



from Dick & Nicki Lynch, P.O. Box 1270, Germantown, Maryland 20874-0998, U.S.A.

This seventh issue of *Mimosa* was published in late December, 1989, and is once again available via the usually reliable U.S. Postal Service for two dollars in U.S. currency. We don't encourage this route, however; we'd much rather receive your fanzine in trade, or even better, a first-person anecdotal article about fandom or things fans do (especially if it's about fandom past) or the promise to illustrate same for us. A published article here will keep you on our mailing list forever. We also welcome Letters of Comment; a LoC on this issue will bring you our gratitude, as well as a copy of *Mimosa* 8 this summer. Australian distribution of this issue courtesy of DUFF candidate Roger Weddall, who is worthy of your support. Now then, please note that all opinions expressed by contributors are their own.

☐ If this box is checked, please let us know (see above) that you want to see our next issue.

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A LIFE OF ITS OWN

Opening Comments by Nicki Lynch

This issue of *Mimosa* is a special one. This past year has been one of changes, mostly good, and this issue, I think, reflects some of those changes.

We finally produced an article we've talked about doing for a long time, about *Chat*, our first effort in producing a fanzine. Back in the late 1970s, we were two enthusiastic fans who had no experience in fanzining, with precious few examples that were available to us. *Chat* provided not only a way of communicating to club members, but to the fannish world at large. We didn't realize that it would open so many doors and introduce us to so many fans in so many places.

We learned a lot about producing a fanzine that pleased us as well as those who read it. We also learned that fanzines, like so much in life, can have lives of their own. The first time I realized this was in an elevator at my first Boston WorldCon (1980). Someone in the crowded elevator noticed my name badge and said, "So YOU'RE Nicki Lynch! I really enjoy your fanzine *Chat*." As I murmured my thanks, other people in the elevator also said they read *Chat* too and starting saying how much they liked it. It was quite a feeling to have a group of strangers suddenly become people you know through correspondence, and therefore friends.

We also learned that fanzines have a life cycle and when their end comes, it's best to make a clean break rather than to dribble on with something you aren't happy with. And so *Chat* came to an end after 40 issues. After devoting so much of each month to producing monthly issues, we almost didn't know what to do with the extra time!

Similarly, our stay in Chattanooga had a life cycle, too. When we first ar-

rived, in 1973, we started out not knowing very much about our new home, and learned about the city and the region. Then came all the good times and the friends. Eventually, there also came to a point where it was time to move on. Opportunity beckoned in Washington, and so we left. It was hard to leave the friends, but that was about all we left behind.

So the cycle begins again with us in Washington. We both found good employment, and are still getting to know our way around the area. We're slowly getting involved in local fandom and starting to make friends in the area. It's been a great year, despite the long commutes that left us with little time during the week for much more than dinner and a little TV before we had to get out of bed and do it again. We've had so much to do on the weekends, the weeks just flew by.

I hadn't thought much about how long we had been here until we recently went to see the Quilt when it returned, for the last time, to Washington. The AIDS Quilt is a living memorial with seemingly a life of its own; Quilt squares represent the many victims of that fearsome disease. This was its last visit, because it's now gotten too large to show in its entirety. The very first weekend we went into the District after we moved here, we went to see the Quilt, along with the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. It may seem like a strange way to mark a beginning, but it was, none the less.

Then there is *Mimosa*. It, too, is still growing and may yet reach that point where it has a life of its own. We also feel that our move to the Washington area has helped *Mimosa* to grow. We're looking forward to life here and many more issues of *Mimosa*.

{{ Well, a year in transition is about over for us. Last issue, you may recall, was kind of a "Welcome to Maryland" issue, while the one before that had a "Farewell to Tennessee" theme. We're not sure what, if any theme this issue will have yet (we pretty much make things up as we go

along). Since we've already mentioned being in transition and given that we're about to transition from the 1980s into the 1990s, here's a remembrance of a different sort of transition, from fan to pro, from 45 years ago. }}

A HUGO GERNSBACK AUTHOR

Dave Kyle

Fantastic stories were a part of my childhood, a common enough situation for most children. As I evolved into my early youth, however, I found fairy tales to read which had been modernized into fascinating stories of the future. In the movies, adult fantasy tales were becoming updated into horror, with scientific mumbo jumbo.

When I was eleven and twelve years old, I had not yet discovered that science fiction was a very special genre of fiction with a very serious aspect. Tom Swift and John Carter and Lord Greystroke represented for the Wells-Verne imagination in popular, contemporary print. As I approached my teens, I was verbally spinning horror stories to my chums in the Kyles back yard orchard, as inspired by *Dracula* (1930), *Frankenstein* (1931), *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1931), *Dr. X* (1932), etcetera. By age thirteen, however, fairy tales for me were growing more and more real. I was slipping into the universe of science fiction. Here were stories more fascinating and intellectually more provocative than I had previously imagined. I didn't know, at the time, what this kind of literature was called. There were many identifications, such as Wells' "scientific romances," Verne's "extraordinary voyages," Appleton's simple yarns of young inventor Tom Swift, Burrough's swashbuckling adventures in other worlds that were in, on and off earth, and a host of descriptions with worlds like "unusual, different, fantastic, original, imaginative, strange," etcetera. Unfortunately and to my disgust, another term that was used frequently, sometimes by my own mother, was "crazy." And there was the comic

strip that tilled the fertile pathways of by brain: *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*. (*Flash Gordon* came a few years later when I was already hooked.) The radio shows, with the few rather rudimentary science fiction serials, made their contributions to my tastes. In my freshman year in high school, I began writing those "crazy" stories myself as classwork, for which I received some good grades, some bad grades.

I was not in the vanguard of aficionados. Older boys in high school (always, in those days of over half century ago they were "boys") had discovered this "new" genre ahead of me. I first became conscious of this genesis of "fandom" by overhearing street conversations on warm spring and summer nights under the street light outside my open, second floor window while I did homework. There were arguments about all kinds of remarkable things, such as the possibility of space travel. It was from one of these mature, sophisticated "older boys" (two years, three years older?) that I found my first true science fiction magazine.

About the time I entered high school, I became a regular sf reader with my discovery of the Gernsback magazines, *Science Wonder Stories* and *Air Wonder Stories*, and the older *Amazing Stories*. They were back issues because the time was 1932, two years after the first two had been consolidated into *Wonder Stories* and when *Amazing* was no longer a Gernsback publication.

In the early thirties, The Great Depression was getting worse, affecting the entire nation, forcing young people into fru-

gality. There were just three, exclusively-SF magazines being published and available on the newsstands in those years, *Amazing*, *Wonder*, and *Astounding Stories*. Occasionally SF appeared in *Weird Tales*, *Argosy*, and such other monthly or weekly pulps. I could regularly buy only *Wonder Stories* of those which appeared. Used magazines, with much borrowing and lending, were the prime source for us teenagers. I lived in a small town. There were no "second hand" book stores there, but once in a while I got to New York City with my mother and bought my supply of old copies, with disfigured covers, torn covers, and even (alas!) no cover.

Through *Wonder's* readers' columns I became part of "fandom," that glorious anarchistic fraternity of enthusiasts which was just developing. This began my active participation. I regularly sent letters to the editors telling them what was good or bad about their publications. Like so many of the other young letter writers, I was very enthusiastic and very opinionated and often sounded a bit of a prig. In my heart I knew I could probably choose and edit and even write better stories. I kept a personal rating chart of stories and authors, along with brief biographies and portrait sketches. Then in 1935, at the age of 16, when I was a Junior in Monticello (N.Y.) High School, I wrote a "serious" short story. I entitled it "Golden Nemesis," referring to the color of the serum and what happened with its use. I submitted it to, what else?, my cherished pulp periodical published by my hero Hugo Gernsback. It was, in retrospect, a rather badly written story, but it had an original idea, and to my enormous surprise and pleasure I received a letter from the managing editor, Charles D. Hornig, accepting it without change.

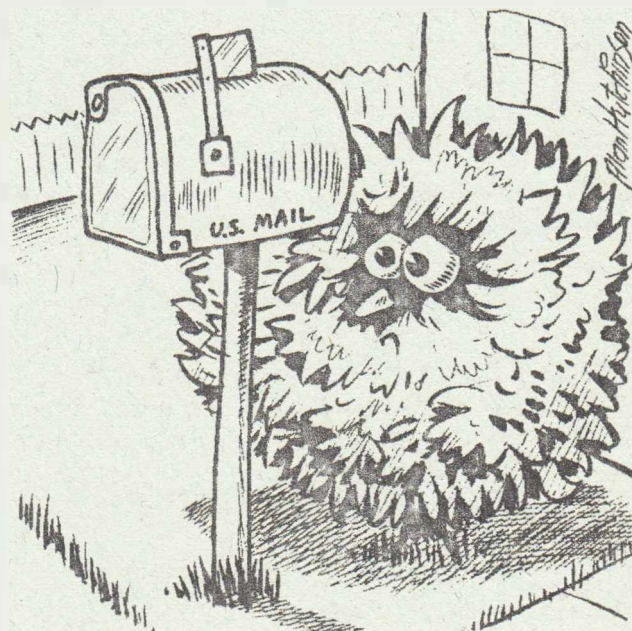
When I had recovered, after a few days, I immediately set about drawing an illustration for it. The idea that I could display another talent of mine was a temptation so strong that I was willing to sacrifice an exceptional honor. I would give up the chance to have the great Frank R. Paul illustrate my creation. I would have my very own illustration

for my very own story in Gernsback's unique *Wonder Magazine*, another dream of glory by a callow youth.

Frank R. Paul was a man who dominated the science fiction field with his artwork. He was probably more intensely honored by the readership than Hugo Gernsback. He was an incredibly prolific illustrator, both in color and in black and white. To me he certainly was, as he was billed on the magazine contents pages, "inimitable." He had loyally tied his career with Gernsback's for decades. Paul was the essence of the science fiction imagination of the century and I considered him of heroic stature. The year previous to my Golden story submission, I had met Paul accidentally while visiting the *Wonder* offices to pay adolescent homage to the editors. He was very kind to the hero-worshipping boy, looking up from his drawing board, a white-haired gentleman who now captivated me personally as well as artistically.

I was no Paul. My illustration, a very oversized, much too detailed line drawing, was rejected.

Meanwhile, the intolerable waiting had begun. The next issue, of course, did not see me in print. Then came an issue in which my story was advertised as forthcoming. But the next issue didn't contain my work, either.

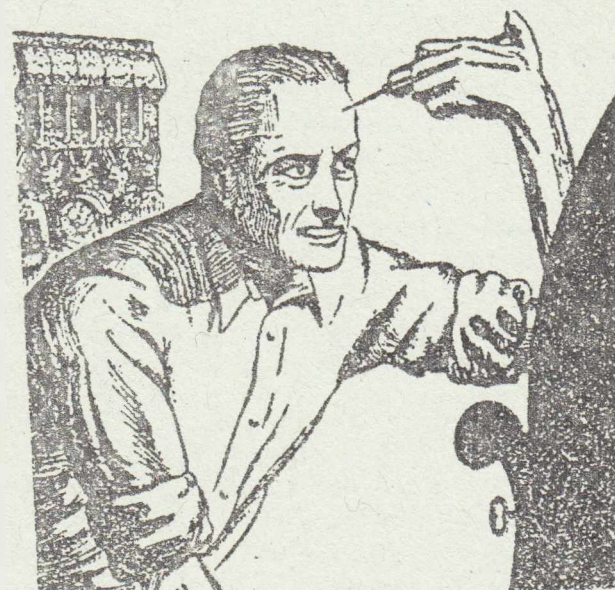
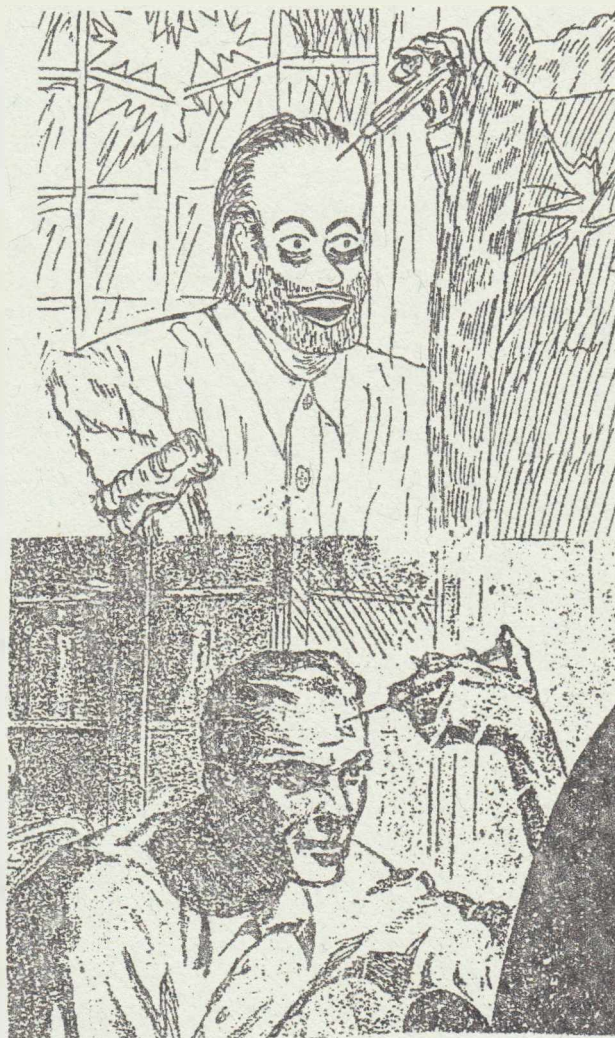


Suddenly my dream disintegrated. *Wonder* was sold. Hugo Gernsback was out of the science fiction business. After a while, a new, revamped magazine entitled *Thrilling Wonder Stories* appeared with a different editorial policy and my story was returned. I didn't get back just the manuscript. Oh, joy, oh sadness! I received the *Wonder Stories* page proofs of my story, not galley proofs, but page proofs distinctively formatted with editorial introduction! And with a full page illustration by Charles Schneeman! I was a Gernsback author in print yet never to be published and my disappointment as a teenager was crushing. To add to the terrible sense of loss was the recognition that my illustration had, in effect, been redrawn by Schneeman. There it was, the hero with his shaved head, injecting himself, needle in his brow, staring in a mirror, just as I had pictured it -- layout, fancy angle, shading and all. Had Schneeman copied my illustration or had he by a strange coincidence visualized the scene as I had? The real difference, and it was an enormous difference, was that his work was professionally excellent and mine as obviously amateurish.

Years later my friend, Donald A. Wollheim, finally published the story in the first issue of *Stirring Science Stories*, a magazine which he created and edited. The prose was unchanged, as poorly constructed as my inexperienced talent had originally produced, but this time the illustration was drawn by me, vastly improved because I had reworked Schneeman's art as I believed he had reworked mine.

Although I had some contact with Hugo Gernsback in later years, I never did publicly become one of his published discoveries. Ironically, however, I did get a Frank R. Paul illustration twenty years later when, for me, he graciously did a letterhead for the world science fiction convention in New York City in 1956 when I was its chairman.

"Golden Nemesis" was written in the glorious autumn of 1935. It was accepted (and not to be paid for until publications) in the glorious winter of 1935-36 by editor



Charles D. Hornig who was himself a fan, a very young man whose fanzine had impressed Gernsback enough to be hired. My "Nemesis"

was returned in the catastrophic spring of 1936 by the youthful editor of *Standard Magazines'* *Thrilling Wonder*, Mort Weisinger, who was himself a fan. -- What many fateful coincidences have come about here! A half century later, at the 1988 World Science Fiction Convention in New Orleans, Charlie Hornig and myself both appeared to the audience as newly elected to the Fift Fandom Hall of Fame and given our commemorative plaques. And standing with us for the same honor was Julius Schwartz, long time associate and close friend of the late Mort Weisinger!

The question has always bothered me because there was no authority to give me the answer: had I really been a part of those remarkable years of *Wonder*? Or had I merely

scored an unfortunate near miss? Then in 1989 came an unsolicited judgement. The British researcher and biographer, Michael Ashley, an editor and compiler of many historical books about science fiction, sent me a letter to inform me about his next work now in progress, a book about Hugo Gernsback. He wrote: "It wasn't til I poured through the small print of *Wonder Stories* that I realized or remembered that you had indeed sold a story to Gernsback, 'Golden Nemesis,' that for several months was announced as forthcoming but which never was used and only finally appeared five years later in *Stirring Science Stories*. But published or not, it makes you a Gernsback author." Yes, Virginia, Santa Claus is real and so is that teenage author -- me, David A. Kyle -- a GERNSBACK author.

ARTIST CREDITS

Sheryl Birkhead - Pages 31; 34; 36

Earl Cagle - Page 27 (bottom left - *Chat* 21 cover)

Kurt Erichsen - Pages 17; 18; 20; 28 (bottom left - *Chat* 26 cover); 37

Brad Foster - Page 33

Wade Gilbreath - Page 29 (top right - *Chat* 23 cover)

Alexis Gilliland - Page 2

Teddy Harvia - Pages 22 (both); 23; 24 (top right - *Chat* 33 cover; bottom left - *Chat* 24 cover)

Teddy Harvia & Peggy Ranson - Front and Back covers

Teddy Harvia & Phil Tortorici - Page 35

David Haugh - Page 39

Alan Hutchinson - Page 5

Dave Kyle - Page 6 (top & bottom)

Randy Mohr - Page 29 (bottom left - *Chat* 29 cover)

William Rotsler - Page 40

Julie Morgan Scott - Page 28 (top right - *Chat* 36 cover)

Diana Stein - Page 38

B. Ware - Page 16

Charlie Williams - Pages 9; 11; 13; 14; 21 (both); 26 (all); 27 (top right - *Chat* 22 cover); 30; 43

{{ Speaking of transitions, it occurs to us that we've already been running a series of articles describing a kind of transition -- that of the first few years in one's chosen profession. (Maybe we have stumbled onto a theme for this issue, after all...) We received this article not long before the Boston WorldCon, which not

only allowed us to find out for ourselves that she still has lots of entertaining stories left about the medical profession, it shows you how long this issue of *Mimosa* has been in transition between the Post Office and the mimeograph. The seasons really do speed by here in the Washington area... }}

TALES OF ADVENTURE AND MEDICAL LIFE (Part III)

Sharon Farber

Take him to Bliss.

Say it like Sidney Greenstreet, and it's threatening -- send him to his ultimate reward! Say it like Peter Lorre, it's not quite as threatening -- give him some obscure oriental drug that will disarrange his thinking. Perhaps permanently? Pity...

When a doctor in St. Louis says *take him to Bliss*, it mean's "take him to the local public mental hospital, and lock him up."

Malcolm Bliss Mental Health Center was one block away from City Hospital, but not a block you'd particularly want to walk, let alone at night. A tunnel connected the two hospitals, but I'm told that was even worse. A drunk is supposed to have wandered into the tunnel system a few years ago, and was eventually found dead. In any event, the roaches in the basement were as big as a respectable mouse, and I had no desire to meet the mice.

Medical students spent a month at Bliss, and then two weeks in the more refined private psychiatric pavilions at the university, with an entirely different patient population. At the university, the patients were still functional enough to have insurance, or relatives with insurance. Some did not even need to be hospitalized -- they just wanted a vacation from responsibility. I once heard my attending have a long conversation with one of his patients, explaining that it would be at least two weeks before she could get a reservation.

Patients at Bliss, on the other hand, were usually dragged in kicking and screaming by families or police, or (in the case of the chronic patients) shuffled in on their own when life got too tough. You knew this was going to happen when there was a "positive suitcase sign." (It is difficult to persuade someone who has brought his suitcase that he doesn't really need to be in hospital. A friend once saw two people with suitcases out in the waiting room. He was quite upset, knowing this meant two admissions. But it turned out the patients knew each other, and by the time my friend decided he could no longer put off speaking with them, they'd gone off together to have fun.)

Most of the patients were schizophrenics of all variety, maniacs, and depressives, though you had to be incredibly depressed to get into Bliss. It helped to be catatonic. There were also a fair number of violent and unsavory individuals in for forensic evaluation. I was warned to never go into the wards alone; on the other hand, the orderlies would never accompany me, so I did anyway.

Another class of patients that frequented the hospital were down and outs -- drunks, sociopaths, the mildly psychotic -- who had learned to abuse the system. They would present on a cold night, recite the proper litany of symptoms to earn admission, sleep in a warm bed, enjoy a couple of meals (Bliss had the best hospital food in town) and then check out. Hotel Bliss, we called it.

Naturally, this made us furious. Not only did an admission entail an extraordinary amount of work -- complete history, physical, review of prior charts, paperwork galore -- but this usually occurred in the dead of the night, when you'd rather be sleeping. And it took up beds that might have been occupied by those actually ill. Many times, real patients were turned away for lack of room.



One of my housemates enjoyed a brief reputation for heroic tough-mindedness when she got rid of one such patient. He was an alcoholic with a long history of checking in overnight. It was impossible to summarily dismiss him as he had, through trial and error, hit upon the exact words that were guaranteed to gain him admission. "I'm going to kill myself," he would say.

It's very hard to get rid of someone threatening suicide. (Just a hint to those of our readers who may someday be destitute and looking for a free room and board. If you don't mind being held against your will and given drugs and perhaps shock therapy in return.) Of course, a phenomenal proportion of those who threaten or attempt suicide (usually in fairly benign ways -- many people who succeed in suicide are quite surprised) are hysterics and sociopaths just doing it to manipulate others.

Anyway, my housemate asked this drunk: "How do you plan to kill yourself?"

The man -- taken a bit aback, he thought he'd be cozy in bed by this point --

said, "Well, I'll jump off a bridge."

"Which one?" asked my friend. There are several in St. Louis, not counting freeway overpasses.

"I don't know," the man replied, rather annoyed.

No suicidal plans, she wrote, and booted him.

#

My first trip to the wards at Bliss was illuminating. I unlocked the door, walked in, and was promptly surrounded by a half dozen schizophrenics, dishevelled, expressionless, shambling persons of various races and sexes. "Doctor, I want a pass." "Doctor, I need cigarettes." I quickly took refuge inside the nurses station, which was surrounded on three sides by huge glass windows, lined with patients demanding cigarettes. It was a lot like a fishbowl, or feeding time at the zoo.

Eventually, I learned the proper way to enter the ward. You unlocked the door and headed in with enough momentum to plunge you through the wall of supplicants and into the conference room, whose door you kicked shut behind you. I learned to juggle in that room.

Soon after my arrival, I was assigned to do an admission physical on a paranoid schizophrenic who had bounced back into the hospital. It went rather uneventfully until I decided to check his Babinski reflex. This entailed removing his stockings. I stared in amazement as the putrid hole-ridden socks peeled off his feet but maintained a foot shape. They were stiff with dirt. Their color was an ill-defined shade somewhere between filth and kelly green.

"Well," I said. "They're certainly...green."

"Yes," said the man. Up to now he'd been perfectly quiet. "They're green. I'm the Green Hornet."

I allowed that I was pleased to make

his acquaintance.

"I'm an architect," he continued. "I design skyscrapers. Batman does too. He's my archfoe. We have a grudge match."

It turned out he wasn't really the Green Hornet -- he stared at me blankly when I asked about Kato -- but I decided that maybe Bliss would have its interesting moments.

#

We had not been long at Bliss when my classmate (the Robot) and I were taken to witness a court hearing. One of our quieter schizophrenics wanted to leave the hospital, and his family wanted him to stay. He was a bit violent, but for some reason I never understood, the psychiatrist was not allowed to testify to that effect. The testimony had to come from family.

We got to court, and waited. The family didn't show. Finally, the judge declared the case closed, and instructed us to release the patient. At that moment, the family straggled in, reeking of liquor. "Too late," they were told, and this bad news made them belligerent. As we left, they were beginning a shoving match under the watchful eyes of the bailiffs.

#

I suppose, in the good old days, seriously crazy people did think they were saints, or Satan, or Napoleon. You still see an amazing amount of religious delusions in the insane, which can lead to problems in diagnosis. For instance, how do you determine insanity in someone who says she converses with angels, when everyone else in her church also gets personal advice from higher powers and speaks in tongues? It turns out that what you do is to go to the other people in the church, who have the same totally bizarre beliefs, and ask, "Hey, is she nuts, or what?"

A surprising number of the delusions I encountered at Bliss were science-fictional. People with thought-control devices imbedded

in their head; people who were convinced they were robots; strange visitors from other planets. We even had a Vulcan on our ward, though he did not act in the least Vulcanish. (When I learned that there was a Vulcan on another ward downstairs, I suggested we put them together and see what happened. No one was amused.)

One teenaged manic, after we all had been enjoying hearing how he'd impressed all the Cardinals with his baseball skills, went on to tell us that he'd constructed a working rocket ship in his backyard.

"You must've needed some help on a project that big," said the attending. "Who worked on it with you?"

The kid shrugged. "Oh, me and God and some other guys."

A few years later, a friend of mine had a patient who claimed to have a rocket ship inside his brain. My friend did the logical thing. He called a neurosurgery consult. It took the neurosurgeon -- a rather nasty gentleman, in the habit of terrorizing his subordinates -- a long time to comprehend that someone was playing a joke on him.

#

After I'd been at Bliss about a week, it was time to take call in the emergency room. The resident flipped through the stack of charts, then tossed me one. "Suicidal ideation. Should be easy," he said. "Just ask him all the questions about depression, then come tell me the history."

I went into the examining room, mentally rehearsing the symptoms of depression (insomnia, anorexia, anhedonia, dysphoria) and sat down at the desk beside the patient. The man was huge. He looked like a Green Bay Packer. A sullen Green Bay Packer.

"So," I said, "you want to kill yourself. How were you going to do it?" First, let's make sure he's sincere.

"I'm going to drive my car at eighty miles an hour into another car," he replied,

with a total lack of expression.

"Gee," I said. "Won't that kill someone else, too?" That was unusual for a depressive.

The Hulk stared at me. "My voices tell me to kill people."

Oops. Voices. I had the wrong diagnostic category entirely. This guy wasn't depressed, he was psychotic.

"Uh, any people in particular?"

He continued to stare at me very intently. "My voices tell me to kill women."



I began to wish I hadn't sat so far from the door. "Uh, do you do what your voices tell you?"

"I go down to the Stroll and I hurt women."

Great. I very casually rose from my chair and inched towards the door. I needed another couple questions to fill up the time it would take me to escape. Quick, what were other symptoms of schizophrenia? Hearing voices, thought insertion, personal messages from the radio or TV....

"Do you get messages from the TV?"

"It tells me to kill women."

Great. I was almost to the door. "Any shows in particular?"

"*Starsky and Hutch*."

I zoomed out the door, into the resident's office, and said, "He likes to kill women!"

"Fine," said my resident. A few minutes later, he sent me back to do the physical examination. I decided to pass on the rectal exam.

#

After Bliss, I did two weeks at the much classier but also much duller psych ward at a private hospital. One day, as I was standing at the nurses station on the locked ward, a patient got up from a game, shuffled over, and placed a stack of playing cards onto the counter.

"Nurse," he said, "we need new cards. We aren't playing with a full deck."

#

The strangest thing about medical education is how it changes you into someone who thinks and does things that you never would dream yourself capable of.

I remember, back around '71, when Thomas Eagleton had to give up running for Vice-President because of the revelation that he'd been hospitalized for depression, and received shock therapy. I had a typically Californian response to shock therapy. "What sort of barbarians would do that to a person?"

Well, it turns out that Washington University at St. Louis was the hotbed of electroconvulsive therapy (ECT). And so, thirteen years after deploring Eagleton's ECT, I found myself, in probably the same ward where he received it, as the resident administering shock therapy.

However, I was probably the only neurology resident in the history of the hospital to deliver shock while shouting "Fire phaser, Scotty!"

Some people are crazy on the psych ward, and I'm not just talking about the patients...

{{ *Mimosa* is a fanzine that's probably not in transition. We decided several years ago that we liked the idea of still being able to preserve random bits of fan history (since so many of fandom's "Founding Fathers" are still with us), so we try to publish at least one article of fan historical interest each issue. Likewise, we decided that there since were many other fanzines out there that have interesting

and all-encompassing fanzine review columns, we wouldn't attempt to duplicate that here. The following article, in fact, is probably as close to fanzine reviews as we'll ever come. We're actually lucky to have it at all; because of our move to Maryland, it had to transition across the Big Pond between here and Europe at least twice before it caught up to us... }}

NO WAY TO STAND KANSAS

Skel

We all exist at the centre, indeed as the centre, of our own personal universe, and we must be constantly on guard lest we confuse localized conditions, perhaps peculiar to our own perception, with the real world. In my little universe, fanzines seem to be dying, so I make allowances for all the factors which exacerbate this perceived phenomenon. I no longer produce a zine of my own, which indicates a lessening of my own enthusiasm, and as fandom is basically driven by enthusiasm, where what you get out is proportional to what you put in, it is inevitable that I'll find it less satisfying. One immediate effect is that the flow of zines to my mailbox has slowed to a trickle. When you no longer trade, the tradezines stop. In a way this is no bad thing, for trading fanzines is an easy option, ideal when the zines don't interest you enough to stimulate a more positive response. The zines I now get have required a positive effort on my part to maintain the 'relationship'.

So, there don't seem to be as many fanzines around these days. I mentioned this to Vinç Clarke who sent me a list he'd compiled by way of refuting my observation... only it had the opposite effect because I still get more than half of them, and yet it seems I don't get a tenth of the number I used to receive. I guess there really are less fanzines about.

But that's only one side of the coin -- 'Less Fanzines' is a quantitative judgment. I feel there is also a qualitative differ-

ence, not implying 'worse', but 'different.' Less rewarding somehow, despite the fact that I'm not talking only about that more stimulating element that I continue to receive. Even those don't seem to be as much fun, generally. The key words are 'fun' and 'generally'. So is it me who's changed? Is my lessening enthusiasm the cause rather than the effect? I don't think so, because of the 'generally' back there. Some zines are every bit as much fun as zines ever were, which supports the conclusion that it really is the other zines that have changed, and not me. Or rather, that the zines have changed more than I have. Which brings us to the 'fun', and to Nicki's remarks in "Like a Car" from *Mimosa* 3:

"I feel new and fresh, that the thing that interests me in fandom -- fanzines and communicating with other people - is still around and still a part of fandom."

That's one of things she wrote. Another was:

"...the consuite sparkled with talk...about fanzines! Not who was dating who, politics, or petty disagreements, but fanzines as I'd never heard talk about before!"

Those two remarks twined around each other in my mind, forming a sort of double-helix that defined and dictated my reactions. Fanzines are strange and powerful things. On

the surface, if what you are interested in is "communicating with other people," then what should be paramount in fanzines is the content, that which is communicated. The message. But Nicki went on to add that bit about "the consuite sparkled with talk about fanzines." That is, talk about the medium, for in truth many of us believe that the existence and availability of fanzines, of the medium itself, is more important than any single message that medium may be used to convey. And that medium seems to be dying.

OK, overstating the case for dramatic effect. Guilty. Maybe.

Or maybe not. One problem is that, whilst there are these two distinct aspects to fanzines -- what they represent and what they contain -- it is the weaker of the two by which they must maintain themselves in the consciousness of fandom. "Communication" is what Nicki called it. Indubitably, but why are we communicating, and what is being communicated? Surely nobody would argue that, for a considerable period of time, one of the main signals we were sending was simply that we were here, that individually we existed. We were drawing attention to ourselves as part of the tribe of Fandom.

Fanzines were a unique binding mechanism, cutting across geographical boundaries. They made it possible for a fan -- any fan, anywhere -- to be a part of a single great tribe, or more precisely a confederacy of tribes. They did this by being in effect a fandom unique and of themselves, a separate but distinct reality. A reality which sometimes touched base with the real world by reporting the doings of localized groups of fans, whether formally constituted or otherwise, sharing the Great Gatherings with those unable to be present. Distances in fanzine fandom were spiritual rather than geographical, and its effect was achieved by warping the reality it reported. You couldn't dismiss fanzine fandom as being simply unreal though, for in those areas where the two universes intersected it was sometimes the real world that gave ground. As an example of this I recall Walt Willis writing about a particularly magical con which the organizers

had created based upon the 'reality' of convention reports rather than on the more prosaic lines of the way such cons actually took place. There's a clue there, I think.

Fanzine fandom was an idealized fandom. It bore little resemblance to the way things were -- ourselves, other fans, SF, the outside world -- and all their myriad relationship. Rather it portrayed fandom as we'd like it to be. Idealism. Science Fiction was wonderful, and our pursuit of it a wonderful thing, but it wasn't quite enough. Something was missing, some colour lacking. We did not have our yellow-brick road. The world was Kansas, and we needed Oz, so in fanzine fandom we created our very own Oz. Fanciful?



To a degree, I suppose, but not entirely. There is something child-like in the unabashed idealism and the enthusiasm of fanzine fandom in its various hey-days, which shouldn't be too surprising. 'Child-like' is another clue. No, not another moan about how we were all younger then, and how it was all so much better in my younger days -- when you could pub your ish quarterly, subscribe to *Hyphen* and *Quandry*, LoC every issue of *True Rat*, throw all the Aussie fanzines unopened into the trash... and still have change from sixpence -- I know it must sound like that, like another case of nostalgic heartburn, but how can you avoid such connotations when you really-and-truly believe that, in respect of fanzines, at least 'fings ain't wot they used

to be'? Nothing to do but carry on, firm hand on the tiller and a sharp eye out for a star to steer her by.

It was Greg Benford, in an old *Out-worlds* I think, who wrote that fanzines were where he went "to play". 'Play' is the key. 'Play' is what children do, constantly and without shame, and so the child-like naivety of that fanzine fandom is explained, because fanzine fandom was where fans played. Not always the same game, but play was the common coin. No matter your particular game, fanzine fandom was where you played it, aware all the time that you were playing, unashamed, like children. Just having fun.

Hardly anybody seems to be playing in fanzines anymore...or it they are it's a bloody strange game. Maybe "Oz" is glorifying it a bit. Maybe fanzine fandom was just some great big, world-wide intellectual sandpit. So what? So let's glorify it -- I was never much into sandpits anyway. Whatever it is, or was, fanzine fandom is no longer serving the same sort of function. Perhaps fandom no longer needs a sandpit? Perhaps we now think that Kansas is a "Rilly Triffic" place?

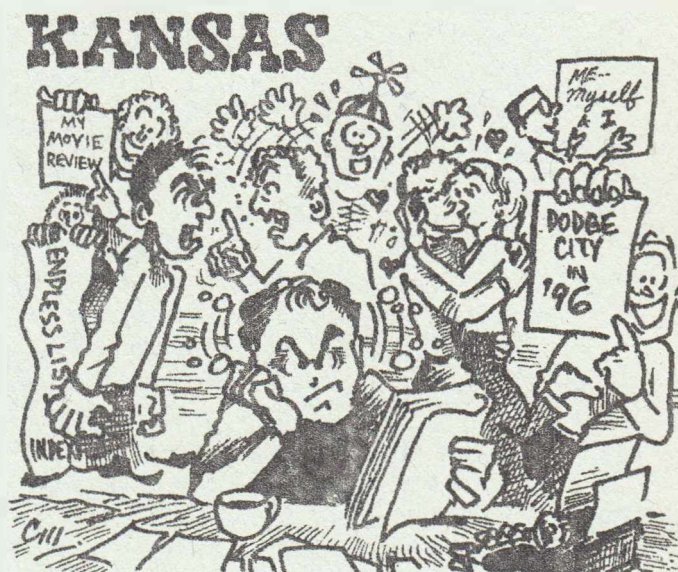
The thing is, fanzine fandom no longer seems to be a fandom that is self-sufficient. Now it appears to be merely a sub-division of Social Fandom, important only for the way it permits you to communicate directly with the small subsection of fandom you can't meet in the flesh. Fanzine fandom is now an adjunct of Social fandom, whereas previously those roles were reversed. Nowadays even those who profess to see fanzines as still important do so only in the context of keeping in touch with that small portion of their social circle which they don't get to meet physically every couple of weeks or months. Fanzines as, at best, social diaries. Mal Ashworth noted this at Rubicon a year-or-so back. He wrote, in Eric Mayer's *Groggy* 29:

"I don't know whether you will believe this next bit or not, except that I think you know me as a fairly truthful chappie. Well - er - one of the very few programs items which did hap-

pen was a panel-led discussion of the topic "Fanzines are unnecessary when you can talk to your friends instead"!! One faction argued 'Yes', the other faction argued 'No, we still need them because there are always those we don't meet, including those overseas'. Don West, invited directly to contribute opined 'Awwkk'. Nobody, but nobody, apparently queried the idea of a fanzine as anything more than an extended personal communication. O Tempora, O Mores: *Hyphen* where are thou?"

Look, this is not some paen to a vanished Sixth Fandom, to some mythical Fabulous Fifties. It was there in the Fifties, it was there in the Sixties, and in the Seventies, but it ain't there now. It is only in the Eighties that the colour seems to be dribbling away, faded and leached out, bleached away by a harsher reality. Is it just that hardly anyone in fandom seems to want to play the games I enjoy anymore, or are we really back in Kansas? If we are, then Hugh Prestwood wrote a song called 'Dorothy', featured on the 1979 Judy Collins LP 'Hard Times for Lovers,' which expresses the way I feel about fanzines at the moment:

"There ain't no way to stand Kansas... when you've been to OZ"



When it comes to fanzines, believe me, I've been to OZ, but when I look around at the current scene, mostly what I see is Kansas.

{{ After reading some of the letters of comment on *Mimosa* 6, it occurs to us that we never did explain some of the fannish references in Teddy Harvia's wonderful wrap-around cover from last issue. Several people asked us about it, among them Dave Kyle, who wrote "I've puzzled over the wrap-around cover artwork because it seems to be loaded with symbols which I only half understand," and Jeanne Mealy who asked, "Do I detect brooding presences in the cover?" Well, yes, there was some symbolism in the covers, starting with the observation that the difference between the wilds of Tennessee and the Washington metro area is like night (back cover) and

day (front cover). Beyond that, the back cover features a Mimosa tree, symbolic of this fanzine, and a saber-toothed tiger, a reminder of our previous fanzine. Some of you readers may be familiar with that other fanzine, *Chat*, which we published every month from 1977 to 1981. It was ostensibly set up to be the newszine/clubzine of the local Chattanooga SF organization. But it managed to take on a life of its own and eventually became much more than just a clubzine, like *Anvil* and *FOSFAX* seem to have done. But what, you ask, was the significance of the saber-toothed tiger? Well, this will all be explained, and more. Read on... }}

VISIT TO A SMALL FANZINE

The Life and Times of *CHAT*

Dick & Nicki Lynch

We don't know what originally possessed us with the idea of doing a fanzine. It was early autumn, 1977, and we had just lost a bid to hold the 1978 DeepSouthCon in Chattanooga, which had left a bad taste in our mouths from the way the winning campaign had been conducted. All that is now water long ago gone under the bridge, but at the time we remember it was like being all dressed up with no place to go -- creative energy was present, looking for an outlet now that chairing a convention was no longer in the cards. At any rate, the local SF club, the Chattanooga SF Association (or, CSFA) was fairly new and growing. There was a need for some kind of central focus, and out of all that *Chat* was conceived.

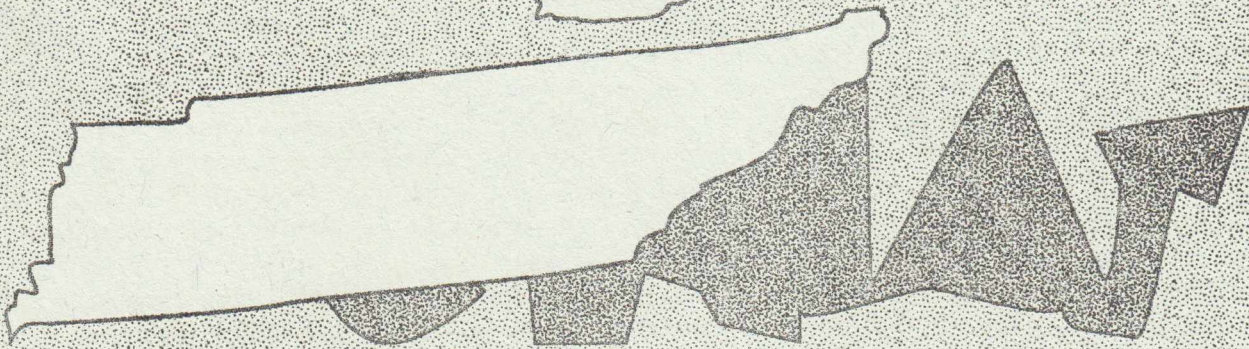
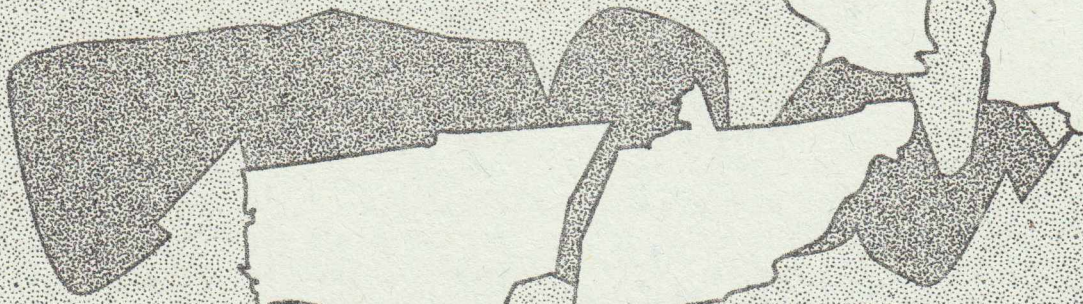
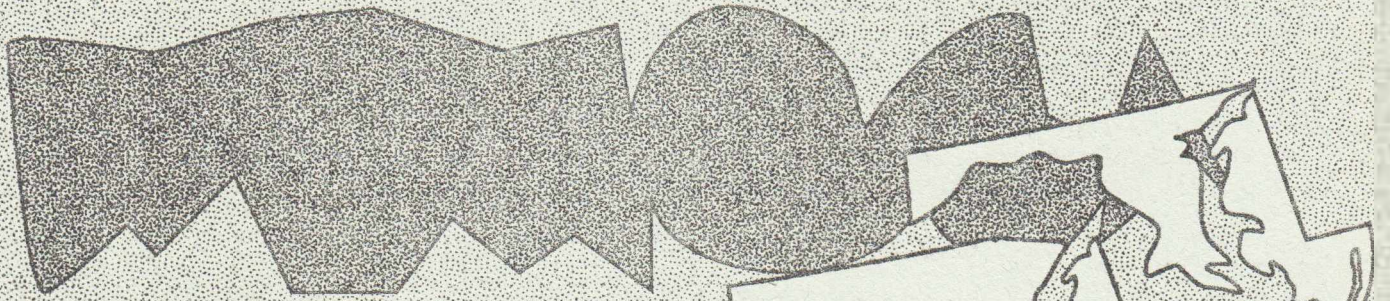
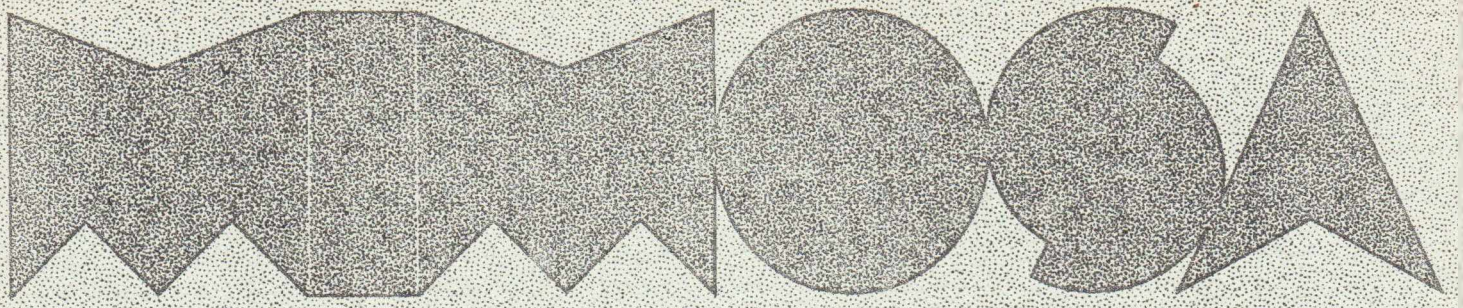
It was Nicki who came up with the name, a double-entendre from the zine's purpose (club news) and place of origin (Chattanooga). There was some opposition to the idea, from a couple of CSFA members who claimed that it couldn't possibly help the club and would be a drain on its meager resources. But most members embraced the idea, and in October, 1977, the first issue appeared.

The first few issues of *Chat* were

pretty scrawny, being only two or four pages long and limited pretty much to local fan happenings with maybe a review or two thrown in. We didn't get a letter of comment for several months, and the first verbal comment we received was sort of a backhanded slap -- a club member told us he already knew all the news in the issue. The first continuing feature, a monthly column co-written by two local fans, didn't begin until *Chat* 7 (April 1978). During that six-month start-up period we did most of the writing, all of the production work, and assumed all of the production costs. Later on, quite a bit of the material published each month came from other fans, both local and out-of-region; however, the club never really did take to the idea that the monthly newszine could in fact be a unifying club activity.

Chat might well have remained at that level of effort indefinitely, except for a spur-of-the-moment decision in February, 1978, to attend a small convention in Little Rock, Arkansas, where we met Bob Tucker.

It's no secret that Bob Tucker has been a big influence and encouragement to us over the years. He was a frequent guest at our



CHAT

house when we lived in Chattanooga, and has been the source of several articles that have appeared in *Chat* and *Mimosa*. The result of that first meeting was a four-page interview that appeared in the sixth issue of *Chat* (March 1978), and boosted that issue's page count to eight pages, a seemingly astronomical level of activity for us at that time. But it turned out that after that, we would never do another issue of less than eight pages again.

That Tucker interview, in retrospect, isn't as interesting as later things involving him we've published. We asked him what his favorite novels were and he told us; we asked him how he came to be a writer and he told us; we asked him what he was working on and he told us. It is to Tucker's credit (and his wit) that the interview came out as

well as it did; we didn't ask him a single question about any of the fannish hijinks he's been involved in over the years like the Staples War or the Tucker Hotel. The nearest thing of fan historical interest was his account of his airplane trip to Australia for the 1975 WorldCon. He must have thought we were just a couple of neos, and who knows -- he may have been mostly right.

We eventually conducted and published much more interesting interviews with Don Wollheim, Hal Clement, Jack Chalker, Vincent Difate, and Jack Williamson; there were also a couple of three-way interviews, involving us, Bob Tucker, and other writers; one of them was with Frank Robinson, and one with Robert Bloch. The Bloch interview, from *Chat* 12 (September 1978), was particularly memorable, and even today it still reads well. See for yourself...

IN DIALOGUE: ROBERT BLOCH AND BOB TUCKER

On Friday, July 28 at Rivercon, *Chat* had the opportunity of meeting Robert Bloch and, with longtime friend and fellow author Bob Tucker, discussing various remembrances. Following is a portion of that dialogue.

Chat: Let's talk about old-time fandom.

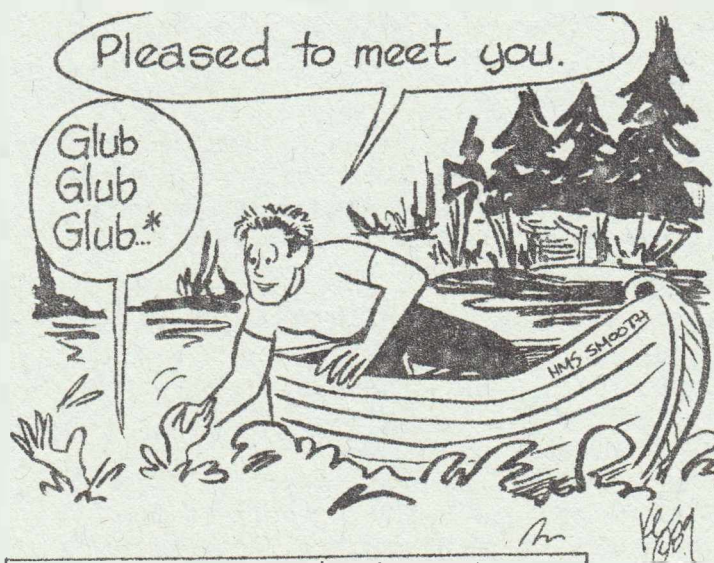
Tucker: All right.

Chat: When did you meet Bob Bloch?

Tucker: In 1946. The 4th World Convention was in Los Angeles in 1946. Pacificcon it was called. And one day I was out on this lake; it was in a little park across the street from the convention hall, and I was out there boating, taking a break from the convention. So I was out there in a little electric boat, and lo and behold, here comes Bob in his little electric boat. When I tell this story, I exaggerate for effect; he really didn't ram into me, he didn't capsize me and knock me over, but I tell that he did. That's how we met. We went back and he told a story on the program about his typewriter, which introduced me to the

humor of Robert Bloch. He underwent a harrowing experience not too much before then, and he was a poor struggling writer at the time. And if you remember the story, Robert, you did something with your typewriter that you talked about in 1946.

Bloch: No. I don't even remember 1946.



* Likewise, I'm sure. Let's collaborate on a Science Fiction novel.

Tucker: (Laughs) Well, he hocked his typewriter to buy groceries, and then when he had the idea for a story he no longer had the typewriter. He couldn't get it out of hock because he'd consumed the groceries and they wouldn't take the wrappers.

Chat: Were you living in California at the time?

Bloch: No. I went to California for the first time in 1937; I stayed with Hank Kuttner five weeks. It was at that occasion I met Fritz Leiber, Forrey Ackerman, and C. L. Moore. I fell in love with California; it was a different world, an ideal place to be. So when 1946 came around with Pacificon, I went out there again. Tucker and I did meet on the lake, we were in boats, and we did bump into one another. We switched chicks or something of that sort and we spent the rest of the weekend together, and from that time on it's been downhill all the way. I went back again in '47; I didn't move out there until the end of 1959.

Chat: When did you become a professional writer?

Bloch: I was a professional in 1934, I'm afraid to say, but it's true. I've known this gentleman, and I use the term ill-advisedly, for 32 years. It's been quite an experience.

Chat: What was your first published story?

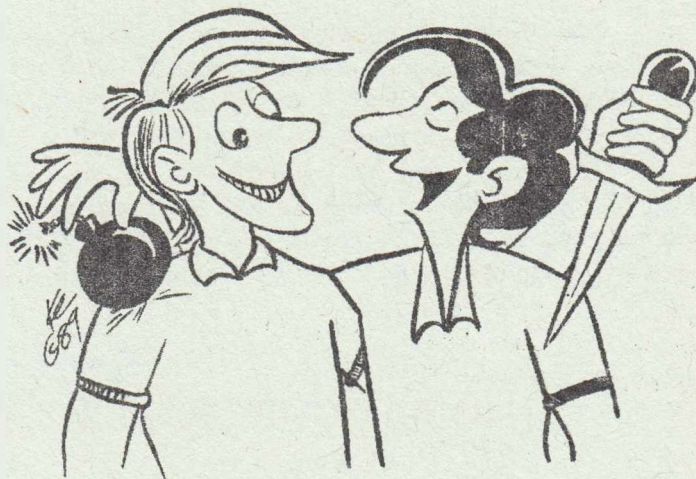
Bloch: "The Feast in the Abbey," in *Weird Tales*, in the January, 1935 issue which actually came out the first of November in 1934. They always issued them two months in advance in those days.

Tucker: Robert has seniority on me. He sold that story, although it appeared in the January '35 issue, about June or July in 1934 as I recall. Magazines have a long lead time. So he became a dirty old pro, underline the word dirty, in June or July of '34 and he has a terrific seniority on me because I did not sell my first story until about January of '41, something like that. It was called...

Bloch: "Slan."

Tucker: Slan! I used the pen name A. E. Van Vogt! No, it was called "Interstellar Way Station." Fred Pohl bought it and published it in *Super Science Novels*. So anyway, Bob has seven years seniority on me, and believe me, on him it shows.

Bloch: (Laughs) I've always wondered about Bob's first story, you know. I wonder why he didn't quit when he was ahead.



Tucker: (Laughs) Robert and I discovered something at Pacificon; we discovered that we could have more fun milking an audience by pretending to stab one another, heckle one another, than we could by playing buddy-buddy. We get up on stage together and play buddy-buddy and they doze, they nod, they fall asleep. We heckle one another and they're wide awake and alert awaiting the next sharply pointed knife.

Chat: Bob, how did you get involved with Hollywood?

Bloch: I got involved with Hollywood when I was about 3 years old, by going to silent movies. I'll never forget it. There was one silent film where a train would rush toward the audience and everyone would cower in their seats. I went under my seat, and when I lifted my head again there was a picture on with a very funny comedian in it; it was a two-reel comedy with Buster Keaton. And it took me until 1960 to meet Bus, when I went out to Hollywood and I found myself on a baseball

team with Buster. He was the pitcher and the late Dan Blocker was the catcher. That was quite a game.

Tucker: What position did you play?

Bloch: I was, um, way out in left field! (Everybody laughs) From that moment we became fast friends. But the point, if any, was that I became a movie fan, a real movie buff. And I was very, very enamored of screenwork. I never thought I'd get into it. But finally in 1959, I got an opportunity to do a television show. I went out and did it, and at the same time my novel *Psycho* was bought, which was then screened and released in 1960. So I've been involved more or less ever since.

Chat: What are your thoughts on *Psycho*? It's made you famous, if nothing else, but has it made you famous in a way you desire?

Bloch: Believe me, I have nothing but gratitude for all the things that have happened to me in my life. Look at the wonderful things that science fiction has done. By picking up a magazine when I was 10 years old, I didn't realize I was opening the door to a world that was going to give me a whole lifetime of pleasure and enable me to meet hundreds of people that I would not otherwise have met. I'm very grateful to all it has given me, in spite of Tucker.

Chat: You won your Hugo in 1959 for the short story, "That Hell-Bound Train." How many times have you been nominated?

Bloch: That's the only time. You know, I didn't even know I was up for it. I really didn't know that the story had been nominated. In 1959, I was at the Detroit WorldCon; Isaac Asimov was the Toastmaster and he asked me to help him out because, you know, he's pretty inarticulate. (Tucker laughs at this) I was to hand out the Hugos. I was opening the envelope and I saw my name on the list of nominations. I didn't even know of it. When the story won, I was flabbergasted.

Chat: Bob, you won your Hugo for Best Fan Writer, I believe. When was that?

Tucker: The award was granted in 1970 for the year 1969. But do not accept that at face value. I've been writing for fanzines since my first fanzine appearance in 1932. When they got around to nominating me in 1969 for the 1970 award, it was for those 30 or 40 years of fan writing rather than the previous year. They were simply giving me a grandfather award, and it was understood as such.

Chat: Have you felt disappointment never having won for fiction?

Tucker: I've had two books nominated. The first Hugo awards were given out in 1953 in Philadelphia. They weren't called Hugos then; they were merely Achievement Awards. My book *The Long Loud Silence* published in 1952, was one of the nominees for that year, but lost to Alfred Bester's *The Demolished Man*, which truly deserved to win. In 1970, *The Year of the Quiet Sun* was nominated along with Silverberg's *Tower of Glass* and Niven's *Ringworld*. And *Ringworld* won. My book came in number four of the five finalists. So I've been nominated twice, and quite honestly, I've been beaten by better books both times.

Chat: Thinking back over your years as a writer and a fan, can you think of anything especially significant or noteworthy?

Tucker: Go back to 1948, the first time you were Guest of Honor.

Bloch: Oh, yes, Toronto! I was Guest of Honor at the WorldCon in Toronto because this character over here made that suggestion. He's the guy who said "Make him Guest of Honor," so they did. We went up there; things were a little bit different. There were about 200 people at this affair and they had a small banquet. We paid for our own banquet tickets; I mean, the Guests of Honor and Toastmaster paid for their own banquet tickets!

Tucker: No freebies in those days. The cons were too small and too poor. They couldn't afford to pay for it. At that WorldCon he was Pro Guest of Honor and I was Fan Guest of Honor. This was the first time we appeared on a program together. That's how we discovered we could

play straight man or jab at each other.

Bloch: What happened was that Tuck had gotten together a very elaborate survey on fandom; an anthropological study complete with charts and diagrams. He'd done considerable serious and intensive research through correspondence, questionnaire, and documentation. He presented this thing as part of the formal program. As luck would have it, they had to have something to do at the banquet; it was a matter of whoever was there would contribute something. So, I turned up the next day at the banquet, and I, too, had a survey of fandom with some charts which I had done in my room the previous night. It was a deliberate contradiction of Tucker's findings.

Tucker: (Laughing) Bloch did the most beautiful job imaginable. Now, picture me with this solidly researched and back-grounded survey; I actually sent out hundreds of questionnaires, and my charts were accurate as of that day. Imagine Bloch getting up there with his fake charts and very neatly in a few words, a few quick slits of that knife, he cut the ground from under me and I fell through the stage. He sabotaged me wonderfully well.

Bloch: What was the situation when you laid down on the streetcar tracks?

Tucker: Ah! In 1948, the United States was abandoning streetcars in favor of buses. Canada, being more enlightened, kept their trains and trolley cars. And Toronto, on a Sunday in 1948, was the deadest thing next to Jacksonville, Illinois in 1978. I live in Jacksonville. ((ed. note: at that time, anyway)) In Jacksonville now, during the week the good citizens go out in their backyards, sit on the patio and watch the grass grow. That's excitement! On that Saturday night in Toronto in 1948, the whole con goes down to the intersection and watches the

red light blink. So the next day, Sunday, we left the hotel and went to the restaurant and it was closed, we got to the bar and it was closed; the only thing to do was go down the street to where the convention was in the process of closing. And it happened that we had to cross the street where there was tramway tracks in the middle. We looked up and down the street and there wasn't a damn thing to be seen, so to show these backward Canadians how forward-looking we Americans were, I laid down on the streetcar tracks and dared one to run over me. And nothing happened. All the streetcars were in the garage.

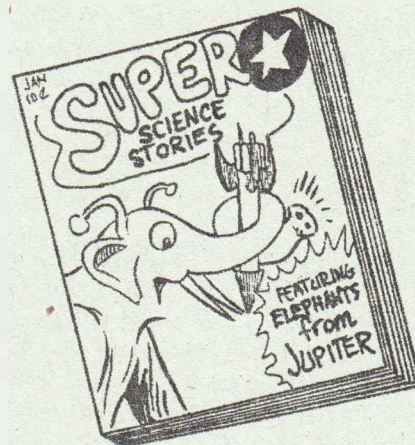
Bloch: But there was a streetcar on Sunday. That morning I took one to a park to see the elephants. I'm very big on elephants.

Tucker: Well, Robert has always followed the elephants. Usually with a shovel. (And everybody laughs)

Chat: You two are amazing. Have either of you any last comments? Or rebuttals?

Bloch: I'm so glad you did this on Friday night while we're still alive.

Tucker: And reasonably sober.



That first year of *Chat* also produced another friendship that's lasted to this day, although we rarely see much of him anymore. In *Chat* 8 (May 1978) we were the first fanzine to publish work by fanartist Charlie

Williams. We were introduced to Chuckles through a mutual friend; at the time he was co-owner of small comics store in Knoxville and teaching a University of Tennessee extension course in cartoon illustration.

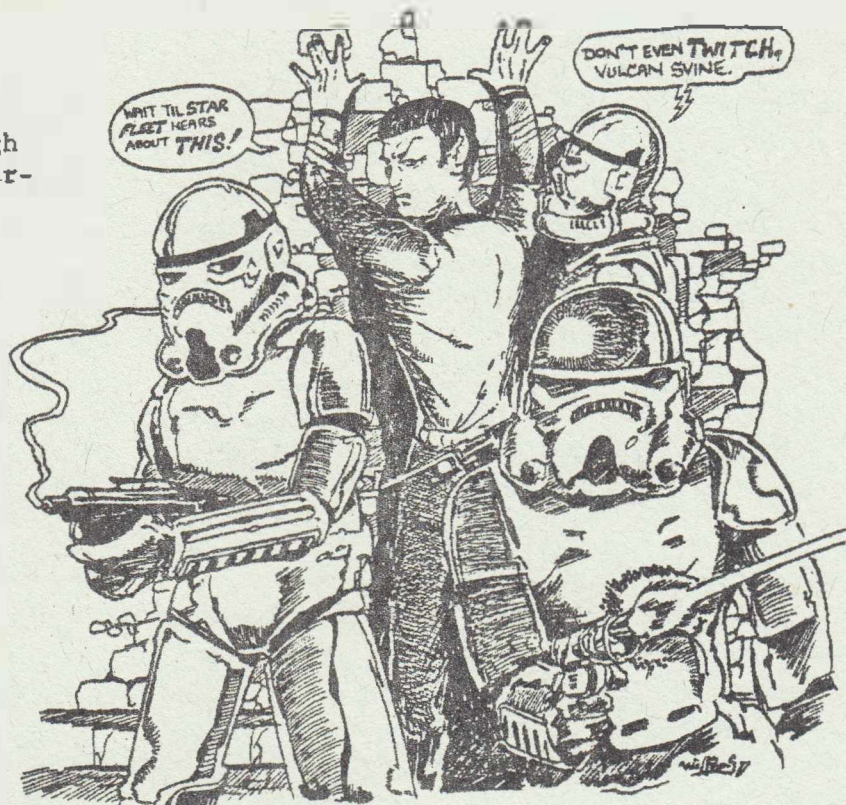
Dick's intro of him in *Chat* read:

"In my opinion, Charlie is a damn fine illustrator, good enough to win some day (soon!) the fan artist Hugo. Remember, you saw his work here first!"

Well, it's turned out that Charlie has never been ultra-active enough to garner enough interest for a nomination, but he has over the years gained notice. Mike Glycer once even listed him in *File 770* as one of the five best fan artists of the year. From his slick style and sharp wit, it's easy to see why...



Charlie Williams was the bridge that took us from year one to year two of *Chat*. We had gone to our first WorldCon (IguanaCon in Phoenix) that August, and had brought a few issues with us for trade or giveaway. While in Phoenix, we went to a program item on fan publishing and met Brian Earl Brown, who was just starting his fanzine review-zine, *Whole Fanzine Catalog*, about then. Not too long after, we started getting favorable reviews from Brian, and one of the things he often mentioned (and what undoubtedly caught his eye in the first place) was the Williams artwork. And soon after that, tradezines started appearing with regularity, and let



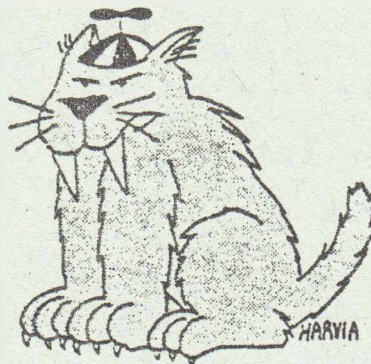
ters of comment on any particular issue started becoming commonplace instead of unusual. It was clear that we'd reached "critical mass."

New contributors started showing up that second year, too. SFWA members Sharon Webb, Ralph Roberts, and Perry Chapdelaine all provided material for publication; Chapdelaine's was a free-wheeling, opinionated monthly column on writing, small press publishing, and related things. About then, we also started getting noticed by other fanartists. Cartoons and spot illos by local area fanartists Cliff Biggers, Roger Caldwell, Jerry Collins, Rusty Burke, and Wade Gilbreath started adding variety to each issue, and we even received contributions from some well-known out-of-region fanartists, like Jeanne Gomoll, Victoria Poyser, and Alexis Gilliland. The 18th issue (March 1979) had a full-page cover by Gilbreath; previous to that, we had just run a logo and colophon at the top of page one and jumped right into local fan news. The club members seemed to like it, and we never did publish another issue without full page cover art. Succeeding months featured covers by Williams, Tara

Wayne, and Kurt Erichsen, as well as by local fanartists Julie Scott, Tom Walker, Bob Barger, Earl Cagle, and Rusty Burke. One other fanartist who responded to a request for artwork was Teddy Harvia, and his cartoon that appeared in the 21st issue (June 1979) introduced the saber-toothed tiger mascot that became identified with *Chat* during the second half of its run.

Cat cartoons were a common theme in *Chat* after that. Letters of Comment or their envelopes often had some kind of cat sticker or stamp. We even received a coffee cup in the mail from the Barnard-Columbia University SF Club (in lieu of a LoC, presumably) that depicted a contented-looking cat and the words "Le Chat." Harvia followed up his *Chat* Cartoon in that same issue with an amusing commentary about how he came to draw it; here it is again...

FANNISH LEGEND



The origins of *Chat*, the fourth fannish ghod, should be obvious. Ah, but how many forget and pronounce the silent h.

"A TRUE STORY"

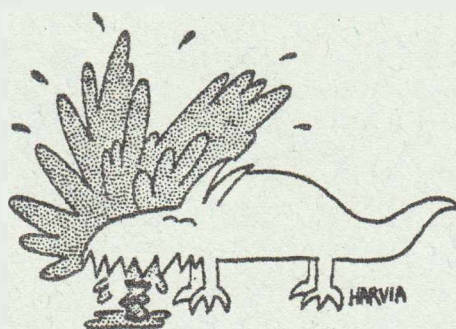
Teddy Harvia

Saturday last, dhog brought me the mail. I hadn't even heard the postman at the box. I tossed dhog a bheer and he proceeded to pound on the tab with his teeth.

A "Mpls in 73" flyer, a love letter from my girlfriend in France, and a fanzine from Chattanooga -- not much, I thought, as I glanced through the mail. But the last had me wondering. I don't know anyone in Chattanooga except McPherson Strutts, and he doesn't count.

A hand-marked block on the inside page explained why I had received the fanzine. Its editors wanted art. No problem, I decided.

Suddenly, a shower of bheer suds descended on my head. Dhog had opened his bheer. I glared at him as he happily tried to catch the jet shooting from the can. You'll have to clean up this mess, I told him, but knew that he wouldn't. He never did. A creature as independent as dhog, who insists on opening his own bheers, has no master.



Dhog (*Bheercanus poundus*)

I set the fanzine aside to dry.

Later that day I relaxed with dhog on my feet to read *Chat* through the bheer stains and teeth marks. Words and comments here and there brought cartoon ideas to mind, but I dismissed them one by one. All in *Chat* seemed temporal, unlikely to recur in the next issue. I needed a cartoon idea which was outside time.

Why not just send a cartoon from your file, dhog suggested. They would know, I responded. They would think I

hadn't even taken the time to read their fanzine.

For two hours I read and reread the issue. I went line by line, word by word, until my mind and body finally fell exhausted into a fitful sleep.

In a dream, the 'h' in the title of the fanzine faded away. It was so obvious, I suddenly realized, that the stuff of fannish legends had been staring me in the face all the time.

I leapt awake, rolling dhog off my feet and across the floor. The idea became a scrawled note. Dhog mumbled for another bheer.

The next day, with only slight changes, I inked the caption. But the accompanying sketch seemed inadequate. Dhog yawned with disinterest at the cat I had drawn.

The sketch lay for three days on my desk. The gulf between conception and execution seemed infinitely wide. I knew eventually I would send off the cartoon, whatever its final form. But I hesitated. The legend seemed to demand time.

Tuesday afternoon a vision from my past entered my mind. I remembered as a child wondering at the drawing of a saber-toothed tiger in the encyclopedia. Suddenly the beast was before me. His scream lifted the hairs on the back of my neck. I was face-to-face with primal fantasy.

As quickly as it had appeared, it vanished back into prehistory. I hurriedly tried to sketch its essence.

At home that night I faithfully traced the creature in ink. When I showed the finished drawing to dhog, his ears shot straight up in the air. And I knew I had captured the legend on paper.

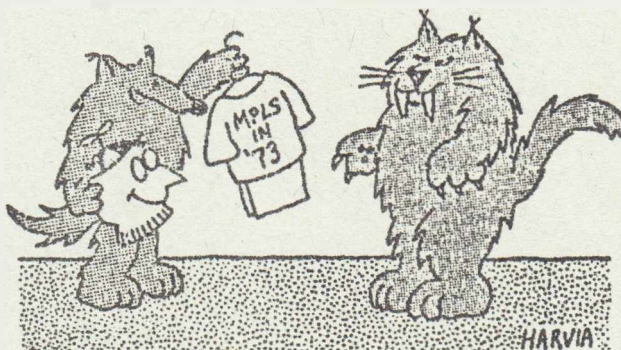
It turned out that Teddy Harvia's "Fourth Fannish Ghod" article generated more fan mail than anything else that ever appeared in *Chat*. But what was more interesting was that it seemed to be the catalyst for a larger number of LoCs. Where we were hard pressed to find two or three pages of letters to print, every issue after that we didn't have any problem filling five or more pages, even with the tiny reduced print and narrow margins we were using to keep the pagecount to a manageable number. The most amusing response to the "Chat" article was from Sharon Webb, who wrote:

"Loved Harvia's fourth fannish ghod, Chat. I was so impressed that I was driven to do some research on the subject: The ghod is, of course, a chatamount. His favorite food is chatfish, but chatbird is violently poisonous to him. Upon ingestion of chatbird the chat will exhibit the chatastrophic symptoms of chataplexy. If the remedy (Chatalpha Chaterpillar) is withheld, the chondition rapidly progresses to a state of chatalepsy.

"I would hope that the fourth

fannish ghod Chat sees fit to reveal himself to us at Chattacon 5."

Unfortunately, it was not to be. While Chattacon 5 (January 1980) indeed had a masquerade, nobody entered as "Chat." Back then, convention masquerading had not become the relatively big-time craft it is now, and apparently nobody who read *Chat* was very much into that aspect of fandom. A "Chat" costume would have been amusing.



But you can't go to the masquerade as yourself, Chat! How's about a nice neofan disguise instead?

By the time Chattacon 5 rolled around, most of the "Chat" puns had run their course; by then everyone in the club was thinking more about the upcoming convention than of mythical saber-toothed tigers. After more than two years, the club itself had grown quite a bit from its modest beginnings. No longer were meetings held at the home of one of the members; it wasn't unusual to have 25 or more people at a meeting by then, and the club treasury had grown to *gasp* over a hundred dollars (those were big numbers back then for a small metro area like Chattanooga). It didn't go unnoticed by a certain few club members that even though the club was contributing less than half of the publishing costs, *Chat* was still siphoning off a what was considered a significant share (usually between \$5 and \$15 a month) of club dues that could have gone into more down-to-earth endeavors, like throwing a big treasury-depleting party each month. And smaller, less costly issues of *Chat* would mean more money for bigger and better parties yet. Personality differences within the club were starting to build that would affect the club as a



whole and *Chat* in particular, even if we weren't fully aware of it at the time. We certainly wouldn't have believed it then if somebody had told us that we would cease publication after just one more year.

For that and other reasons, the Chattacon 5 issue of *Chat*, number 28 (January 1980), was another transitional issue. Gone was the photocopier method of repro; Dick had felt more and more uncomfortable about using his employer's Xerox machine to run off higher and higher copy counts of greater and greater pagecounts each month. It had become unmanageable, so we had acquired an honest-to-goodness Gestetner mimeo and electrosten-cil machine for future fanzine projects. *Chat* 28 was the first of them.

That issue was also memorable from the article by Bob Tucker in it. Every January since our first meeting with him in Arkansas, he'd been a guest at Chattacon, and had spent a few days with us before or after the convention. His visit in early 1980 was particularly memorable, because he drove down with Lou Tabakow from Cincinnati; Lou was already in the early stages of Lou Gehrig's Disease



that would eventually claim him, but we remember the two days they spent with us before the convention were two of the most fun days we've ever had. Bob was Toastmaster of that Chattacon and was the subject of "The Last Whole Earth Bob Tucker Roast" at the Saturday

night banquet, a truly funny and entertaining event of which sadly no documentation remains. He had also contributed an amusing article of fan history interest that was printed in the Program Book and also in *Chat*. Here it is again...

A SCHOLARLY REPORT ON AN ALMOST-LOST ART FORM

Bob Tucker

"Lez-ettes" was the name given to the very-short stories which appeared between 1940 and 1968 in a fanzine called *Le Zombie*. That was a time when fandom was very young and had not yet gained a social conscience, and refused to take itself seriously.

The appeal of the stories was that they each consisted of only three chapters, and each chapter contained but one word. (A very few stories contained more than one word per chapter, but they were not as popular and as pithy as the single-word chapters.)

Two examples follow:

Chapter One:

Fan

Chapter Two:

Fanne

Chapter Three:

One-Shot

Chapter One:

Jill

Chapter Two:

Pill

Chapter Three:

Nil

The Lez-ettes were the invention of the old Slan Shack gang in Battle Creek, Michigan, and were written by Walt Liebscher, Al Ashley, Jack Wiedenbeck, E. E. Evans, and myself. The rules for writing them were simple: each chapter was to contain only one word, if possible, and the three chapters taken together should tell a coherent story, with the third and last chapter being reserved for the climax or culmination. The kind of story a Big Name Editor was likely to buy if he wasn't afraid of being fired.

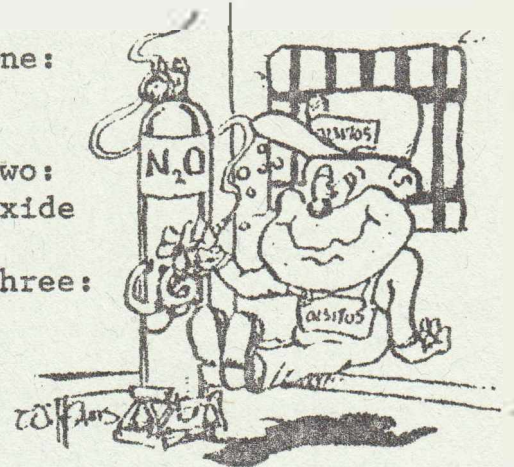
The chapters were to be set out as illustrated in this report, and the desired goal was to be as terse and as clever as possible but to always tell a complete story.

That which follows is a reprinting of the "better" stories taken from the pages of *Le Zombie* during the years mentioned above, and you are invited to contribute to the art form and so prevent it from becoming entirely lost. Try your fine hand at this exciting kind of fiction. You may win fame and fortune, but, unfortunately, you won't become eligible for membership in the Science Fiction Writers of America.

Chapter One:
Prison

Chapter Two:
Nitrous Oxide

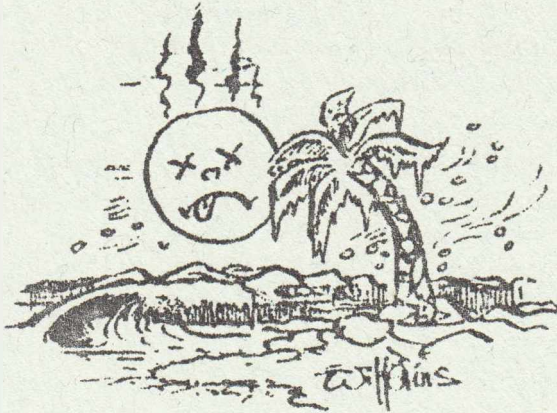
Chapter Three:
Silicon



Chapter One:
Sun

Chapter Two:
None

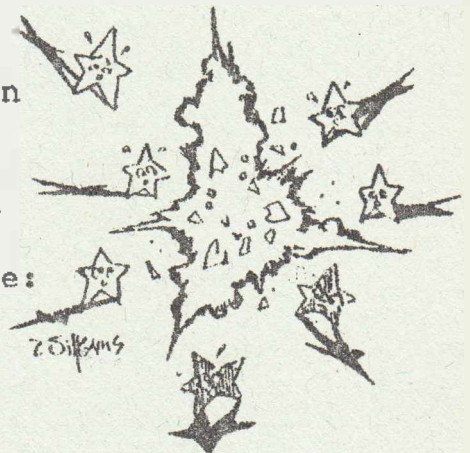
Chapter Three:
All Done



Chapter One:
Constellation

Chapter Two:
Constipation

Chapter Three:
Nova



Switching over to mimeo had an additional side benefit -- it allowed us to use color in *Chat*. Issue 31 (April 1980) was the first issue where we used different colored mimeo inks; it had a three-color cover by local fanartist Bob Barger. There wasn't as much reader response as we thought there would be, although it did catch the attention of Taral, who was doing fanzine reviews for Mike Glycer's fanzine *File 770* at the time. Taral gave *Chat* a somewhat positive review -- he praised it for use of color

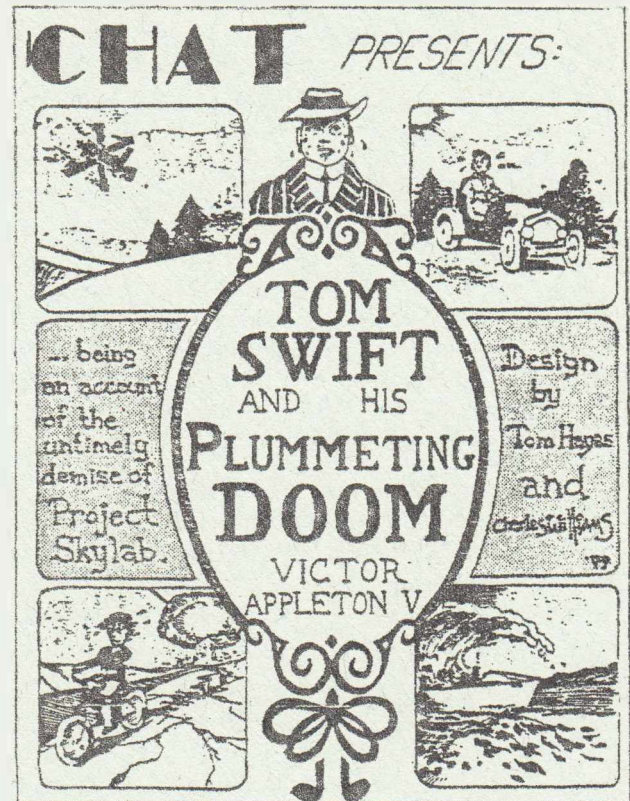
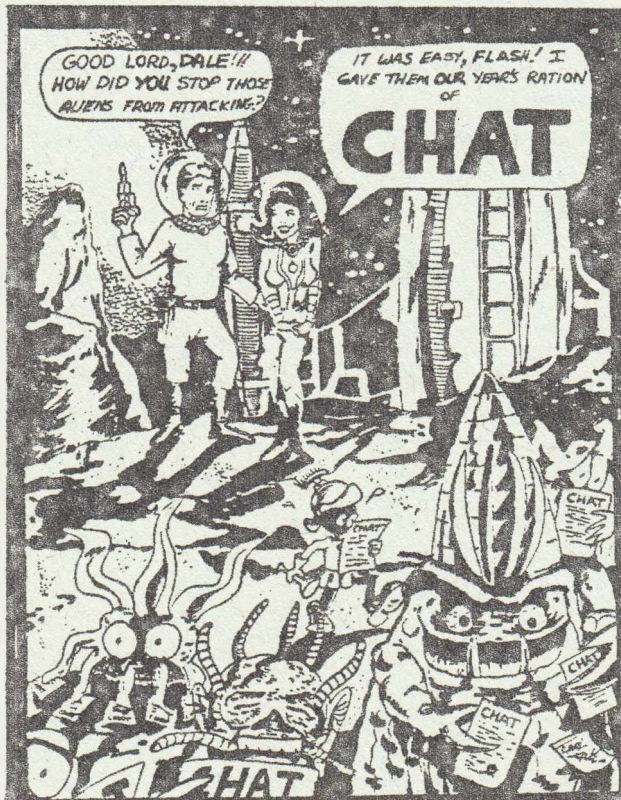
mimeo and appearance, but thought we were pretty well hemmed-in by the clubzine format and monthly deadlines. He suggested we might be better off doing a different kind of fanzine.

We were starting to think along those same lines ourselves, but frankly, we liked *Chat* and the growing number of fannish contacts we were making because of it -- it wasn't unusual to find letters from Canada, England, Australia, Italy, or even Minnesota in our mailbox. Besides, after three years,

that little saber-toothed tiger was part of the family. So we pressed on.

There were other color covers after that. For very next issue, *Chat* 32 (May 1980), we managed to work in all four mimeo ink colors we had; fortunately it was a fairly simple cover with lots of white space as buffer between colors. And there were three issues after that, 34 through 36, that had two-color covers. However, we soon discovered to our dismay that although we now had the means to do multi-color mimeo, we still didn't necessarily have the time. Deadlines fell just too close together. And it added somewhat to the cost of the fanzine, which again was starting to be an issue with the club.

By the time that the third annish, *Chat* 37 (October 1980) came out, growing personality differences had polarized the club to the point where it was in effect two different and competing fan organizations. There wasn't any semblance of unity anymore, and meetings had started to become confrontational to the point where we no longer looked



forward each month to attending. It was obvious that someone needed to stir things up a bit, to at least try to regain some semblance of unity. So, in issue 37, someone did.

The article was called "A Statement of Intent," and was written by Ken Scott, a club member known for his sharp sense of humor. We ran it as an editorial, although in retrospect it might have been better as a letter of comment. In any event, it succeeded in stirring things up, but probably not in the way that was intended. Here is the text...

Some time ago at a meeting-after-the-meeting meeting, it was noted that the Chattanooga fandom had lost sight of itself. That is, that it is no longer concerned with science fiction and SF fandom, and that it had become chaotic, directionless, and was turning into a party club. Let's face it; any bunch of half-drunk mundane idiots can get together and have a party. SF fandom is supposed to be better than the mundane world, not just like it.

So it was decided that CSFA needed a leader, one who would provide a structure of continuity both within the meeting and from meeting to meeting, not just someone who just stands in front of everybody and lets everybody talk at once. The SMOFs conferred on this leader (as yet nameless) as unlimited an authority over meetings as his henchmen could secure for him. However, there seemed to be no one to entrust this power to due to either lack of time or fear of lack of experience in wielding power. No one that is, but myself.

I did not want this position but I recognized that another candidate might not have my determination for reform and improvement for CSFA. The SMOFs understood this and assented to the inevitable.

Therefore, at the October meeting there will be a short ceremony of investation wherein I will assume power and appoint my henchmen. Afterwards the meeting will begin along guidelines set forth by me.



Wishing myself well and the CSFA renewed health and prosperity, this is your friend and servant...



Unfortunately, the message that was presented, namely the obviousness that the club needed some revitalization, was misinterpreted as an attempt to wrest control of the club. The fact that there was never any control to wrest, the club having been organized as essentially an anarchy, wasn't considered. An uproar ensued, with all kinds of accusations being tossed about, and what happened was that *Chat* itself became the focus of all the unpleasantness that was going on. The next three issues had a lively debate in the letters column about what does or doesn't make for an interesting meeting, and we were both surprised and pleased to get correspondence from readers in other cities comparing similar situations in their local clubs with CSFA. The most interesting and gratifying was from a fan in Philadelphia, who wrote:

"It is interesting to note the comments about a 'power struggle' and factionalizing within your club.

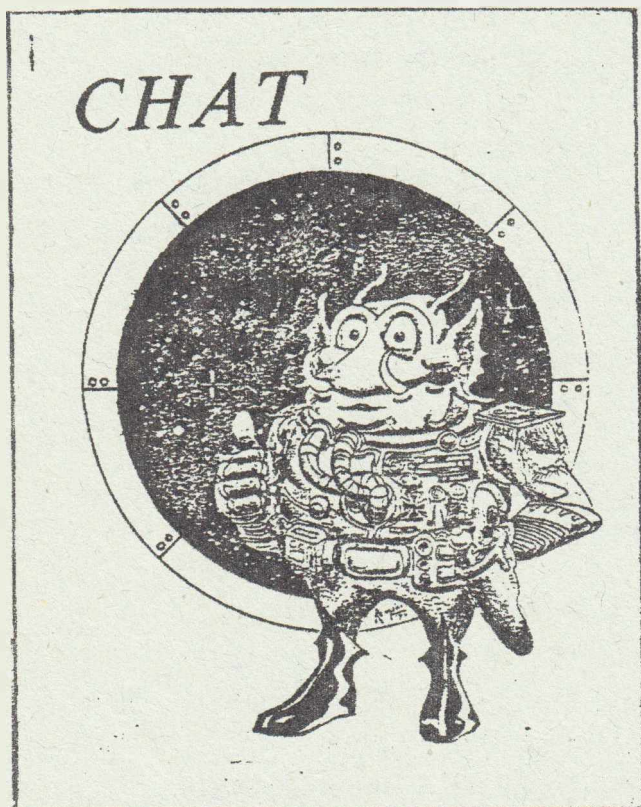
This has been a problem which has plagued the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society for the last eight years (since I've been in). The people who do the work are inevitably accused of trying to grab power. What most people don't realize is there is really almost no power to be obtained by running the typical regional SF club. And the positions of responsibility are generally available for those who are interested and dedicated enough to use them. Unfortunately, there are those who aren't willing to take that approach, and instead seek titles for their own sakes. This leads to the downfall of the club, as the workers get disgusted with all the drones. This series of events has occurred countless times in PSFS and other clubs."

That letter appeared in *Chat* 40 (February 1981), which was the final issue. By early 1981 we had decided that Taral had been right after all; we were pretty well hemmed-in by the clubzine format and monthly deadlines, and had taken *Chat* about as far as we



thought a clubzine could or should be taken. Twenty pages a month may not sound like much in these days of powerful personal computers and slick word processing software, but back then each page had to be laboriously pasted-up from hand-typed copy. We also had decided that things with the club were probably not going to get better any time soon (they didn't), and we were tiring of all the bullshit. We longed to do a zine that didn't have or need any affiliations or sources of cofunding. It was time to try something else -- a different kind of fanzine with a more open publishing schedule. And so *Mimosa* was born, the name indicative of our southern fan background, but like ourselves, not necessarily or even originally from the south.

It's been almost nine years now since the demise of *Chat*. In that time, CSFA split into two separate clubs. The original CSFA hung on for another couple of years before atrophying away; the rival club still exists, although it has undergone so many changes in its cast of characters that the differences that originally led to its formation are probably only dimly if at all remembered. There



were other Chattanooga clubzines after *Chat*; however, none of them persisted as long, appeared as regularly, or had as wide a circulation or as varied and interesting a content. *Chat* was a product of that rarest of times in any new fan organization, the first few years when feuds hadn't yet had time to develop.

And we admit there were times during the early and mid 1980s when we vaguely, but not really seriously, considered resuming publication in a more newszine-type format. We remember one of those times well; it was a breezy Tennessee autumn night with the wind singing through the branches of the big Sweet Gum tree in our backyard. We thought it sounded kind of like a big cat yowling...



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MIMOSA LETTERS

{{ We thought fewer articles last issue might well translate to fewer letters of comment, but we were wrong -- not only were there over 70 respondents, we also received maybe 60 different fanzine titles in trade. Needless to say, we're gratified by the response. The articles that seemed to generated the most mail were Dave Kyle's remembrance of the First WorldCon, "The Great Exclusion Act of 1939," and Bruno Ogorelec's autobiographical "Great Jumping Grandmothers - A Cautionary Tale of Female Emancipation." First up is a sampling of comments about these articles... }}

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue,
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

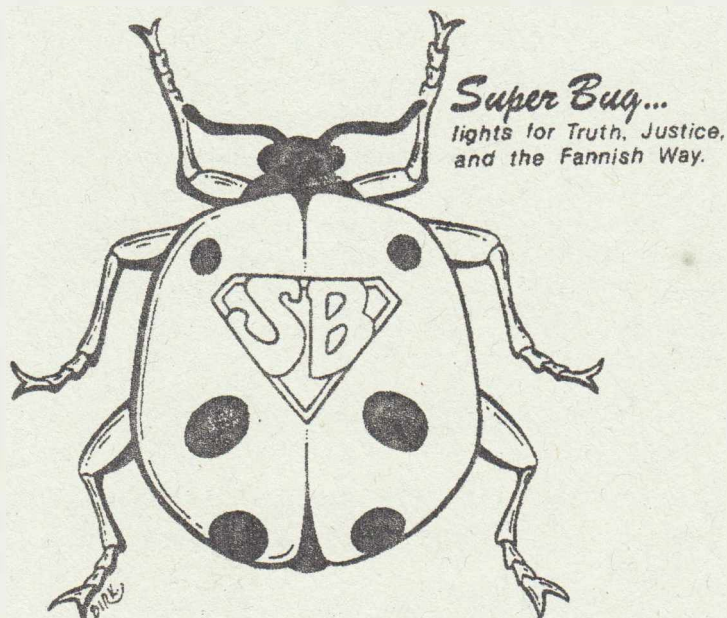
The new *Mimosa* gave me a lot of pleasant reading, plus a sort of patriotic pride to find Maryland so well represented among the creators and contributors. Maybe this state is entering a fantastic period of fanac that will some day be compared with Irish Fandom.

Naturally, as a lapsed fan historian, I took a lot of interest in Dave Kyle's article. The reprint of the complete document that caused so much trouble at the first WorldCon is something that should have been done long ago. I remember years ago coming across my copy (a much-rumpled one which either Fred Pohl or Jack Gillespie retrieved from a hip pocket and presented to me the time they hitchhiked to pay me a visit shortly after the con) and thinking it was a seminal document that should be made available in print in complete form from time to time. I do wish, though, that Dave had told us who did the actual writing. I can't remember anyone having claimed authorship and I can't figure out from re-reading the identity of the author on stylistic grounds. It sounds as if it might have been a collaboration with two or more Futurians helping out.

I'm glad you ignored your length limi-

tations for once and published Bruno Ogorelec's article in complete form. It's the sort of article that will stick in my mind long after most of the contents of the fanzines I read in 1989 are jumbled together in a homogeneous mass. It's so different from most fanzine material in subject matter, so thorough in its characterization of an entire family, so warmly humorous. If the FAAn awards still existed, it would deserve one. And the strangest thing about the article is that the events described in it seemed familiar to me, four or five thousand miles away from its setting. The excitement when science fiction became available in greater quantities in Yugoslavia a generation or two ago wasn't too different from the way it was when I was a boy and could find it almost nowhere but in the three prozines published each month, followed by the elation that came when dozens of new prozine titles began to be published.

{{ Like the commercial says - some times you gotta break the rules. Bruno's article was just one of those cases. We're glad that so many people enjoyed it, and we'll run longer articles a little more often now. }}



Taras Wolansky, 100 Montgomery Street,
Jersey City, New Jersey 07302

Mimosa #6 was outstanding! {{ Thanks! }}

I picked it up at Noreascon, mainly because I noticed it had the text of Dave Kyle's "evil, communistic" pamphlet of 1939, which I've wanted to get for a couple of years.

It turns out, I see, that Kyle's pamphlet was neither evil nor communistic -- just libelous! I don't think I buy Kyle's argument that Moskowitz made the pamphlet sound worse than it really was, by selectively excerpting it in *The Immortal Storm*: some of the stuff left out was as bad as the quoted material. On the other hand, Moskowitz did leave out one paragraph ("The Newark Revolution") which might have embarrassed him.

Speaking of communists, what propels *Mimosa 6* into the fannish stratosphere is Bruno Ogorelec's wonderful memoir, "Great Jumping Grandmothers." This has got to be one of the best things I've ever read in a fanzine. (Teddy Harvia's illos fit the text beautifully, too.)

It made me think of my own East European roots, in Ukraine. I'm also the descendant of priests, only in my case it was all legit and in the male line: Ukrainian Catholic priests could marry, at the time.

Bruno's account of the difficulties in obtaining SF in Yugoslavia reminded me of how my father discovered Edgar Rice Burroughs: a Polish translation of *The Return of Tarzan* was serving as toilet paper in the outhouse. My father remembers spending hours there reading ahead, while people banged on the door and yelled, "Hey! What are you doing in there!"

Kev McVeigh, 37 Firs Road, Milnthorpe,
Cumbria LA7 7QF, United Kingdom

The piece about the first Worldcon all seems rather petty now at this distant time,

but at the same time it shows up a disturbing phenomena in U.S. culture which seems to still be present.

From here, and I may have a distorted view, it seems that there is an effective "ban" on Socialists through the McCarthy legacy. I have a copy of *The Book of Lists*, which includes "20 U.S. Cities Which Have Elected Socialists to Public Office." I don't know what they include in "Public Office," but still, the fact that this list is worth printing says a lot to me. {{ ed. note: "Public Office" here is any position in the city, county, state, or national government that a person must run and be elected to, rather than being simply appointed. }} Why is it that so few socialists achieve success in the U.S.? Is it a result of propaganda and anti-Soviet paranoia? Whatever its cause, the effect seems not far short of the one party system of Eastern Europe in preventing real change.

{{ It probably goes a lot farther back than that. The original colonists of the New World were mostly individualists who were looking for a better life; much of the westward expansion was by so-called "rugged individualists," who apparently did not want or need any government interference in their lives. Later, the mythos of "Yankee Ingenuity" arose, which again promoted the values of individualism, with the carrot of potential personal wealth for a good new idea (i.e., "Build a Better Mousetrap and the World Will Beat a Path to your Door"). In short, this country is based on the concept of individualism -- always has been and probably always will be. Socialism, even something as beneficial as social safety nets like Social Security, Medicare, and the proposed National Health Insurance has always tended to rub people the wrong way. The McCarthy era seems therefore a symptom (a reactionary one, admittedly) and not a cause of the general lack of success of Socialist candidates for political office here. We're interested in other's views of this, particularly from other coun-

tries like Australia and Canada with similar histories. }}

Michael Sherck, 53361 Hickory Road,
South Bend, Indiana 46635

I especially enjoyed Dave Kyle's article "The Great Exclusion Act of 1939." Having previously read about early fandom (Fred Pohl's *The Way the Future Was* and Knight's *The Futurians* primarily) had left some curiosity about those days and it was quite interesting to have some light shed on the subject. I don't suppose the principals are too awfully interested anymore but I thoroughly enjoyed that little piece of Fannish history.

Mr. Ogorelec's family's experiences with SF were interesting. Having been the recent recipient of a portion of a grandmotherly woman's SF collection myself, however, I wonder whether this might not be a somewhat more widespread phenomenon than is otherwise noticed. I suppose that it is entirely possible that there are whole legions of elderly ladies out there with bulging collections of vintage SF.

{{ We know for a fact that's true. Some years ago, Dick was able to acquire a large number of old SF digest magazines from someone who was cleaning out his grandmother's attic and who heard through a mutual friend that we might be interested in buying them. Included in the stack were the first four issues of *F&SF*, plus issues of *Galaxy* and *Astounding* from the early 1950s. All were in excellent condition, and the purchase price averaged out to 45¢ per issue. The fellow told Dick he had almost thrown them away, a fate that any number of similar collections of long-time readers of SF have undoubtedly been unable to escape. }}

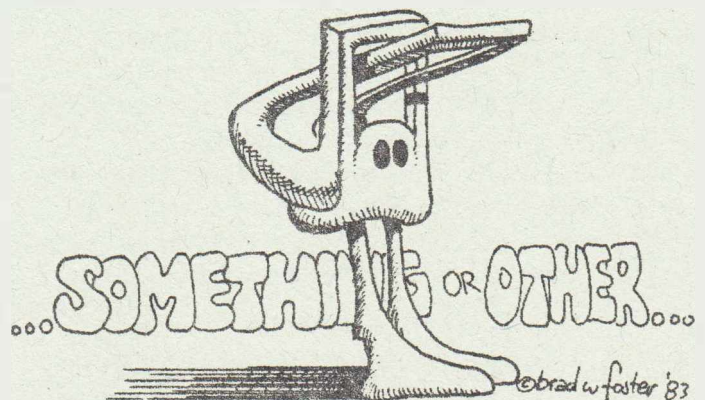
David Rowe (address withheld by request)

Oddly enough, back around '72 I happened

to see Sam Moskowitz and Don Wollheim greeting each other (at a London Circle/Globe meet, of all places). Their attitudes 33 years after the exclusion act were still curt, artificial, and icy.

As much as fandom "owes" Sam for writing the first history of fandom, his lack of reticence worries me. Although *The Immortal Storm* started in *Fantasy Commentator* in 1945 before the McCarthy Era, it went on till '52 when the witch hunts were well underway. Didn't Sam realize that if an overzealous petty politician had gotten wind that there were dirty little commies involved in that kids-stuff SF, all hell would have broken loose? Surely it would have been better to have halted the series until more liberal times prevailed. As Arthur Clarke has pointed out, Science Fiction was about the only branch of entertainment to escape the McCarthy witch hunts (mainly because at that time it was generally thought to be beneath contempt), it's also fair to note another truth Arthur pointed to -- if it ever happens again, SF will not be so lucky.

{{ Let's hope we've reached the point that it never happens again. Is it really fair to blame Moskowitz for not being intimidated by McCarthy-ites, though? When he started his series, he could hardly have predicted what was to occur, and part of the reason for the downfall of McCarthy was certain individuals deciding not to be intimidated by him. As to whether Moskowitz and Wollheim are on friendly terms, though, read on... }}



Sam Moskowitz, 361 Roseville Avenue,
Newark, New Jersey 07107

I would like to make a few additions, revisions and corrections to Kyle's presentation. First, Dave's statement: "But I forgave him even though others haven't after all these years." Of the six who would be barred from the First World Convention, Cyril Kornbluth and John B. Michel have passed on and I was on a very friendly basis with both of them before their deaths, Kornbluth appearing as a guest speaker for me at the Eastern Science Fiction Association in 1958 ... Michel loaned me his mimeograph to put out my fan mag, *Different*, dated December, 1945.

I don't know what ever became of Jack Gillespie.

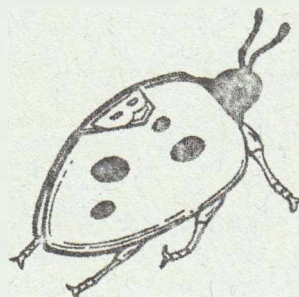
Further, I regard Robert Lowndes as a close friend that I had no compunction with helping him obtain a position with Gernsback Publications when his *Magazine of Horror* collapsed. He has been over to my house on several occasions for very friendly get togethers. He paid me for consultation when he was editing the fantasy magazines. He paid me for consultation when he was editing the fantasy magazines.

I have been on excellent terms with Donald A. Wollheim ever since the forties, have visited him at his home and he has graciously responded to my requests that he be a guest speaker at the Eastern Science Fiction Association on a number of occasions, paying all his own expenses and providing his own transportation. Just three days before writing this letter I visited him at the Manhattan hospital where he is recuperating from a stroke suffered in 1988. I am on a very friendly basis and have always been with his wife Elsie and his daughter Betsy, both of whom are lovely people, and recently met Betsy's husband Peter and her baby Zoe. Fred Pohl bought a dozen articles from me when he was editing *Worlds of Tomorrow*.

I regard myself as being on a very friendly basis with Dave, his wife Ruth, and his daughter Kerry for many years, and I wonder why he had to forgive me. After all, I

did let him into the convention!

{{ Sam's letter goes on at great length from here (10 pages!) and in great detail about events leading up to that first WorldCon, re-presenting his version of these events (as originally related in his book *The Immortal Storm*) in refutation of Dave's version. Since there still, after 50 years, seems to be plenty of hard feelings left over about this incident, perhaps we should present our stance on this still controversial topic. Simply put, we have no interest in re-opening a 50 year old feud; indeed, we had no idea that this was still a touchy subject after all this time -- we saw Sam, Dave, Don Wollheim, Fred Pohl, and others on a fan history panel at the Atlanta WorldCon, and everyone seemed to be getting along just fine. In any event, what interests us about articles like this is the fan history aspects; it's obvious from the mail we've received that most fans have never seen, or even heard of, the Pamphlet. In our opinion, while it is a bit of fannish history, it's had little effect on fandom outside the region where it happened so many years ago. If it had any effect on southern fandom, for example, it would be pretty hard to trace. We don't know if it had an effect on the fandoms outside the U.S. but we do feel it's an important bit of fan history that deserved being revisited, fifty years after its transpiration. As for events surrounding the Pamphlet and the First WorldCon, we suggest that readers acquire *The Immortal Storm*, *The Way the Future Was*, *The Futurians*, and other fan history references, and to make up their own minds as to what did or didn't actually happen. }}



Lloyd Penney, 4 Lisa Street #114,
Brampton, Ontario L6T 4B6, Canada

I've read about the exclusion of those fans from the first Worldcon in two other publications -- Fred Pohl's *The Way the Future Was*, and as Mr. Kyle states, Sam Moskowitz's *The Immortal Storm*. I have to be amazed that there is still the controversy, the disputation, the anger, and the hard feelings surrounding this event after fifty years. {{ Us, too. }} In this later age, the fact that there's further discussion and revelation makes me wonder how those feelings can last after 50 years of what I thought would be resolution and patching-up. Feuding and fannish politics seem harsh to many in my own circles today, but if that length of time cannot let those involved forget or forgive, then our own conflicts are mild indeed.

Janice Murray, P.O. Box 75684,
Seattle, Washington 98125-0684

I was fascinated by Mr. Kyle's article about 1939 WorldCon politics. Gee, I had no idea the crap I went through with Norwescon in 1980 had such a rich fannish historical precedent.

{{ We've been through a few of those ourselves. }}

Walt Willis, 32 Warren Road, Donaghadee, Northern Ireland BT21 OPD

Thank you for *Mimosa 6*. I hope you know what you're doing, printing that article by Dave Kyle. {{ Apparently we didn't! }} It makes the Great Exclusion Act as interestingly controversial as any of the great events in mundane history. Many people think that history just sort of lies there, everything agreed on and all the loose ends tidied up. But if you read different books on, say, the French Revolution, you realise that controversy is still raging about every episode and character. What is going to happen as a result of Dave's article is that you will get

an indignant and copiously documented rebuttal from Sam Moskowitz which you will feel morally obligated to print; other readers will take sides and once again All Fandom Will Be Plunged Into War. Oh well, it was nice knowing you.

The whole fanzine was good, but to my mind the article by Bruno Ogorelec was outstanding. His experiences are at once so similar and so startlingly different from what is typical here, that one feels simultaneously both sympathy and astonishment. And all that about the fan gene descending the female line...incredible. It leaves me feeling that one would almost believe Bruno if he told us that his country was really called Hugoslavia, after Gernsback. Anyway, it was pretty nearly an ideal fanzine article. Congratulations.

Russell Chauvenet, 11 Sussex Road,
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Thanx a lot for *Mimosa 5* and 6. It was especially nice to have 5 on hand while reading the locs in 6. The absolute ☆ of ☆☆☆ was Bruno Ogorelec. At my age I never expected to read any fanzine article a tenth as gripping and fascinating as his Cautionary Tale. As soon as I can find my father's old Serbian dictionary, I'm going to write him a letter.



Debi Metcalf, 13 Cardinal Court, West Nyack, New York 10994

I'm glad you decided to run Bruno Ogorelec's article. I found it interesting, well done, and the allusions to *Dune* amusing. Then it occurred to me that this wasn't written in the man's native language...

David Palter, 55 Yarmouth Road (Basement), Toronto, Ontario M6G 1X1, Canada

I have seen letters from Bruno Ogorelec in various fanzines before, and I had wondered how he had managed to become an SF fan in Yugoslavia. Having now read the history of his discovery of the genre, I must say that it is both stranger and more interesting than I had remotely expected. Aside from the inherent oddities of the narrative itself, I must also remark on Bruno's writing, which is excellent by any standard. This is even more impressive as a display of his command of English. Of course, it is logical that he should have developed such a knowledge of English, given the quantity of English-language SF he has read. Fandom does have its educational side-effects, without a doubt.

Richard Brandt, 4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso, Texas 79912

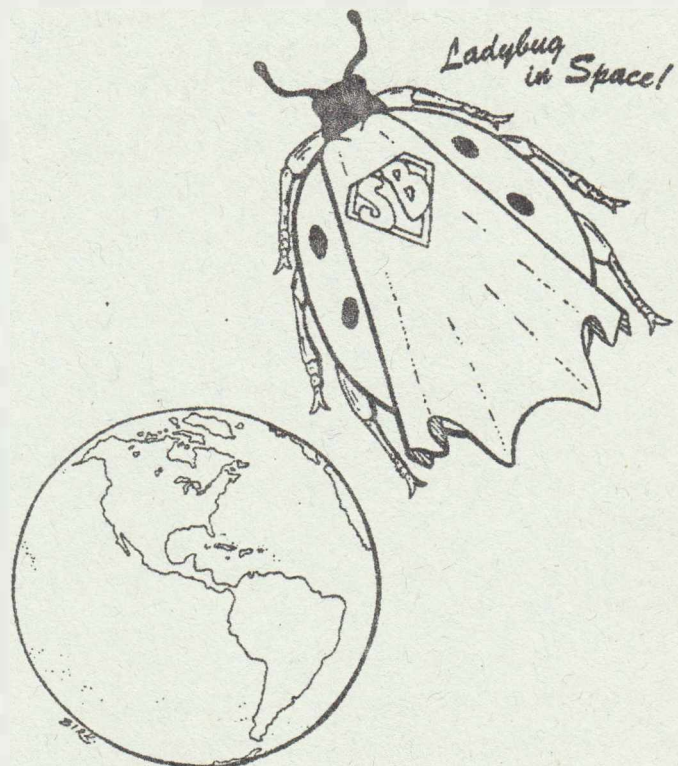
Interesting fanhistory notes this issue -- especially from Dave Kyle. Sam Moskowitz has been arguing heatedly and effectively for the depth and validity of his research; the issue of how his biases affect his conclusions, or indeed what he selects to present as history, is perhaps more at issue.

{{ Sam's book is undoubtedly influenced by his personal recollections, so it's not unexpected that he would add his own spin to events he chronicled, just as Dave has in his. }}

Bruno's article is quite a tour-de-force; the science fictional element is merely a thread to tie together the outre family his-

tory and glimpses of life in an alien nation. His discovery of the story where "the mountain opened up" didn't sound quite so stfnal to me, however. Why, our local paper had a headline recently: "MT. SAINT HELEN'S TO OPEN FOR CLIMBERS."

I wouldn't mind hearing more of Dick's adventures in the coal seams {"Paradise"}). I'm in the fossil fuels industry myself, although my desk job doesn't provide any fascinating experiences in the gas fields. Somehow, anecdotes about the office routine don't stack up...



A. Langley Searles, 48 Highland Circle, Bronxville, New York 10708

Dave Kyle's "Great Exclusion Act of 1939" suffers from the same fault he accuses Sam Moskowitz of showing in his *Immortal Storm*: it is incomplete. What he doesn't mention, among other things, is that most Futurians and Michelists didn't do much thinking for themselves: they just slavishly followed the Communist party line. They were pro-Fascist from the time Germany and the USSR signed a non-aggression pact and divided Poland until

the Nazis attacked Russia. And as far as the excisions from Kyle's booklet, let me say that as editor of the magazine that published *The Immortal Storm* {{ ed. note: *The Immortal Storm* was originally serialized in *Fantasy Commentator* }}, I read these before publication and felt they added little substance to the points Sam was making. (I re-read them again in *Mimosa*, and see no reason to change my mind.) I can't help wondering why, if Kyle thinks they are so important, he never wrote to me when the abbreviated version first appeared? Did it take him 50 years to make up his mind?

{{ Well, we weren't aware of any statute of limitations for replying to a fanzine article, so it doesn't seem entirely fair to take Dave to task for waiting until now to write his own account of those events. }}

Sharon Farber's tales of medical school {{ "Tales of Adventure and Medical Life, Part II" }} were delightful, and I shall hand them over to my wife Alice (who happens to be a doctor) for her enjoyment. I note that Sharon encountered patients for the first time in her third year, which I think is late. Alice had in her freshman year a course titled "Introduction to the Patient" and always told me she was glad contact with "the real world" started that early.

Finally, thanks for printing your experiences with a cat in a motel {{ "Two-and-a Half Months in a Motel... With a Cat" }}. My wife and I are cat people, and once had a household containing two Siamese and a Russian Blue, both now gone (as Sharon would say) to the Eternal ICU. Their place is now taken by a cat who found us (as cats are so adept at doing), a big, affectionate orange tiger male named Monty. When Monty can't snooze on our laps he does so beside my typewriter, which he is doing now, and if he could read and write I am sure he would add a few words of praise to Nicki for her enjoyable article.

{{ We regret to report the saddest, cruelest transition in this fanzine of transitions -- earlier this month we lost our cat Sesame to an unknown ill-

ness. She went anorexic soon after Thanksgiving and wasted away before our eyes. We still don't know what killed her, though we know lots of things it wasn't, among them FeLV, FIV, or anything that would affect her blood chemistry. It seems ironic that she could cope with a stressful cross-country move and three-month hotel stay so well, then yield to something so subtle we still don't (and may never) know what it was. We miss her a lot. Fortunately, we still have her companion cat that we adopted about a year ago from a vet clinic. }}



Juanita Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, Indiana 47348

Mimosa was a good read, as expected. Your stay at the motel sounds like the sort of thing that's interesting for a while but starts palling fairly rapidly -- then entering the increasing-impatience-to-escape stage. Up to a point, I don't mind new experiences, even when they're uncomfortable. But it's sort of like playing host to other people's kids (who of course haven't been as well trained as one's own): pleasant enough for short periods, followed by relief that they're not yours and will eventually be their parents' sole charge once more.

{{ Actually the worst part about being in the hotel so long was not being able to cook, and having to eat out all the time. It was also difficult for Nicki to job hunt with only a hotel phone number to give out. Most of the people who called back thought she actually worked for the hotel, rather than being a guest there. }}

Roger Weddall's reaction {{ ed. note: in the Letters column }} to Sharon's reminiscences prods me to assure him from a patient's point of view. No, all U.S. hospitals are not like the one she's describing. They come in wild varieties.

Michael Waite, 105 West Ainsworth,
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

You should be settled into your new home by now, which prompts me to ask, when is *Mimosa* going weekly? {{ Arrrgh. }}

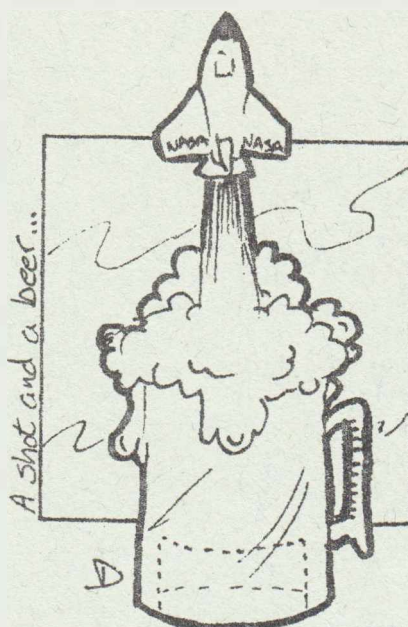
I'm looking forward to more cutting stories from the humorous scalpel of Ms. Farber. (Can you really hear the ocean through a stethoscope?)

Buck Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford
City, Indiana 47348

Sharon Farber has the best material again this issue. Juanita says that once when she was visiting me in our hospital, a candy-striper came in and unhooked the heart patient who shared the room with me, saying "time for your (whatever)," and wheeled him out. A couple of minutes later, the head nurse came running in, stared at the empty bed, and asked, "Where did he go?" Juanita explained, and the nurse said that when the aide came back, she was to report to the nurses' station immediately. Apparently, the aide hadn't mentioned to the nurses about the (whatever -- bath, I think), and they had been watching the remote sensors. Suddenly all of his went dead, and when the nurse came to check, the patient had vanished.

{{ We received several letters detail-

ing hospital anecdotes / horror stories like this. Maybe things are worse here than we thought. }}



David Haugh, 556 N. 3rd Street, Woodburn, Oregon 97071

I really enjoyed the further adventures of Sharon Farber... as someone mentioned, there is something about being a medical student that guarantees a fund of stories. You also pulled quite a coup with an actual article by Harry Warner, jr. {{ "The House on Summit Avenue" }}, and not "just" a letter (which can be articles in themselves).

And of course, the Great Exclusion Act gave a great peek into early fandom... and I didn't need a ladder to reach the second story windows.

{{ We'll have another article by Harry next issue. }}

Patty Peters, 7501 Honey Court, Dublin, California 94568

Harry Warner, jr.'s article got me wondering if non-fans would be more understanding of fan clutter (paper in sundry forms) than of "crazy" people's rubberband, rag, hubcap, or lampshade collections. If something did/does happen, who would place any

value on most of the things we find important enough to house? I know my parent's approach, because when they moved several years ago, all my books were given to the library or to Goodwill. I don't even want to consider how the moose collection would be interpreted.

Brad W. Foster, P.O. Box 165246,
Irving, Texas 75016

I liked Harry's article. What with all the huge amounts of obvious trash moving out of that house, my first question to Harry was did he ever recall seeing a trash truck stop there while the couple still lived there? I mean, it sounds like they simply never took out their trash -- maybe that's why they wanted the flattened curb, to roll their trash out!

Terry Broome, 101 Malham Drive, Lakeside Park, Lincoln, Linc's LN6 OXD, England

I couldn't make much sense of Dave Kyle's article, and the reprinted **WARNING!** is both embarrassing and tedious. From what I could understand, a group of fans disagreed about the running of the first World SF convention, one group wanting the process to be democratic, the other oligarchic or even autocratic. Reading it, I can see why Moskowitz edited it and said most of what was left out was simple repetition, 'cos that's the way it came across to me. I can see why Kyle wanted to present his side of the story, but unless your readership is particularly interested in fanhistory or of the age to have been at that con, I wonder what the article was supposed to be saying to younger, less fannishly introspective fan like myself.

{{ Perhaps the article can be considered a cautionary tale about how events or ideas of one time can seem blown out of proportion to those who follow. Struggling to keep one or more "undesirables" out of a convention or club can lead to hard feelings

and pain long after the oh-so-legitimate reasons have been forgotten or become unimportant. Until you've ever been involved in the strangeness of fannish feuds or parting of ways, you don't realize how something minor or transitory (to another) can become a major bruhaha. }}

So, a poor start after your wonderful opening comments about moving and the Mimosa tree {{ "Notes From the Second Floor" }}, but I was soon cheered up by Harry Warner jr.'s "The House on Summit Avenue." It is as marvelous and incredible a story as his "When Fanac Was a Four Letter Word" for Geogre Bondar's *Marital Rats of Shaolin*, a pure delight to read, in that gentle, smooth style of his that gives it that Indian Summer type of feel I like so much.

Nicki's closing comments about the move and life in the hotel counter-pointed the opening comments, and worked very well, I wondered how you could suffer the hotel for so long.

{{ So do we. However, with a choice of either that or the street, you do adapt. We moved with such short notice, we had no time to find another house until we actually got here. }}

Finally, I loved the illustrations and the cartoons. Teddy Harvia's stuff is usually very funny, but I also particularly liked Charlie Williams's illustrations for Dick's and Sharon's pieces, and Steve Stiles's illos for Harry's article.



Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield,
Detroit, Michigan 48224

The Pamphlet of Kyle's from the 1939 Worldcon is pretty interesting since so much of it appears to have been deleted from Moskowitz's account. It's good that Dave Kyle has finally seen to its reprinting in full, though its issues have long since become moot -- except for its warning about power-mongers among fans. That seems as timeless as ever.

{{ And as timely as ever, too. }}

Roger and Howard's play {{ "The Definitive Story of Numbered Fandoms" }} astounds me -- mostly because I haven't seen Howard write anything before except when minac and deadlines were hounding him. This was a nice little play, superbly illustrated by Kurt Erichsen, one of fandom's least known better artists.

{{ Big-Hearted Howard has lots of humorously anecdotal fan history tales he can tell, so we hope to see more by him here soon. }}

Ladislav Peška, Na dolíkách 503,
274 01 Slaný, Czechoslovakia

The article by Dave Kyle was interesting for me, because of the name of one of the participants in "The First Eastern Science Fiction Convention," William S. Sykora. Sykora is a typical Czech name. Would it be possible to get to know more about this fan? The only other American fan with a typical Czech name that I know about is Arthur Hlavaty.

{{ There are numerous references to William Sykora in Harry Warner's fan-history of the 1940s, *All Our Yesterdays*. From it, we can deduce that he was an active convention fan; other than that we're somewhat in the dark ourselves -- we don't know if he's still active, or even alive for that matter. From what we've read, he would be a good subject for an article of fan historical interest for a future issue of *Mimosa*. }}

P. L. Caruthers-Montgomery, 2629 Norwood Avenue, Anniston, Alabama 36201

Excellent Teddy Harvia front and back cover! He's doing wonders for the looks of fanzines everywhere -- not only with his inspired covers, but with his witty cartoons as well.

You're to be commended for your efforts to bring to light historical material not only on American fandom, but also for filling us in on the beginnings and early days of fandom in other parts of the world.

{{ Thanks. Fan history has always interested us, as do writings which demonstrate that SF fandom is more than just an American phenomena. }}



Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue,
Toronto, Ontario M6S 3L6, Canada

Well, the first of the northern *Mimosas* bears a striking resemblance to its antebellum ancestors, so evidently the move hasn't hurt your essential southern fannishness. Welcome to your new part of the country and I hope we'll continue to see a regular series of attractively designed, nicely printed, and interesting issues of your fanzine.

{{ So do we. }}

I knew the basic story of the 1939 Exclusion Act, but I don't believe I'd ever seen Dave's manifesto before, so that adds flesh to a previously skeletal piece of pivotal fanhistory. Whenever I get to thinking that maybe some fans are taking fandom too seriously, I shall recall this article and recognize that compared to the eo-fans we're all just simple dilettantes!

I'm in complete agreement with you and Leigh Edmonds on the importance of getting older fans to put their recollections into a more permanent form. Since I spend at least part of the midwest cons I go to hanging around with the likes of Sims and DeVore and Tucker and Hickman, I've heard many of their tall tales of early fannish exploits, but unless somewhere like *Mimosa* encourages these elder statesmen to either write articles or talk into tape recorders for later transcription, these aspects of our history are going to be lost as we gradually lose those who were a part of them. The SF Oral History Association is doing a good job of preserving current conventional fannish history, but Larry Tucker can't go around to room parties and record people just chatting about their own memories of fandom past. It's those parts of our very fragile history that most desperately need preserving. I applaud the job *Mimosa* is doing in this direction and hope you can get more Old Pharts to set their stories down for you. (Even if many of them do centre on that Ellison fellow, may his dangerous visions increase.)

Skel, 25 Bowland Close, Offerton,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5NW, England

Mike Glicksohn {{ ed. note: in the Letters column }} has a point about the prime purpose of a LoC being to return substantial amounts of egoboo to the editors and contributors, but I think he misrepresents that bit about "making the letter-writer appear clever or entertaining to readers of the subsequent issue...". I can't speak of a letter-writer wanting to appear clever, which I think a poor motive, but I sometimes try to

write entertainingly, so perhaps I should explain why I take the trouble.

Partly of course it's a compulsion, and I can neither accept credit or blame for my endeavours in this regard, but there is another reason. Making the extra effort to present the egoboo entertainingly is in itself egoboo for the editor and contributor. The editor gets in effect a mini-contribution, something which will hopefully improve the quality of the lettercol (which Mike quite rightly sees as the "lifeblood of any good fanzine"). Mike surely would agree that letter-columns need to be carefully edited, and that there are few things more tedious than enormously long LoCcols that are full of dully-phrased LoCs doing nothing but dole out straight-forward egoboo to the editors and contributors.

You ran excerpts from 20 letters in *Mimosa* 6, presumably the ones that best suited your editorial requirements for that issue's letter column. You also WAHFed a further 30, and looking at some of the names involved it obviously wasn't because they didn't write interesting LoCs. You two got the editorial egoboo from those last 30 LoCs. I presume you xeroxed the contributors' egoboo and forwarded it to them, so they got their egoboo too. So from the point of view of yourselves and your contributors, strictly from the standpoint of receiving your due egoboo, you have no need to actually publish a letter column at all.

How then would Mike explain this? Everybody's got what they want from the LoCs, what he says they're mainly for, and yet there's no justification for a LoCcol which he sees as "the lifeblood of any good fanzine." There's a logic fault here somewhere. This program will not run. The lettercol therefore must achieve more than Mike's stated objectives... and it does. For the editors, it is a feature, a composite contribution in itself, serving the editor's purposes within that issue, and one of those purposes must be to entertain the readers. Thus a LoC that the writer has taken some extra trouble over, if it suits the editor's

purposes, is therefore of more use to the editor, and hence more likely to be used, than one that was dashed off dutifully.

Another thing the editor wants to do is make as many of his or her readers feel as involved with the zine as possible, because readers who feel involved, are more likely to respond in some way, and furthermore to respond more interestingly. Without the letter column in *Mimosa* 6 you involve 14 people (that's the 13 people in the contributors listing on page 14, plus Dave Rowe)... whereas with the letter column that number was increased to 34.

From the contributor's point of view, egoboo taken in public is much more satisfying than the equivalent egoboo taken in private, via xeroxes of unused LoCs. It's like actors taking a curtain call. We not only like to be appreciated, we like to be seen to be appreciated. We're all at least that insecure. I mean it would be all very well for the Queen to take me aside at one of her garden parties and say, "Loved your article in *Mimosa* 7," but how much more satisfying if she were to pull out a sword and exclaim, "For services to fanac, arise Sir Skel."

Leland Sapiro, Box 464, Waco, Texas
76706

The current *Mimosa* is a true House of Horrors, it being hard to decide which account was more frightening: Sharon Farber's, of the callousness toward corpses at City Hospital ; Dick Lynch's, of being nearly pulverized in Paradise; or Harry Warner's, of chopped-up corpses being crated out from the House Next Door. Or maybe this last was just plain ol' shit -- as hinted at by the editorial remark on Moving as a "cathartic experience."

On Sam Moskowitz's failure to reprint all of the '39 pamphlet -- the stuff he left out made no more sense than the stuff he didn't. In any case, the Futurians were not "excluded" in the sense of being unconditionally forbidden to enter -- but I'll refer you to

Sam's book for more details.

Sims' and DeVore's account failed to record how First Fandom's Staples War terminated in the first Bob Tucker Death Hoax (yeah, there was a second a few years later) which resulted in Bob's being left out of *Astounding's* "Brass Tacks" for a long, long time. Talk about Grand Exclusion Acts!

Charlotte Proctor, 8325 - 7th Avenue
South, Birmingham, Alabama 35206

Mimosa 6 arrived on Saturday and I immediately piled up in bed, fortified with Diet Pepsi, and read it from cover to cover. There are not many zines I do that with. I particularly enjoy following the tales of your lives. For some reason, I am very interested in your life and times, I guess because you feel like family to me, and I rejoice in your good fortune and worry when things are in turmoil. Unlike family, however, you have never hit me up for a loan!

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

Eve Ackerman; Harry Andruschak; Lon Atkins; Martha Beck; Tony Berry; Lloyd Biggle, jr.; Sheryl Birkhead; Pamela Boal; Lester Boutilier; Ned Brooks; "Gary Brown"; Mike Christie; Richard Dengrove; Sharon Farber; Wade Gilbreath; Jenny Glover; Chuch Harris; Lee Hoffman; Steve Hughes; Alan Hutchinson; Ben Indick; Dave Kyle; Guy Lillian III; Ethel Lindsay; LynC; Jeanne Mealy; Norm Metcalf; Curt Phillips; Berislav Pinjuh; Marilyn Pride; Sarah Prince; Peggy Ranson; Deb Roe; Yvonne Rousseau; Robert Runte; Julius Schwartz; Michael Sinclair; Diana Stein; Sheila Strickland; Alan J. Sullivan; David Thayer; R Lorraine Tutihasi; B. Ware; Roger Weddall

Thanks also to Sheryl Birkhead, for her help in printing, collating, and assembling both this issue and our previous issue. She has helped make the hardest part of fanzine publishing a lot less difficult.

INTERESTING TIMES

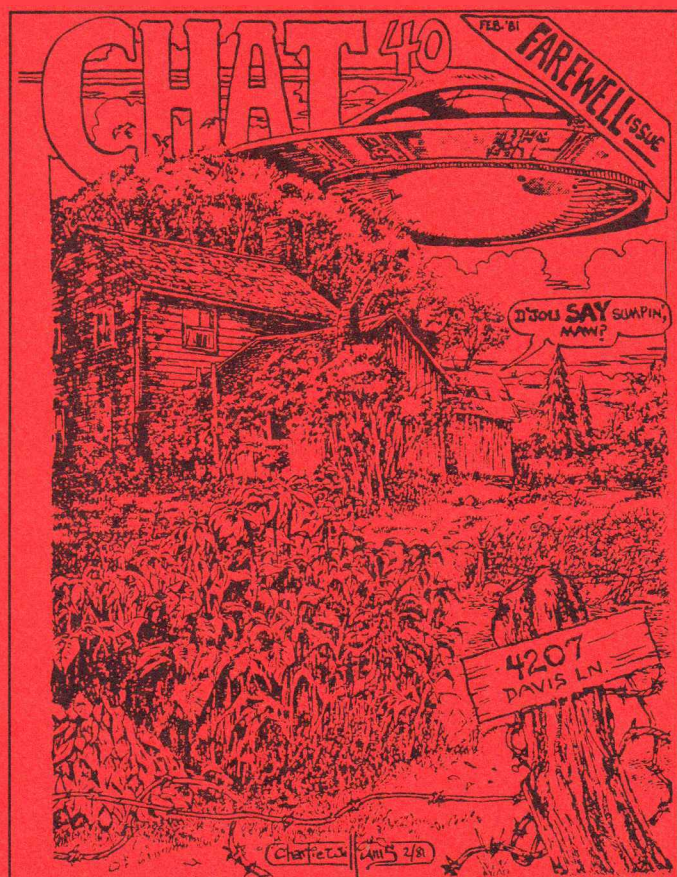
Closing Comments by Dick Lynch

And so ends another issue. It's been an interesting (in the Chinese sense of the word) first year in the Washington area for us. It's been so interesting, in fact, that our planned October publication date came and went with scarcely a murmur; we were too wrapped up with making a living here to do anything about it.

But now things have stabilized, at least for a while. Nicki is now back working at the Institute of Standards; after being on temporary duty at a work place way out in the Maryland countryside for the first eleven months of her employment, her two mile drive to work is most welcome. Meanwhile, I'm back working at my original work assignment in Germantown after just completing an eight

month temporary duty assignment at Department of Energy headquarters down in the District. While the work there was fascinating, the extra two hours in commuting time each day wasn't. The other time sink for me that recently ended (at least for a while) was preparing for the Professional Engineer License exams I've decided to take; the first one was two days before Halloween, and was (as you might have guessed) a real horror show.

But like I said, all that's over, at least for now. We're going to try to resume twice-a-year publication at more regular intervals, so look for our next issue in June or July. And if things don't get any more interesting, we won't have to pass off any more lame late-issue excuses like this again!



We still have quite a few *Chat* overruns left that we decided to pack and bring to Maryland instead of discarding. We still don't *really* want to throw them away, so we'll instead take this opportunity to offer them to all of you compleatist fanzine collectors out there at 4 different issues for a dollar (for postage).

Also, we have a reasonable stock of *Mimosa* issues 5 and 6 left, at three dollars each; our supply of issues 1 - 4 is pretty well depleted (but look for them at WorldCon fanzine room sales tables).

