



LICKS #1 (August 1990) is written and produced by Rob Hansen of 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB, UK., for FAPA.
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Never actually having seen a FAPA mailing, I have no idea what its 'flavour' is and consequently I'm unsure what level to pitch this zine at. That will be solved by next time, of course, but for now I think I'll play it safe and start with a few personal details...

I was born on 9th November 1954 in Cardiff, Wales. This makes me Welsh. I point this out because long experience has taught me that far too many Americans assume that anyone from Britain is English and that the terms 'English' and 'British' are interchangeable. They are not. Wales and England are both parts of Britain. I may be British, but I'll never be English. I attended my first convention in 1975, published my first fanzine in 1976, and moved to London in 1980. In 1982 I won the Nova Awards for Best British Fanzine and Best British Fan Artist, and in 1984 the European Science Fiction Award for Best European Fanzine. The fanzine in both cases was EPSILON. In 1984, I was chosen as the TAFF delegate and so attended L.A.CON II, my first visit to the US. (My TAFF report is still being serialised and will be complete Real Soon Now). In 1985, I married American fan Avedon Carol, and we live together in domestic bliss at the address shown in the colophon. In 1989, we were the Fan Guests of Honour at the British national convention, the Eastercon, held that year on the island of Jersey, off the coast of France. We've visited America four times since marrying, the most recent visit occurring in May this year when we attended CORFLU in New York. My fannish biography has appeared fairly recently, in the unnumbered special issue of ETA I did for the Jersey Eastercon, but it did little more than touch on my fanzine publishing. Therefore, in order to correct that grievous oversight - and because it gave me an excuse to compile the list that appears in these pages - I present:

MY BRILLIANT (FAN PUBLISHING) CAREER

My first fanzine, EPSILON #1, appeared in September 1976, a year and a half after I'd first made contact with fandom through attending SEACON 75, the 1975 Eastercon. My sole motive for producing it was to have something to trade for other fanzines. It had no editorial philosophy, no character, and very little in the way of contents (and what it did have was double-spaced to make it seem more substantial than it was), but I thought the cover I'd drawn for it was pretty good and that it was very cleanly produced. This last was hardly surprising. Since I had no access to a mimeograph (I was, so far as I knew, the only SF fan in Cardiff) EPSILON was professionally printed. So the first thing I ever published was a litho crudzine. Nonetheless, I was proud of EPSILON and it garnered enough of a response to encourage me to produce another issue. Unfortunately, at £26 a throw I couldn't afford to produce an issue as often as I wanted to (at the time I was only earning about £1000 a year), so I decided to start up a less expensive zine that would appear between copies of EPSILON. It appeared in January 1977 and was called SKWELSH. (Hey, most of us have fanzine titles in our past we'd sooner forget.)

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* FISH HELMET
** THE FANHATTONITE

*** BORN IN THE UK
**** Camera-ready copy produced, but never actually published.

(Numbers in brackets are the page counts for the zines they follow)

In July 1988, I put together THE COMPLETE FISH HELMET (combining items 11,21,22, 23,25,26,27,28 & 31) in an edition of about a dozen copies. For various reasons, I decided not to include it in the above list. As to why this zine is called LICKS...well, I always liked the logo I produced for the original LICKS (which is now LICKS 0, I suppose), and since I'm unlikely ever to do another music fanzine.....

SKWELSH #1 was run off secretly on my employers' xerox machine and, since I had no idea how to photocopy on both sides of the paper, consisted of three single-sided sheets. It was met with such resounding indifference that I decided I'd better stick with EPSILON. So, soon after the 1977 Eastercon, I put together the second issue. It was only eight pages long this time, to reduce printing costs, but the type on those pages was single-spaced and reduced, so it probably contained at least five or six times as much text as its predecessor had. Unfortunately, due to inflation, the price quoted for printing issue two was both more than that for issue one and more than I could afford. So EPSILON #2 also was subsequently run off, single-sided, on my employers' xerox. Nor was this the end of SKWELSH.

A couple of months earlier, with Newport fans Bryn Fortey and Mike Collins, I'd formed the South Wales SF Group, which had as honorary members such Welsh-fans-in-exile as Greg Pickersgill and Dave Langford. Given that we only saw these honorary members at conventions (of which there were then only four a year in Britain) and at parties, it occurred to me that we needed a groupzine to forge a unified identity. Not wanting to waste a good title (yeah, yeah, I know) I revived SKWELSH. In May 1977 it made its first and, as it turned out, last appearance as the organ of the South Wales SF Group.

EPSILON #3 (Feb'78) was my first mimeographed fanzine and it was printed for me by John and Eve Harvey. It had a wraparound litho cover that was supposed to be the same size as the zine, only the printer printed it the wrong size. I told everyone it was a poster and I believe that Dave Bridges actually stuck his up on his bedroom wall, but then he always was a little strange. There were three more EPSILONs that year, all of them printed by Greg Pickersgill and all of them now quarto rather than the A4 format of previous issues. Beyond the physical changes there were also changes to the contents. Reports on conventions and on parties had formed the meat of earlier issues but now, though those things remained, the emphasis shifted. I was far enough into fandom by this point, and sufficiently sure of myself, to start an editorial column, 'Notions', in which I sounded off on the state of British fandom. EPSILON had now achieved the basic form it was to maintain for the remainder of its existence to date.

LICKS #1 (May'79) was a 'theme' fanzine. Being interested in rock music, which was going through a particularly fascinating phase at that point, I decided to put out a fanzine devoted to the experiences of fans in the music field. To this end I'd interviewed Graham Charnock at the previous year's NOVACON about his involvement with the Burlingtons, who had played at a couple of conventions, and about how he'd come to be a part of Michael Moorcock's band, The Deep Fix, on the album they had released a couple of years earlier (which, I believe, has since been deleted). The transcript of that interview formed the body of the zine, and it was rounded out by a piece from Bryn Fortey. A second issue was planned but never materialised. A fanhistorically interesting footnote to this is that I bought the mimeo on which Greg Pickersgill had produced FOULER from him in order to run off LICKS #1. Unfortunately, I couldn't get it to work properly so, apart from the final page on most copies, Greg ended up running the rest of the zine off on his own Gestetner.

Having long been interested in comics I started working, in 1979, on a series of three and four page comics stories that were a satire both of fandom and of traditional superhero comicbooks. I'd completed four of these when I realised that I had no idea who would want to run them in their fanzines. The only solution, it seemed me, was to publish them all in a special one-off zine and,

early in 1980, STARFAN #1 duly appeared with duplication courtesy of John and Eve Harvey. Soon after this I bought a used Gestetner 466 from my employers, the mimeo I have to this day, but before I could make use of it I lost my job and finding a new one led me to London.

My first year in London was taken up flat-hunting, learning my new job, getting used to the pace of life in the capital, and generally losing myself in the social whirl of London fandom - London may well have been the best place in the world to be a fan in the early 1980s. It wasn't until I was firmly established in my East Ham flat at 9A Greenleaf Road, nursing a large mortgage, that I put out my next fanzine, the first to be run off on my mimeo. This was the entirely inconsequential TWO OTHERWISE BLANK PAGES and it was produced in June 1981 for the first mailing of the short-lived APA-SF&F. It was my first apazine.

In July 1981, I relaunched EPSILON with its seventh issue which, like many another issue over the next few years, had litho covers that were run off for me by the Harveys using the British Science Fiction Association machine. Mid-1981 was when many of the fans who had been active during the 1970s came to life again after the slump that followed the 1979 British Worldcon. American fanzine fandom too seemed to have acquired new vitality, and for the next few years we rode a wave of renewed transatlantic activity that seemed to me to be as exciting as the wave that had contributed so much to fandom in the 1950s. Between July 1981 and January 1983, EPSILON enjoyed an unbroken run of seven issues and won a Nova Award. I imagine that the fan artist Nova I won at the same time was in large part a result of the covers I drew for EPSILON as well. The achievement I was most proud of, however, was getting Leroy Kettle to write for me. I've read stuff by all the acknowledged fannish humourists but none have made me laugh as much as Kettle.

Avedon Carol won the US to UK TAFF race in 1983 and so got to attend that year's Eastercon in Glasgow. She was in town the week before the convention and I saw her a couple of times at various parties and the like. At the same time I was working on ETA #1, which I was publishing to hand out at the Glasgow con. This was an 'ensmalled' fanzine, a format that was particularly popular in the early 1980s and one I decided to try my hand at. ETA was full of short and snappy pieces, like others of its ilk, scurrilous and slight. In Glasgow, Avedon and I hit it off and she stayed with me during much of her second week in Britain but neither of us, I think, had any idea where things would ultimately lead. It was the summer she spent staying with me in 1984 when things got serious between us.

There were two more issues of EPSILON before the end of 1983, and also three issues of FISH HELMET. This last was the zine I did for FRANK'S APA, which had been set up at that year's SILICON in August - SILICON being a convention that was similar in many respects to the current day CORFLU. SILICON was a fanzine fans convention, but many of those who attended hadn't actually put out a fanzine in years. During a lively session in the bar, it was decided that an apa deadline was what these people needed to spark them into activity and FRANK'S APA was launched on a wave of alcoholic enthusiasm. FISH HELMET got its name from a 'speako' during a conversation at SILICON in which great amusement was caused by my omission of 'bowl' from the term 'fish-bowl helmet'. I produced a further four issues of FISH HELMET between March and August of 1984, at which point I flew to the USA.

In EPSILON #16 (Aug'84) I described how I had won TAFF, and EPSILON #17 carried the first chapter of my continuing trip report. In between was the trip itself,

which was unbelievably wonderful and which you will be able to read about in its entirety any year now. Unfortunately, this TAFF race also sparked off what became known as 'Topic A' or 'the TAFF Wars', which engulfed the 1984, 1985, and - to some extent - 1986 TAFF races. You've probably heard far more about that over the years than you ever wanted to, but suffice it to say that in their wake the TAFF Wars left a much-weakened fanzine fandom. The vibrant transatlantic scene faded away and contacts between our fandoms fell back to the feeble levels of the 1970s. As TAFF-winner and then TAFF-administrator, I was necessarily caught up in the thick of the conflict, and most of the large quantity of writing I did between my trip and the early months of 1985 were sucked up by it in the form of letters and suchlike. In November, I managed a final FISH HELMET and in January I put out the first TAFFETA, a single sheet of obligatory TAFF business, and then fell silent. I, too, was a casualty of the TAFF Wars, and for nearly a year I could summon up no enthusiasm for fandom at all.

Avedon moved to Britain late in May 1985 and three weeks later, on the summer solstice, we were married. By August much of my enthusiasm for fandom had returned and I put out the eighteenth EPSILON, the final issue to date. I'd decided to mothball EPSILON in order to work on CRANK, a zine I co-edited with Ted White, that made its debut the following month. In late 1984, before all that TAFF craziness got out of hand, I'd been planning to co-edit a monthly zine, called POOT!, with Harry Bell. Harry dropped out, however, and I ran the material I'd written in EPSILON #17. CRANK was something like I'd imagined POOT! would be. It was another 'ensmalled' zine, but was unique in that Ted and I used a rather interesting method on it. We'd take it in turns to type CRANK up, putting our own stuff and our co-editor's on stencil. Then, after running off the copies for our side of the Atlantic, we'd mail the stencils to the other guy so that he could run off the copies for his side. This was intended to eliminate the transatlantic response-lag without resorting to expensive airmail, and it worked, too. Ted and I had hammered out the particulars of CRANK when he was over for the wedding, and it was intended to spark some life back into those who'd been laid low by the TAFF Wars. Unfortunately, though Ted and I liked each other's stuff and were fannishly sympatico, we soon discovered that we had strongly divergent views on a number of editorial matters, and consequently CRANK was never the zine it should have been. CRANK was published monthly, but it was flawed from birth and it would have been necessary to terminate it eventually to preserve our friendship. In the event, Uncle Sam intervened in the form of a drugs bust and Ted spent some time in jail. Not unnaturally, the then-current CRANK, issue 5, was the last.

In February 1986, shortly before our first trip together to the States, Avedon and I co-edited CHUCH #1, which contained such high-quality pieces that Mike Glycer suggested that by itself it probably constituted an anthology of the best fanwriting of the year. The contributors were Christopher Priest, Jeanne Gommoll, Patrick Neilsen Hayden, and Dave Langford - which is why the pieces were so good. CHUCH was named for the great Chuck Harris and came about when we talked Priest into writing up the tale he told us one day about seeing the Beatles play in the Cavern in 1962. This, when it arrived, was so good that we decided to commission others to complement it and to start a fanzine devoted to high-quality writing. To date, there hasn't been a second issue, which is due in part to a lack of contributions of sufficient quality, but mainly because soon after CHUCH appeared we got involved with a new zine, PULP.

It was during a coversation at Greenleaf Road about the current state of fandom that Pam Wells suggested we start a frequent genzine. This was something that we

all agreed was needed to get fanzine fandom out of its post-TAFF Wars doldrums, and in order to spread the work and expense we decided on a rotating editorship. In June 1986 the first issue of PULP duly appeared. Pam edited that issue, Viné Clarke the next, and Avedon and I the third. This was the rotating editorship and, so far, PULP has been on both bi-monthly and quarterly schedules at various points, and missed deadlines on more than one occasion. Pam was soon replaced by John Harvey, and Viné eventually dropped out leaving the editorship as it currently is, with John editing one issue and Avedon and I the next. Walt Willis was a columnist in PULP's early days and our current regulars include Dave Langford and Chuck Harris.

In February 1987, Avedon was one of the Guests of Honour at WiSCON, in Madison, Wisconsin. This was our second visit to the US.

Through a fair part of 1987, I was gathering together material for, and editing, four publications that were being produced for sale in the fanroom at SEACON'87, the 1987 Worldcon which was held in Brighton, England. The research for, and writing of, one of these - THE STORY SO FAR - was particularly time-consuming, but also particularly satisfying. In 1984, when on the committee of the first MEXICON (a sort of SERCON, with elements of CORFLU), I'd been responsible for publications and decided to write an article on the history of British fandom for the programme book. Sadly, this grew to such a length that it ultimately had to be bumped from the programme book. It languished in my files for three years until SEACON'87 came around whereupon we decided it should be expanded and added to the items we'd already decided to offer in the fanroom. However, though THE STORY SO FAR was about as good as could have been done in the time, I wanted to find out more about early British fandom, particularly the fandom of the 1930s and 1940s. There followed six months of intensive research which culminated in March 1988 with the publication of THEN #1 - a history of British fandom in the 1930s and 1940s (which is out of print now, alas). A further year's research and writing produced THEN #2 exactly a twelve months later, which covered the story of British fandom in the 1950s. The 1960s are proving rather more difficult to find details on, though research continues, and THEN #3 is unlikely to appear before the end of 1990.

November 1987 saw the birth of the Hatton Group, the name deriving from the pub where we first met. We were a breakaway faction of an older London fan group, Friends In Space, which faded away a few months after the split. Since all of us lived in London and saw each other regularly the last thing we needed was a group newsletter, so I started one. The first issue of THE FANHATTONITE was published in June 1988 and there have been a few published since, none of them being of the slightest consequence whatever. At one point, Avedon started up another group newsletter, MAD HATTON, which styled itself 'the alternative to the fascist running dog media monopoly', so we had the totally absurd situation of a six-member fan group having two newsletters.

By this point, having spent many months poring over dusty old fanzines while doing research for THEN, I was feeling the need to flex long-unused muscles and to put out a general circulation fanzine again. The fannish climate wasn't such that it could sustain EPSILON any more (not enough return on effort, in other words) so instead I ressurected ETA, which had only seen a single issue back in 1983. ETA #2 wasn't terribly impressive, but it did 'break the ice' and was followed in January 1989 by ETA #3, which was a fannish newszine no less!

For our FGOHship in Jersey over Easter 1989, Avedon and I did special issues of our zines ETA and BLATANT that were published in Ace/Tor Double format and left in a pile in the fanroom for anyone who wanted them. We distributed the remaining copies at CORFLU 6 in Minneapolis the following month, our third visit to the US.

Spike Parsons, an old friend and member of the Madison group, had suggested before Easter that I join a new US apa that was being set up - Apa of the Damned - an offer I decided to accept. There was a lot of back-biting and general unpleasantness in British fandom at the time and though I wanted to produce fanzines I had no desire at all to produce them in that atmosphere. I do this for pleasure, after all. Robert Lichtman, the 1989 TAFF winner was at the Eastercon, and he tried to get me to join FAPA, but I decided that one apa was enough for me. The first issue of my apazine, BORN IN THE UK, went out with the second mailing of the Damned, and I haven't missed a mailing since.

In October 1989, in response to various things happening in British fandom (none of which you probably want to know about, since I know how boring the fanpolitics in someone else's area can be), I wrote ETA #4. However, by the time it was finished the situation had calmed down considerably and Avedon convinced me that it would serve no purpose to release it. She was right, but it remains on disk just in case I ever need it. ETA #5 was published for distribution at the 1990 Eastercon and at CORFLU 7, which we attended during our fourth and most recent visit to the States, of course. (By the way, these trips are not just fannish but also involve visiting the in-laws.) Which brings us more or less to the present.

So why did I join FAPA? Well, despite contributing regularly to another apa, researching and writing THEN #3, and publishing the occasional ETA, I discovered that I want to do still more writing. Whereas I used to enjoy having written I now actually enjoy the process of writing itself. This is due in no small part to having access to a word processor, which has changed my attitude to writing much more than I would have believed possible. Also, I admit to a certain curiosity. This is the oldest fannish apa in the world, and contains some near-legendary fans. I wanted to see just what FAPA is like....and this mailing I will.

FLYING TO AMERICA

Flying, I am convinced, is one of life's great joys. Avedon doesn't share this conviction and usually glares balefully at me as we lift off and I go:

"Wheeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!"

Avedon keeps her nose buried in a book, reading with intense concentration throughout a flight. Nevertheless, she always finds time to inform me that:

"All that keeps this thing from crashing to the earth are thin air and theories."

The main problem with flying to America is the Atlantic. The Atlantic is boring. Hour after hour with nothing to see but ocean. Fortunately, there are these bits at either end of the flight that are intensely interesting and it's these that keep me glued to the window at those times. We had unusually clear weather when

we flew out of Britain in May, and a pilot whose occasional commentary enabled me to get a fix on exactly where we were with the aid of the maps in my fake-o-fax. It's funny, but knowing precisely where we were and being able to follow our course on a map was genuinely exciting. I picked up our position when the pilot identified the island to our left as the Isle of Wight, and from there was easily able to pick out Bournemouth, Poole Harbour, and Portland Bill as they passed by. We had been heading almost due west thus far, but at Portland we turned about 15 degrees to the north, quickly traversing Devon and heading for the sea. We crossed the coast near an easily identifiable feature called Baggy Point, a finger of coastline jutting out into the Atlantic that points directly at Lundy Island, a few miles further out. Sure enough, Lundy hove into view looking incredibly beautiful, like (and I know this is a cliché but, really, there's no other description that catches it so well) a green jewel mounted on burnished metal.

I stayed at the window long enough to see Ireland pass by beneath, looking uninhabited as usual, and then settled back to contemplate the 'welcome' that awaited me in America. During my first trip, in 1984, I was stopped at customs by a stern-faced official who ordered me to open my case and started rummaging through it, asking me questions all the while. It was just pot-luck that of all the travellers streaming into the USA they had singled me out for attention, I supposed. But I started to get concerned when a second official was called over to go through my hand-baggage, and positively worried when a third took my passport into a back room and ran a computer check on me. Eventually, obviously pissed off at me for wasting their time by not actually carrying any contraband, they ordered me to re-pack my bags and told me to beat it. I assumed I must fit some dopey profile they used to identify suspicious characters, though I hardly thought that my jeans, sneakers, T-shirt, bomber jacket and moderately long hair marked me out from many of my fellow passengers.

"It's the beard" Avedon later explained, "As far as those in power in the US are concerned, young men with beards are a subversive and undesirable element. The customs guys obviously had you pegged for a drugs courier."

"That's dumb! If I was going to smuggle drugs I'd make sure I looked as respectable as possible; short hair, clean-shaven, three-piece suit, the works."

Oddly enough, I was searched again when next I visited America, in February 1986. Unfortunately, we were carrying copies of Dave Langford's TAFF report with us which, as you may know, has a cover depicting a clearly stupid customs officer going through Dave & Hazel's luggage while a character loaded down with contraband slips by him unnoticed. Our customs guy stared long and hard at that cover before deciding, somewhat reluctantly I thought, to let us through.

The following February we visited the US again and, you will by now not be at all surprised to learn, I was stopped at customs. Clearly they were still using the same profile - and I still fit it. This was at Boston's Logan Airport and, thinking that time was running out for us to make our internal connecting flight, I got more and more agitated as the search dragged on. When the customs official told me I could go I took off at high speed - with him in hot pursuit. I was so flustered that I'd left my tickets at the customs desk!

I was also given a cursory search when we visited again in April 1989, making it four times out of four, so you can imagine my trepidation as we approached customs this time. Only something remarkable happened. I wasn't stopped! Avedon was shocked, and demanded to know why they weren't searching me.

"It's a tradition," she said, "and he looks like he could be carrying drugs." The customs officer laughed, and said:

"Hardly. Drugs couriers go for three-piece suits and respectability." Nice to know they change their profiles occasionally.

MAILING COMMENTS

Since finishing the above the May mailing has showed up. I didn't realise I'd get a mailing before contributing so, to round this out, here are a few mcs:

KING BISCUIT TIME (Lichtman): I share your gloom about the level of fanzine activity in "general fandom" and agree that the response loop in apas is more appealing these days (it's no accident that I'm currently in two apas). Still, there's an extent to which I feel uneasy at this retreat into the apas and wonder whether the activity the apas suck off prevents the sort of 'critical mass' of activity developing in general fanzine fandom that is needed to kick-start it and get things rolling again. Or does the size of fandom these days, the difficulty in hearing the voice of like-minded souls against the sheer volume of background 'noise', make the sort of fanzine fandom you and I would both like to see again a thing of the past? Perhaps not. The last decade may have seen profound changes in British fandom but you've been where we are now for much longer than that, yet those conditions didn't stop Ted White and Dan Steffan from sparking a renaissance with PONG. So it can be done. At the time Brian Earl Brown (or maybe it was Taral) commented that it seemed a very limited renaissance and one seemingly designed to exclude many, totally missing the point that it had to be. Bigger isn't better, as you said. Or, as Don Fitch put it even more eloquently: "Just how large can a group become before individual members become insignificant and the sense of 'group identity' is watered down to the point that it's no longer satisfying or sufficiently rewarding?" Right.

HORIZONS (Warner): You make a persuasive argument for the pop music of a particular period vanishing entirely after 50 years, and SF writers should certainly be more careful about including references to such in their stories, but given that many of the biggest concert draws in rock are acts who have been performing for more than twenty years I think it may last a bit longer. What makes me think this is that a large part of those audiences, particularly in the US, appear to be made up of people in their teens and early twenties who are listening to the same music - in many cases the same numbers performed by the same people - as their parents were a generation ago. They also listen to contemporary rock of course, but they're aware that these older acts were those that started rock and can find pleasure in their music. In my own case, I've been getting particularly interested in the blues roots of rock in recent years, an interest I'm hardly alone in, and so found myself listening to music recorded in the 1930s and 1940s. This is music that still informs rock and quite a few of those old songs have become part of the standard repertoire of later groups such as the Rolling Stones. Still, as Gordon Eklund points out in his zine, rock music forms a generational dividing line (between parents and grandparents now, rather than between parents and children) and I may be merely reflecting the prejudice of those on my side of that line when I say that I expect rock to be longer-lived than you do.

SPIROCHETTE (Boggs): Loved the tale about scouting and patrolling, as I did your bit about hats in the previous issue (which you mailed me

before I joined FAPA, for which I thank you). Is the Dave Bridges whose LoC you printed the same as used to live over here? From internal evidence it seems to be him but if it is his writing style sure has changed.

FANTASY COMMENTATOR (Searles): I'm deeply impressed by the level of scholarship on display in this and particularly liked Mike Ashley's piece on the business relationship between Wells and Gernsback. Do you send copies of FC to the SF Foundation, by the way? They have no budget and so rely on contributions of material, but they're still this country's primary centre for SF research (I've done research there myself on more than one occasion) and could surely put them to good use.

SOMETHING FOR FAPA (Walker): I'm slightly confused by the chronology of your con-going. Am I right that the 1972 CHESSMANCON was the first con you attended, and that the sell-off of the BSFA's fanzine library started here and concluded at the next Manchester con, MANCON, in 1976? Since the sale is one of the things I'll need to investigate for THEN #4, this is a matter of more than casual interest to me.

KAKADAEMONISTIS (Rodgers): ct Tackett - I don't see the US ceasing to be a Great Power in the foreseeable future, but there is a danger, however. In Paul Kennedy's book (which I've also read and enjoyed and whose central analysis I found entirely convincing) he stresses the relationship between economic power and military power, and the importance of the balance of same. According to his analysis, Great Powers have always projected military power reflecting their economic power but they have often lost Great Power status due to 'imperial overreach', ie. taking on military commitments beyond their economic means. Similarly, unless they took on military commitments commensurate with their wealth they remained minor players in international power politics and sometimes, thanks to the temptation their wealth created, they became victims. For this latter reason I don't actually believe the US will withdraw its troops from Europe, though it will almost certainly reduce them. 'Imperial Overreach' might be a problem, however. Under Reagan you built up a massive military machine, but you mortgaged the store to do it. The US has vast resources, and relatively efficient utilisation of same, but the cost of servicing your incomprehensibly huge national debt (not to mention the vast sums necessary for your S&L bailout), could strain even Uncle Sam and produce at least a temporary decline. It all depends on whether Bush will jettison his election pledge, as he has to, and raise taxes. He doesn't seem to like taking unpopular decisions, however necessary.

CANDIRU (Foyster): ct Eklund - The following quote illustrates your point nicely, I think:

"I received the Fantasy Amateur this week and discovered that I am now number five on the waiting list for FAPA. I was talked into putting my name on this by Phyllis Economu in 1963. Let's see now...that's only five years for me to get into spitting distance. Which is just about what Phyllis promised me. I was all set to sue her if I got in any sooner! FAPA is one of the oldest apas, and once in it fans rarely leave."

- Ethel Lindsay, SCOTTISHE #47 (March 1968).

How things change, eh? And should any of you wish to send your zines to Ethel, who would surely appreciate receiving them, her address is: 69 Barry Rd., Carnoustie, Angus, Scotland DD7 7QQ, UK.