremely high rates of gunshot homicide. In addition consider the incidents not so long ago on the Long Island Railroad and in a restaurant in Killeen, Texas. Those two kooks were able to wreak the havoc they did because no one else had a weapon. If ordinary folk were permitted to

carry pistols, someone would have dropped them. I will agree though that military hardware, such as assault rifles and machine pistols, should not be readily accessible to ordinary civilians.

Sincerely,

Roy R. Wood

4709 Rutherford Drive

El Paso, TX 79924

{Roy asked that I include his address so old friends could contact him. By now both Roy and the rest of you should have received the latest roster with the names and addresses of all members. Anent "assault rifles" wouldn't the '03 Springfield and the M-1 carbine have been considered assault rifles at one time? -- Mark/

Dear Mark & Ray --

Thanks for mentioning my review. I should amend it slightly: my essay was entitled "From FIAWAL to GAFIA: all about Fandom." The actual book being reviewed is Joe Sanders' "Science Fiction Fandom" published by Greenwood Press, a fine book.

I would like to nominate for the hall of Fame a grand old Planeteer, Basil E. Wells. I do not know whether Basil is in FF but his credentials in science fiction, if

not in fandom, are obvious. A stalwart of *Planet Stories*, several books from FPCI and others, an associate in friendship of David H. Keller, M.D., a perfectly lovely and modest gentleman of 85 living and *still writing* in retirement.

Congratulations on restoring "old-time; SF fiction! Great story!

All best,

Ben Indick

[Just to keep the record straight, Ben's nomination reached me May 26, just five days shy of the deadline. I apologize for the mixup in names and titles. Ben's essay was a pleasure to read, and it should entice others to purchase the book. -- Mark]

Greetings:

In mid-Missouri, as you may or may have not read, we have been blessed with an over-abundance of water. One week before many in Jeff City were flooded out of home and business. Nancy was hired to manage the Hertz agency at the Jefferson City airport. As this is being written we are informed that there is still two feet of water in the terminal building and hangars as well as four feet covering the runway. Great timing, what!

Finally getting around to reading the Spring *SciFiction*. Gee, I can remember when WorldCon attendance of 400 was considered

earth-shattering. When Jonie Kanppenbberger told me the projected attendance at Archon, it almost made me decide to stay home. Guess I'm from the school that liked the exclusiveness of First through Seventh or Eighth Fandoms. One of the reasons I stopped going to WorldCons -- and even Midwestcons -- was probably losing the feeling of being the proverbial *big fish in a little pond*. Or maybe not.

Re the ET Exposure Law and such, I suddenly recall being told some years ago that the main reason we won WWII was that the Germans were enmeshed in more paperwork than we were. Given the German reputation for thoroughness it was possibly possible in the forties. For another military paperwork tale, ask me about the *Flypaper Report* in St. Louis.

Nuf fer now,

Hal Shapiro

[The Flypaper Report is legendary, Hal, so I won't ask you about it. Hmm, Missouri is awash and people wonder why we moved to a mountain top. Take it from me, with the current girth of ten each one is now a very big fish indeed no matter what the size of the pond. At NolaCon some megafan complained that the elevators should be made larger. I opined that, were that to happen, ten would just expand to accommodate the increase in volume. --

Mark/

Dear First Fandom;

Since Connie Ruppert asked, herewith:

I was born in 1910 -- a month and a half after Aubrey Mac Dermott. I also read Tom Swift -- and the Motor Boys and Radio Boys and Jules Verne, but met modern science fiction in the *Electrical Experimenter* in January or February 1918. Later it was renamed *Science and Invention*. I subscribed to it strictly for the stories. Boy was I mad when I saw the *second* issue of *Amazing Stories* on the stands. I wrote a hot letter to Gernsback for not letting me know.

What you recalled as the International Correspondence Society was the Science Correspondence Club, later renamed the International Scientific Association. Its organ (the first fanzine) was *Cosmology* and you printed the last two issues. The first issue was named *The Comet*, so that was the first fanzine, but it became *Cosmology* before any other science fiction fanzines appeared.

Clifton Amsbury

Dear Mark:

I nominate Hal Clement for

the 1997 Hall of Fame award.

Julie Schwartz

[Julie, noted. And thanks. -- Mark]

Dear Mark:

I don't correspond much and I'm not very active in organized fandom, but I am very proud to be a member of First Fandom. *Maybe* one of these days I'll get to a First Fandom meeting.

Sincerely,

Lester Mayer

[Thanks for the note, Lester. We always like to hear from our less active members -- Mark]

Dear Mark,

Early January I experienced one of the deadly symptoms of cancer and wound up with a urethral biopsy late January which led to the diagnosis that I had urethral cancer which had hopefully been resolved by the removal of two small tumors and cauterization of the area. The urologist wanted to wait three months and, if there were a recurrence, remove my urethra (not useful to me since my bladder cancer in 1985).

Three months of waiting for cancer to re-occur didn't appeal to me as a life style, so I sought a second opinion and wound up with

a urological oncologist who assured me that the cancer *would* occur and recommended proceeding with a urethrectomy which was scheduled for March 28.

In the meantime, negotiations we had started in December were completed and in early February a crew started to work to build an attached 2-car garage for us, including a concrete driveway to replace the gravel we had lived with since 1971. We also had all external wood paneling on the house replaced, along with painting the wood trim (we have a slump block house). That made for a hectic five or six weeks and combined with my medical uncertainties to keep me very uptight.

The surgery went very well and I was informed that the follow-up lab work showed that I was completely clean, so for the second time in my life I did not have to undergo radiation or chemotherapy for cancer.

I completed most of Part 2, the mountain rescue stuff of "A Fan on the Rocks" in June of 1994. Unfortunately I discovered that the analyses I had done for two fatalities still had a lot of emotional baggage for me, so I haven't gotten back to finish it off. I also recognized that I had failed to deal at all with the beauty that one often finds in rock climbing in Part 1. I added a couple of paragraphs in case I ever republ-

ish the autobiographical essay; to wit:

There is a considerable outdoor beauty associated with climbing. The views from "the top" were almost always gorgeous. The most beautiful climb was on the red sandstone of the Sedona area with my son-in-law to be and one of his friends (who subsequently climbed the Himalayas).

The most memorable "climb" was a rappel in the moonlight down the steep cliffs which form the western face of the Eagletail Mountains about WSW of Phoenix. A friend and I decided to go back to our family camp rather than stay in the mountains with our climbing friends. We were about halfway down the 200 foot cliff and I was belaying him as he rappelled down the last pitch. Standing there in the moonlight on that cliff and looking out across 15 miles of terrain to the next mountain range, I decided that I couldn't think of anywhere else I would rather be.

Well, hope that all is well with you and yours.

Sincerely,

Stan Skirvin

(I do my climbing in the daylight, Stan, but I agree that it's a beautiful experience -- Mark)

Dear Mark,

It was a pleasure to meet you at Archon. I want to express my

sincere thanks for all you do for First Fandom. I hope you are enjoying your new home. New Mexico is such a beautiful state.

Sincerely,

Leigh Couch

(And a pleasure it was to meet you, too, Leigh. I recall we've corresponded sporadically on First Fandom matters over the years but never managed to arrange a meeting. -- Mark)

Saludos --

Just noticed that today is the closing date for the Fall issue so decided to be late with comments. Although we do have until the end of the year for the Hall of Fame balloting.

Okay, go ahead with the telephone numbers. I enjoy receiving calls and the obscurer the better.

Just received some pics from Mary Lu, including one of you coming on to Ray in a big way. Well...whatever makes you happy.

I'll leave any debate about fiction in *SciFiction* to others. Frankly, though, I'm not sure it enhances the publication. Now of you could get your hands on some original unpublished Verne, Wells, and/or Doyle, it may be more palatable to potential nay-sayers.

Possible minuscule money-saving suggestion: in cases where

more than one FFer (whatever the classification) receive their mail at the same address, send communications together. Or wouldn't it be saving using bulk mailing?

luvnstuff2awl,

Hal and Nancy Shapiro

(Hal, our mailings are pretty much automated. To go through the system, eliminate redundancy, and combine mailings is a task that takes precious time we don't have. However maybe you might be willing to volunteer to do it. By the way, this happens to be your second loc in one ish. Are you trying for some kind of record? -- Mark)

Mark:

I would like to place Ray Bradbury's name in nomination for a long overdue Hall of Fame award.

Nelson Bond

NSB007@aol.com

(Noted and entered, Nelson. By the way, this came in over the Internet. -- Mark)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This summer has been better than the last that contained the appendectomy despite a few minor irritations. I did not like missing Midwestcon, but had a great time at the First Fandom Reunion at Archon. The committee was very generous and followed through with all their promises. We had a real nice turnout of the First Fandom Members.

We have been offered a Reunion in 1996 by the group in Indianapolis that puts on Inconjunction. Inconjunction XVI promises to be a very nice Convention as it has been in the past. The dates will be July 5, 6, and 7, 1996. The details of their offer are presented in a letter elsewhere in this issue. As before we as officers of First Fandom do not endorse these offers but present them to the membership. It is for the individual to decide to attend. I admit that I am partial to Inconjunction since I was Fan Guest of Honor at Inconjunction I along with Phil Farmer as Pro Guest of Honor and Bob Tucker as Toastmaster. Also, my wife, Mary Ann as co-chairman of Inconjunction IV.

I will be attending Pulpcon in August which technically is not a Science Fiction convention. I will see a lot of the older SF fans there along with other friends who are strictly Pulp collectors. First Fandom and Pulpcon have a lot in common in that they are both composed mainly of older Fans. The difference is that the Pulps are gone and as time goes by they will cease to exist, but First Fandom will continue as the Associate members become the old timers.

I am looking for information about Fandom in the Indiana area. I have been connected with Indiana Fandom since the early 1950's. However, I have seen references to a group that existed in the early 1940s in the Ft. Wayne area. I am hoping that someone can give me details on this group or any others that were active in Hoosier land prior to 1950.

That is about it for this time. Looking forward to another successful Reunion in 1996.

Ray

FINAL COMMENTS

As you may have noticed, we got our first loc via the Internet from Nelson Bond. This is a Good Thing inasmuch as it allows you to send me letters, messages, and maledictions in far less time than using snail mail. It is a Bad Thing if my Internet node goes down, as it did for about two weeks.

When a node goes down the ever-vigilant Mailer Daemon sends a message to the mailer to the effect that the recipient doesn't exist. The poor daemon doesn't have a memory for whether or not a node existed in the past, only that it doesn't exist in the present. As a result it conveniently kills the potential recipient of the message.

So if you get a letter to me kicked back by the daemon, just try again. Internet links are not yet perfect, and sometimes become Internyet links.

This ish was another example of too much material/too few pages. To handle the situation, and believe me I'm glad we have so much to publish, it was necessary to pad with white space, additional commentary, and suchlike. Many thanks to all of you out there who wrote arti-

cles, stories and locs for thish.

I forgot to mention one thing about Archon that particularly pleased me -- the number of *Babylon 5* fans around. I have never been a fan of the *Star Trek* -- *The Pepsi Generation* series, nor have I cared for *The X-Files*, *Sliders*, and other stuff (with one notable exception). *Babylon 5* is a fresh idea for television: a science-fiction series that is written and produced with intelligence, and wit. Its universe is fairly believable, its story lines are usually intriguing, and its endings are not always happy.

The one notable exception is *The Adventures of Hercules*, a fantasy show loosely based on the Greek demi-god which manages not to take itself seriously. It's produced by Sam Raimy, the same fellow who produced *The Evil Dead*, a film best known for a protagonist who replaces his right hand with a chainsaw. Raimy enjoys having a good time and a few yocks, and he wants his viewers to do the same.

Next ish we'll have more goodies for you. Write soon, now!

FIRST FANDOM
Dinosaurs of Science Fiction

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