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THOTS

WHILE TYPING

By Rick Sneary: Last time I wrote about some of the books I had been reading, and told most of you more than you really cared to know. The exception being Fitch, who I told just enough to make him decide he didn't want to read any of them. Which shows his usual good taste, as I was rather underwhelmed by them myself. So, this time I "Thot" I'd tell you a little about what I have been listening to. And how I've been listening.

My taste has been, as long as I've been aware I had any, for the lighter or more popular of the classics. What is generally referred to as Program Music, "music that tells a story, describes a specific mood or situation, or depends upon a literary program, opposed to absolute music" (David Ewen, Encyclopedia of Concert Music.). I grew up listening to The Voice of Firestone and the Bell Telephone Hour, and other programs like that on radio. I never developed any real love for opera or classical singing, but people like Milton Cross and Deems Taylor told me a lot about music and the people who make music. Then the one semester I actually went to High School, (rather than studying at home) fortunately gave me a course in Music Appreciation. While I may have already known about as much as the course was designed to teach me, still it did help set up better listening habits. Part of our home work was to listen to classical music at home, and then write a report on it. The reports must have been terrorable, but it sharpened one's listening. - The main thing we listened to in those days was one of Los Angeles's older AM radio stations -- KFAC (pronounced, "kay-fac"). It has broadcast all classical music, 24 hours a day, for over 30 years. Though its some times bemoaned by local music lovers for vurgeing on the monotonous, it has always produced good music, with very little garbage, and with an announcing staff that gives precise and articulate identification of what they are playing.-- I'm sure any announcer that pronounced Wagner with a "W", would have been strangled on the spot with his own microphone cable.

When I started collecting records in the late 40's, my little money went for the classical ones I could stand to listen to, over and over. The first one was The Nutcracker Suite...(an indication of my lack of musical knowledge is, that it was not until last year that I realized there was a difference between the Nutcracker Suite and the music for the Nutcracker Ballet.) A fantasy touch came in with Night on Bald Mountain and The Sorcerer's Apprentice, and Ritual Fire Dance. Then Ravel's Bolero, with its rhythmic and hypnotic beat. I played this so much that it became un-official official music for the Outlander Society ... a group that held similar taste in music, as did many from the LASFS of those days. Small groups would frequently get together of a evening or a weekend, to listen to music. The Rite of Spring was very popular then too.. -- as you can see, we were all strongly influenced by Fantasia.

I have had little opportunity to enjoy live concerts -- something like six in my life. But in the early 50's I was in a circle of people who liked opera, and I attended over a dozen performances, of the few operas that reached Los Angeles. I found I enjoyed them more in live action than as mere sounds, but I found myself distracted by the crowds, and watching more than listening. The opera I enjoyed most was Carmen (which has music that can stand alone) and on the other hand, La Boheme to slow and dull.. While I enjoy the Barber of Seville and Madama

Butterfly, and found Rigolette unplesent. The performance that I enjoyed the most, and which I can mention to signs of envy in others, is Martyn Green in The Mikado. Not that G&S is normally classed as opera (atleast I never have) but they are all singing things, which are pretty much of a piece with me. Though I must admit, if I have a little weakness, it is a passion for a flight of Gilbert & What's-his-name..

Do to the high cost of records and the low quality of my phono. equipment, I didn't buy many records, but my taste became more defined. Beethoven thundered on, sweeping away nearly everyone else. I gained Emperor Concerto, Moonlight Sonata, 5th Symphony, Leonore Overture, and The Ruins of Athens, which in the complete version is strangely hard to come by. (I haven't a copy of the 9th Symphony, or even heard a good version of it, but I imagine I'll add that to my "greats" soon.) I've other Beethoven beside these, and a good selection of the Russian Romantics; Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Prokofieff, and the modern, Khatchaturian..

I have also added a number of standards by Bach, Mozart, and Hyden -- of their progrme music. The tinklely, mathematically precise music of Mozart and Bach is enjoyable at times and in limited amounts, but I get the feeling that nothing is happening, and I start to fidget... But, I don't insist on large, noisy orchestras. I have a number of albums of solo preformances, including three of Debussy, played by Levant, Giesecking & Rubinstein.. And I think Clair de lune is one of the most beautifull pieces of music I know.

Other things I especially like are Vaughan-Williams' Fantasia nn "Greesleeves", Mahler's First Symphony, Mendelssohn's The Hebrides, Grieg's Piano Concerto and Peer Gynt Suite, Delibes' Sylvia Ballet, Ketelbey's In a Persian Market, Rachmaninoff's Concerto No. 2, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, and Revel's Pavan for a Dead Princess. (I do not have, but plan to aquire, Borodin's Polovtsian Dances, Respighi's Pines of Rome, and I have been interested by the couple of recordings of Carl Orff's Carmina Burana. I would be interested to hear Harry Warner's opinion on this last work.) There are a good maney more, but those are the highlights of my collection and interest.

My interest has been much keener the past few months, due in part to my staying home more, and partly to additions to my audio system. I had made due with a Webcor portable phonograph untell four years ago. Then I aquired a Garrard AT60 changer, which I could play though my table modle Zenith radio. I'd read advise that when up-gradeing a sound system, to start with the turntable, as while you couldn't hope for better sound than the poorest component in the system, a good turntable would atleast extend the life of the records, so that they might last untell you were able to bring the rest of the system up to level.

The next thing I wanted to get was a tape recorder, with the idea that among other things I could put my old disk recordings onto tape, and thus make them last that much longer. But the problem was, what to get. Trying to balance quality against cost -- and to come up with the price -- filled in several years. Not being sure just how much I would use/enjoy it, I held off makeing the investment. But after desiding I might not live for ever, and with growing irritation at the big hunks of money for insurance, taxes and medical expenses, I desided I better spend something on me, while I still had it. So I went out with a Wallensak in mind. It had about the range I wanted, it cost about what I could afford, and everyone else I knew had them..... But, then started a chain of events, lasting over 18 months,

in which each time I came close to getting what I wanted, something would come up to put it off. I was interested in a monophonic recorder, and they are growing harder to find in stock, as the bigger stereos and little cassettes are the big sellers. The full account of these frustrations and failours has been related to my close friends in CAPA, but I will spare the rest of you the details. Let us just say that I finally decided that the Ghods were trying to tell me not to get a product of West-Germany (which is odd, as they didn't object to my Olympia typewriter), so I turned in near desperation to a Sony-matic TC-105, for \$139+. This is a four track monophonic recorder, which was something I'd never heard of before, and I'd read a lot of catalogs. - What it is, the standard stereo tape recorder have recording heads that record (and play back) on two different strips of the tape as it runs through. The top $\frac{1}{4}$ and the middle $\frac{1}{4}$...and when you turn it over it plays the other two strips. Well, this machine will record or play back two strips each way on the tape too, but one at a time. A switchs flips it from upper to lower track. This means I can record twice as much as the average mono-tape recorder, and makes every reel the equivalent of two. A very good deal for one interested in monophonic tapes.

The machine is a three speed job, with a frequency response at the slow $1\frac{7}{8}$ of 50-6,000 cycles per.sec.(to use the old term), which is good enough for conversation. At $7\frac{1}{2}$, it is 40-18,000 cycles, which is about as close to the hi-fi gold of 20-20,000 as I could get without spending too much real gold. And, neather the tape or the speaker system is capable of reaching 18,000 cycles (probably my ear can't eather) it dosen't matter much, yet.

That, as those of you with sound systems have found, is the great problem. Each time you add a component to the system, you see a new weakness some were else along the line, and the need to replace or up-grade parts of it. My most burning problem has been that as I didn't have a pre-amp. I had to use ceramic pick-up on the phono. I knew I was looseing sound, though I couldn't hear it. The trouble was I was getting some I didn't want. Some of the new lp's have such thin grooves that the needle wouldn't ride well, and would vibrate on loud passages and produce a static like buzz. (It wasn't couse by skipping, as there is an anti-skip device in the changer) So I decided I needed an amplifier. I didn't need stereo, but thought I'd have to settle for it. I don't need more than 20 watts, in my little room. And I want something that would match the frequency range of the Sony -- but I haven't seen anything for much under \$160.. So, last week I went out and let a Lafayette dealer talk me into buying a ten dollar pre-amp. Now I can use the magnetic pick-up I all ready had, just fine, but there is a carrier humm I can't get rid of. Has any one any advise? And, has anyone had any luck building their own speaker system? That is the next thing.

But, in the mean time, I have had the fun of building up my tape library.. First ofcourse my own disk collection went onto tape. With the old 78's, this was a real project, and a great relief. For example there was one old five record album designed to be played one disk at a time. And, as an old bookkeeper, I was busy making out inventories. One 3x5 for each composition in my collection. Another 3x5 for each reel of tape, listing each item on the tape, and the numbers on the tape counter at the start and end. (The counter confused me for a while, as I thought it was counting the number of feet past the recording head, but I found out it was only counting how many times the reel went around. On a 7 inch reel there is quite a difference in speed at the beginning and at the end. To work it out I finally had to play a 1800' reel though and note the time at each multiple of 50 on the meter. I found that it took the first "fifty" 5 min., 5 sec., while the last "fifty" took only 1 min. 58 sec..) There was the problem too, of balancing the works of different length, so as to just fill a reel. The easiest was to record the longest work first,

and shorter and shorter works untell you'd end with only a few feet/seconds of dead air at the end. (It is pretty frustrating to spend 20 minutes trans-scribing a piece, only to end up with 45 seconds more record than tape.)

I tried recording a few things off the radio, using only the microphone, though I knew this wasn't any good. But not knowing much about electronics I was reluctant to try re-wiring it myself. But I finally went part way and attached jumper wires to the lugs of the radio's speakers, and using shielded cable, the results have been satisfactory to date. Atleast it seems to record as clearly as what comes out of the radio -- which isn't saying a lot. But, as the tape can be re-recorded when better sound becomes available, I am happily recording what ever takes my fancy. I have become a much more regular listener to the Boston Pop's Concerts, as a result, and classical music programs in general. I've listened to more "good music" in the past three months, that I imagine I have in the past three years.. And to a large extent, listening more intensely. In the past I have let it play as background music to what ever else I was doing, but now I have to listen with the critical view of whether this was something I wanted to save. And, ofcourse, be ready to switch on, or off, so as to not get too much of the announcer or commercials.

Also, I've been making out 3x5 file slips for these pirated recordings. Each slip list the composer, the date and radio station I recorded it from; the title of the work, conductor and orchestra; and ofcourse, on what tape it can be found. All this has resulted in my looking up record catalogs and music encyclopedias to check on spellings and names. This form of research, and the actual physical act of writing out the names, has added much to my limited store of knowledge of music and musicians. I am not only learning more about music, but I find I am enjoying it more. The recordings I'm adding by pirating them off radio, really inspire me to want to get them in disk form, so that I can copy them at the highest level of preformance, without any static or interference. -- With TV getting so poor, and my urge to write letters getting weaker all the time, this old hermit is finding music growing ever more important in my life. I maybe not able to set down at the piano and play for an hour each day, but I can turn nobs and throw switches.

EDDIE JONES FOR TAFF!

THE BACON REPORT REPORT

A revealed last mailing by the Vice-Presidents, I was the author of "The Bacon Report", that appeared in

Moonshine No. 36, under the nom de guerre of Zoltan Zzyzzk. It was composed over the Labor Day weekend, as I nersed my drink of sour grapes, for not having been able to attend my self. With the exception of two minor points, it was totally based on my imagination, and information I all ready had before the Con started. (The dry swimming poor was shear luck...though the sort of thing you expect to go wrong) I wrote it originally for CAPA, with some thought that it might be reworked for FAPA. But no sooner had June seen it, but volenteered to not only cut it onto stencils for Moonshine, but to edit out the miss-spellings (and make a few name changes), and ask you all to guess who it was by. It would rase the question as to whether the Sneary style was reconizeable without the spelling errors.. I had some doubts as to whether any one would (or, that anyone would care) but I figgured that if June was willing to back her idea with the work, what had I to object to. I was getting it into FAPA in a lot better shape than I could do it, and I didn't have to hit a key. The responce was about as I expected -- a very good clever plastic disguise.

SOUTH GATE AGAIN IN 2010!

OPINIONS ON WORLD-CON/NATIONAL-CON QUESTIONS RAISED BY FRED PATTEN, Vukat #7.

I am completely and totally against any so-called National Convention, for the US. And my main reason for being against the idea is the Law of Diminishing Returns. There can be no true comparison between a yearly National Con in any European country and one in the U.S., do to the vast difference in size. A quick look at my atlas shows it is approx. 900 miles from London to Rome, and something over 1200 miles from Seattle to San Diego. Our regional Westercons draw on an area almost as vast as all Western Europe. Thus a National Convention in any other country is no farther to travel to, for the fans in that country, than a local Conference is for us. And this is important. Or, it is atleast for the bulk of those Fans and Fringe-fans that attend Cons and Conferences.

Attendance, even at World Cons, comes large from fairly local fans. The farther away it is, the harder it is for most to get there. For example, if the next Westercon were in Albuquerque, I might be able to make it. I'd be happy to get to that, even if I couldn't make the World-Con. Some one like Fred might be able to make the Westercon, on a long weekend, and then vacation at the World Con. But, what if there were to be a Westercon in Albuquerque, a National Con in Boston, and a World Con in Paris? How many from here could make all three? (Some professional con goers could, but many of them make the regional conferences now, anyway, so the name doesn't make any difference.) Chances are, most fans would have to make a choice, as the Busby's did a couple years ago. They op'ed for a Westercon over a World-Con as cheaper and a chance to see more old friends. Thus, a US National Con would, in my opinion, either draw off fans that might have attended the World Con, or not see those fans who op'ed for the World Con. The percentage of attendance from beyond 500 miles from the site of a World Con must be fairly low, and it could hardly be larger for National Cons. An a National Con isn't going to be any help to fans who can't get to it.

On the other hand, a National Con in the U.S. is going to look an awful lot like a Rump-con to foreign fans, and strain relations even more. Just as the self-nomination of a Westercon as the National Con for 1970, is likely to strain the Westcoast relations with the East. And, in the long run, for what end? No real purpose is served but a social one, by any conference or even World Cons. We go to cons to see fans, not conduct business or gain votes. At the last couple Westercons there have been more people that anyone could find time to see.. More BNF at a Nat'l. Con? There are those that won't cross the country now, for a World-con. And anyone who wants to put on a National Con (or extry World Conventions), merely for the ego-boo, have the poorest reason possible, and deserve to lose automatically. Its a pretty Mickey Mouse idea.

Ofcourse as a West Coast fan there maybe a degree of chauvinism in my view of a Nat'l-Con, as we are pretty well set with our Westercons, which are as large as World Cons of ten years ago. I think it would help if the East were better organized, and try to have one main Conference in each of the Zones each year. (Central, Eastern and maybe in the South.) Rotate them within the Zones, the way we do, and stop dissipating their efforts on many small ones. These would be more equivalent to the present European National Conventions, than one for all 50 States would be.

Another point, what of the argument over who should give the Nat'l Con, and where? If the World-Con were in the Mid-West one year, and then moved over seas, where would the National Con go? To the East? But they will get a World Con the next year. To the West Coast, which would be then two years away from a World Con, past or future? The East will hardly be better off than none at all.. And if it stayed in the Mid-West, it is either a worn out World-Con Committee, or their second best, runner up.

The point is, that while the East and West Coast fans object to a four year gap between World Cons, switching to a Nat'l. Con may produce more problems than it solves. It would certainly mean one more thing to vote on and rangle about. And fan beauraucrats have enough as it is. There or four regional conferences, opporating like our Westercons, would be a whole lot simplrar. And more fans would get to attend the conferences, than could get to one Nat'l. Con.

I think the question of how often the Would Convention is held out side the U.S. should have some relationship to the numbers of Fans involved. -- Now let me explain my terms, as used here-after. -- A "fan" is anyone interested in s-f and Fandom. A "Fan" is some one who regularly reads stf; receives and writes to fanzines; corresponds with other fans; maybe active in fan clubs; and attends Cons...to the extent that Fandom is his chief (if not only) hobby. An "Acti-Fan" does the same, only more so -- and devotes most of his spare time to the hobby. A "Passive-Fan" reads and is aware of Fandom, and may belong to a local club, but doesn't do anything on his own. "Fringe-Fans" are only somebodies friend, who likes fans, but cares nothing about Fandom. In my opinion it is the Acti-Fans, (and a few mere Con-Fans) who are our opinion makers. And the Fans who generally carry out those opinions, and are the base for Fandom. It is my opinion that these two groups do 98% of the work Fandom, and they are the only ones who should be counted. And I think some kind of a count should be made to see if the present rotation system is fair. While there are Acti-Fans in Sweeden, it wouldn't at this time be fair to hold a World Con there, because the numbers are so low. But maybe a point system could be worked out, so that if a country (or an area) has 10% of the Worlds Fans and Acti-Fans, they would get a Convention every ten years.

I had been unaware that there were problems about the World Convention, untell I read the letter in Scottishe a few months ago. As an older Fan, I can't help but wish to see Would-Cons like they use to be. But I'm also a believer in One Worldism, or what ever you want to call it, and feal that Fandom makes a small controbution toward this end. Just as I believe the greatest good to come from Fandom, is the friendships made through it, so to, one of the best things to come of this is the aid to international understanding. There aren't many fans, but a few more persons who have a better understanding of people in other countries is a help. Thus I tend to look on International Fandom as an Idea...made up hopefully of a band of brothers. As such the World Conventions become less of a solid thing and more of an Idea. A banner, as it were, that is handed from hand to hand. Not to mark a movement of fans around the world, but to symbolize our Unity. It doesn't matter if no one moves with the banner, or that a Con in one place has 400 attendance, and 4,000 at another. I would like to see it as the celebration of the unity of a world wide movement. Though at present some areas are under-populated, and others haven't "linked up". I'm thinking particularly of Japan, which has a large and seeming active fandom, cimular to ours, but which has few outside contacts. Time can change all this.

I think International Fandom has growing reason to object to the way the U.S. tries to run Fandom. But we invented it, and it is still mainly our Club. What we have to show them is that it is open to all, as soon as they are truely active. The control of World-Cons should not be based on the number of countries, but on the number of Fans... And, we should also try and convence the more chauvinistic American Fans to think of others as being Fans.

Rick Sneary - April, 1969

One - Fans - Outlook (by Stan Woolston, for FAPA).....1

Once again Len Moffatt is producing Moonshine, with pages open to Rick Sneary and me. Once again I jump at the opportunity. Frankly, it is much more than the time saved in running off my stencils on a mimeo without a feed-system that works, though of course Len's Gestetner will permit me to forget about the time needed for running off my own pages. Mostly what I like about being the part of a "community effort" is that there is a deadline--a specific time to get pages out. But the fact that fans who fan together (such as Rick, Len and I) keep in touch is a factor, too. I feel more at home in Len's zine than I do on my own, mostly.

I'm easily amused. Part of my enjoyment of life is due to laughing at myself. Since the late fifties--well, maybe a bit earlier--I have been a member of N3F, and at the time I joined both Rick and Len were officers. They have been ex-Neffers for many a year, but I hang on--and run for office. This year I'm President (again), and Wally Weber of the Seattle Webers is OE of the clubzine, The National Fantasy Fan. Fandom is fun and games, and one of the games we play is "let's publish a fanzine".

Part of the duties of the President of N3F is to see "reports" get in. Sometimes a letter or card arrives and I embellish it. This is a challenge: members who don't know about the various activities won't be apt to participate. So I try to produce a report that sounds as if it's by the person who should have written it. Ghost-writing for fans is one of my duties in N3F, I tell myself. It's one of the games I play.

But of course most things in the zine are written by the members themselves. They're selfish--interfering with my "game". Well, if I've no material to ghost I can at least play other games--like write letters to members. I write people if they are members or not, but just as a mailing gives fans excuse for telling others how to do things (a fine old fannish game) a Letter of Comment--or just a plain "letter"--can be used to fill the hours in the week not used up with reading about umpteen things, or attending parties, or other important things.

Not long ago Ed Cox got his tape recorder out...at a meeting of the Petards. They meet about monthly, and the bunch of us discussed our ideas of what the well-read SF fan should read. Ed put out a preliminary report for members who didn't attend, and my understanding is that as soon as he can attach a foot-lever and get a fan to type it up, a fairly complete transcript will be produced. It's funny, in a way, to hear about the experience (background in SF) of some of those involved--Roy Squires, Cy Condra, Stu Mechette, Roy Lavender...

I wonder what the current reading habits of FAPAns are in the area of SF and out. I imagine most have wide reading interests; both in fiction and non-fiction areas I read massively (if that is the word), and though my prozine reading has fallen off, and outside of apas my fanzine reading isn't great, I read paperbacks and library books as well as purchase SF and other things each week. Often it is second-hand material, and I roam several such places habitually, a highly satisfactory way for me to get my reading and collecting matter, I think. I get more than I can read, but continue to add more.

Quite a few local elections seem to occur on April First. I visited Rick Sneary and he showed me the candidates for the school board with 133 candidates for 7 positions (14 would be selected for a run-off). On looking it over I predicted one who would win would be Pat Brown, Jr.--not because he is particularly well known, but because his name is the same as the previous Governor. I believe he was one of the winners, but because Los Angeles is in another county I didn't check on the radio news about him being ahead to see if someone else might have pushed him out. I resent any election with too many candidates, or when there is so little indication of points to choose. Very few submitted platforms.

In some elections only the name and the indication of their kind of work was any clue at all to someone's worth, or outlook. Three words to describe them is allowed in ballots for the state, I believe, and if there is a sure-fire label to grab the votes I don't know what it is, and doubt it exists (any more than the idea of "Abe Lincoln's Doctor's Dog" would really be an attraction for readers of a book, as a title). Maybe the ideal would be something like a term to describe yourself as a strong labor man for the labor voters and a strong biz man for the business group might have merit--but somehow I imagine there is little chance to trick everyone into this even with the production of a very apt label. For one thing, too many people would consider any high-sounding word is an insult to them, and that the person so labeled is a snob. The old stand-by activity of having your name spoken and your merits praised by others would probably do the most, and even one or a few people going door to door in such an election as the 133-person election, speaking earnestly for one person, might encourage a big part of the random voters to decide to vote for your candidate. Of course the element here is that people like to feel they are in the know; they hate to feel out of it, and though you might not get away (or even "away") with telling someone how to vote, enthusiasm may fill the vacuum of non-acquaintance.

Fans as potential political propegandist isn't a new thought. We are letter-hacks, and in fandom develop the ability to crank out stuff (a regular zine or a wone-shot) at the last minute...for a deadline, say. Maybe some fans might be interested in politics for themselves, and others might like to try to influence policy, or even be the "power behind those elected". In FAPA, where more mature fannish heads are found, we should have a few of these if there are any around at all. Is there?

A few tips or some experiences would be interesting from them, if so.

Al Snider, the OE of Gestalt SF apa (GAPA) sent me his zine and the official publication for the second mailing, put out in February. Evidently the APA trend isn't over, despite evidence of raised dues. The thing I really intended to say was, "despite evidence of raised postage" which might necessitate raised dues. In N'APA, where dues is, according to rules, \$2, and \$1 has been charged for several years, there is talk that next year it should be returned to \$2 due to problem of getting book rate for bundles. I wrote a friend you knew from Santa Ana (who moved) and his opinion was that the way to get around this is not to ask for opinion of post office but to tell the post-office "40 bundles at book rates" and have bundles fixed (in those padded "book" containers). He has found no problems with postoffices in this--and if there is over 20 bundles presented at once, evidently there is little chance of challenge if you are in an area with much industrial mailing. Maybe if you are out in the sticks, away from colleges and the like, someone might investigate, but there is a certain degree of value in the bundle that is regularly mailed and properly packaged and labeled.

I know this man would not object to me saying this but then I know you know who I mean anyway--all FAPA folk are alert and brainy, aren't we? Methods to save money are GOOD.

Death in the fan-news seems too common nowadays. Recently several of my correspondents of past years died. Harold Palmer Piser died at 75, and I do not know if he had an "assistant" who might continue his project to complete the index of all fanzines. All fanzines--with new ones coming out--would be an eternal job, but with some cut-off date something could be published. He republished the Evans and Pavlat ("Pavlat-Evans") Fanzine Index some time ago, but I don't know how close to anything else he was.

In March of this year two fans named Johnson died. I heard about Seth first, though he died March 11, and Marijane Johnson (no relative) died about a week earlier. I met Seth at the Detention, in 1959, but corresponded with him for years before that, and since then too. After somewhat fewer years Marijane dropped in to visit some Southern California fans about eight years ago (both of us were 40) and she came over to the house with Clancy, her wheeled chair. Janey's letters have always been cheerful, though she had to type with a pencil--using it to "hunt-and-peck". Her arthritis was so extreme that she got through school about the time she had to take to a wheel chair--not much of anything to look forward to. I wrote her less than I would otherwise because, when I thought of her efforts to write, I didn't have the heart to think of her exerting herself to reply.

Somehow the long hours of funeral--and funeral--reporting concerning the ceremonial aspect of President Eisenhower's funeral came at a time to augment my mood. It didn't affect me as much as the assassination of the Kennedys, but there was other things on TV, and it wasn't such a shock. Still, I have a feeling that it had some of the soap-opera elements the assassination seemed to sustain.

Normally I would probably not call him "President Eisenhower", but someone on TV said actually we don't have ex-presidents; officially the presidents out of office can be identified by number (Lincoln, the 16th President, then, is still President Lincoln).

The Laureate Poll.--So far I have moved away from my usual comment-style, at least as far as having headings before a change of subject. It seems appropriate at times to consciously change things, but the subject of the voting for the "bests" in FAPA seems to have aroused less and less activity as time goes by. Until more of us marks down our preferences for each quarterly mailings, and keep them where we can look them over for a final evaluation, I imagine there will be only a few members who continue to vote for every category each year.

Of course certain people stood out in my mind, and for this I might not need the reminder of notes taken at the time I read the mailings. But the matter of the awarding of egoboo is something like a review rating in that we cannot expect everyone to remember all that is, or was, most appealing to us. I, for instance, really could not from my memory list the artist I liked the best--and so I didn't vote in this category. At times--sometimes for years--someone will be outstanding, or at least be very active; I imagine that for some years someone has been voted as best in a category in which he may not have been active at all, because in the mind of the long-time FAPAN you expect that person to be present and of top quality because he was in the past.

Anyway, possibly the official organ might, during each mailing, have a "rating corner" in which fans who do not mind marking their zines could register the things they felt were top in areas of editorship, writing and artistic skills. Of course categories might vary from year to year, but even then these notes should be of help when it comes time to vote in the poll. An OE who feels some members would not like to write in the OE might even add an extra sheet--and make an extra copy for everyone. In such a case we'd have one less excuse for not knowing what to vote for.

Editing.--Skill in editing a fanzine should increase when the issues are close enough together that the skill accumulates. Still, some elements of editing can be done by sitting down and thinking about it. The zine that uses material from others calls for a plan to seek material if you

don't plan to use whatever happens to come in. To me when everything is published that comes in, and the "editor" does not bother to edit out errors or do any arranging for better effect, I think of him as a publisher rather than editor.

To me an editor should list, mentally or physically, the things he likes, and use it. The reason for this is that if you use things you do not want to use, just because you have it, you'll get people who like the subjects you may really dislike. In my way of thinking, the fanzine should give the reader a chance to guess what sort of stuff it will contain. The subzine, in particular, should be treated this way. In this case a degree of specializing can develop--and a specialty has the advantage of permitting you to ignore the things that bore you (or you dislike least) while you can guess that if you keep readers they'll have at least some of your interests. Gads, I feel I'm mumbling to myself--this may be obvious, but even in FAPA there are probably publishers who include things they do not like because they think others will like it.

Well, there IS the other side of this: quite often we borrow the enthusiasms of others when they are presented well. An apa quite often is strong in this generalizing element--but then apazines are much different from subzines. And yet the member who ignores his interest to comment over-long on what others present, and which he likes only occasionally, will probably encourage more of what he personally dislikes.

Editing and Prozines.--Robert Lowndes made an editorial remark in a recent zine of his that when he copied other's letters he changed the punctuation ~~at~~ marks at times. For instance, some people use three dots to indicate a sort of "something left out in thought" when the editor must assume HE can use it to indicate something is left out of the original. So if the three dots are in the middle of a sentence, he changes it to a dash. Actually, the habitual use of punctuation by fans is something that might best be examined--but as I am thinking purely of my own habits I'll try to avoid some of my own faults. These include "asides" in parentheses instead of rewriting to make the subject more specific, and maybe writing an auxiliary sentence or paragraph with subjects linked in a more clear way. I should also re-examine the matter of balanced sentence forms to make some of the things I try to say clearer to others. Perhaps this could be summarized by saying I have been trying to write clearer, and punctuation can be an important part of clarity.

Jumps into Fandom.--A few days ago I got a copy of The Boy's Life Book of Outer Space Stories. Over the years I've picked up issues of this magazine to read individual stories--serials or shorts. I remember reading a time-travel story by a Goudy, I believe, that was later put in book form. There has been humorous and serious stories of space, robots, and futurity--and also, I believe, prehistoric and other examples of SF type of material. At one time Blue Book and Argosy had SF from time to time, and of course when the SF zines came in (well, Weird Tales and similar material too) it may have served to introduce some people to the field. Nowadays libraries have their SF zines, and English classes in SF are becoming less common. I've been told that Anaheim (that is where Disneyland is located) has SF classes in high school starting this year, but I've put off phoning in for details. And there are the "imaginative" SF comics. And there's the real jumps into space.

I wonder how many of these are "jumps into fandom" nowadays...If we have many recruits because of the space program, or SF in libraries, or short SF in Boy's Life. Has anyone tried to find out, I wonder?

The Worldcon.--Whether I attend St. Louiscon or not, I am looking forward to it. Its location may be very advantageous--get us from all parts of the nation. I hope to attend, and meet and talk with YOU there...

For some time now the idea of publishing the program "wordage" and other material "after the con" has been explored. Many attendees have found they enjoy the personal contact of parties and non-programmed events better than attending all the program next day, and with published results some feel they can in effect spend their nights in the way they enjoy best and get some rest during the daylight hours without "losing out" on the programming they like. But there is an immediacy in programming that even the best book on the subject may well miss. Any book must be less immediate than attending the sessions. Still, for various reasons I too appreciate these books that allow something of a record of what happened to be kept. For one thing, for quite a few years now I've been quite selective concerning convention events I attended, and still missed some things that I really wanted to experience. Also, at times some events have been long-winded, and when you read you can pick your own time and if you wish skip and choose when you first read it without losing what you skipped permanently. Sometimes, too, I've not really heard part of the events I have attended. Partly perhaps this is due to distraction on my part. But in one sense it has been due to a physical fact: I just don't hear perfectly.

But with the chance of catching up on events, none of this is as apt to bother me in the future. If I have a choice of missing a meal or so or attending an event or so, in the past I just missed the meal (and at night I missed sleep, sometimes sleeping just a few hours for all nights of the con). After a while this missing sleep might bring out the Zombi effect--that sleepwalking condition where attention is dulled even when on the surface I seem to be "in attendance".

But with a published program, it won't take many years before we may have a chance to evaluate results of programming. We can see now original a particular con has been. Sometimes I've attended programs that seem to be an unconscious replay of previous events in the past years: the subject-matter of one panel event seems to take on the subject discussed before; the same people in the audience bring up the same questions and make the same statements to "clarify" things. This is inevitable, perhaps. But it is the result of having the same people on the panels and in the audience, I suspect. I imagine it is the result of having some of the same strong-viewpoint people around to "fill the vacuum" that would exist if they didn't participate. And yet at times a panel, or an individual talk, has taken on a life of its own.

Sometimes when a subject has been wide enough individual speakers can use it to channel the subject into fresher channels. Sometimes the original direction is the result of not being polite--of a degree of hostility of viewpoints, such as between a critic and the authors involved. To find outspoken, perhaps self-centered speakers can delight an audience and freshen the results. The art of dragging out viewpoints that may not be popular can be helpful. Someone like Harlan Ellison enlivens a program because he is opinionated, and not petrified into one direction in his views, either.

The chances are that St. Louis will involve many more fans than previously. The sheer number would suggest the value of more extra-programmed events for those that can't make it into an overstuffed meeting room. It may be best to have other events open during programs in the future, and even different events for the other conventioners than those entirely SF oriented. Besides the art shows, the rooms available for dropping in such as the N3F room, it might be best to work with the comics fans, the monster fans, the TV and radio "specialists" in mind. And it might be fun to read of these events in the book that comes out about it.

Of course a book must be far more than copying tapes and adding a few photos.

The mood of a convention includes a sort of gestalt of those there. I touches on the personality of those participating, but also it can be influenced by surroundings and moods. Too often a "report" has a too-formal atmosphere about it, but there are people in our groups who can give the proper feeling, I am sure. How the tapes are "interpreted", in a sense of describing the mood or flavor of the various events or "times" is something that requires a light touch.

Of course how an event will "come across" will depend on whether the participants "catch fire". Sometimes an over-specific subject may serve to strait-jacket a discussion. But others seem to take off and live, because, at times, there is a chance for those involved to put into their discussion things they believe and insights they have--things that would be lost if a theme or subject was so closely defined that those involved had little chance to give their individual slant to the subject. (Perhaps all panelists should be given the opportunity of titling their talks and deciding if it might be more interesting, and more to their liking, if some shift in emphasis was made in title or theme.)

I can see this could grow longer and longer; I'm in a windy mood. But I do not want to give Len and June too big a publishing job, and feel hesitant about preparing too many stencils. Len can always cut this off and the left-over material can be re-numbered for later, I guess. As this is not typed in advance I do not know how it will fit on the page, either.

I wanted to write on one other subject, but am not sure I've got it in order in my mind. If not I may have to type another stencil, or let a flawed one appear in FAPA...

Fannish Committees.--When a fan convention is prepared a committee is the usual procedure. The planning group has to seek out, or accept, aid from a wide variety of people. Advice, offers to help in program and non-programmed events, and the influx of "membership" funds will come in spurts--and so will the "deadlines" needed to keep things going, and the crises, too. Some can be avoided if the group can discuss possibilities to avoid foreseeable problems and possible alternates when a plan or goal of the committee can't be realised, at least as first conceived. Finding a sound, desirable solution to each problem that comes up (or each programming event) will be impossible, but most will be in order by convention time--and then it may be upset by unforeseen circumstances. The stresses on a committee probably varies according to the approach of those involved, and if the job is split into individually-solvable problems the result should be that the finished event will go over well. That is one committee in fandom, and when there is a specific goal (to put on a convention) and time, details can be worked out.

Other "fan committees" include the working of officers in a club, editors in fanzines when there is more than one fan involved, or fans who produce an amateur film. Also, it includes the "story robin" in which a number of fans write a segment of a story "in tandem". I wonder how many FAPAns have indulged in these various types of "committee work"...Should I ask?

Vera Heminger, Seattle fan, would like to see someone start a fan-history magazine. She knows about the one Lee Hoffman did for a while, and I agree that if someone would start this (for fans interested to write on some phase of the fannish past) it would be interesting. Now that Harry Warner's "fanhistory"--or at least a volume--is out (I think) maybe it is time for the mossbacks and not-so-ancient fans to write up anecdotes or "stories" about one phase of "our past" for such a publication. Would YOU