

The New Port News
198



THE FUNERAL PYRE

The lumber of the fetishes, my own manuscripts and my exploded theories feed the flames for my conclusions.

198 The New Port News 198

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Art from **Old Sox on Trumpeting** by E. T. Gundlach
(Consolidated Book Publishers, Chicago 1928)

OO - Jeff - Got the mailing on June 12. You *wired*? I always thought of you as the epitome of laid back....

Tyndallite - Metcalf - Surely it must be a hard vacuum that has a refractive index of 1.00, not air - it is the varying refractive index of air that causes mirages.

I think you are right about "radiation sickness" - I seem to recall that Madame Curie knew that her work had made her ill, though the mechanism was not well enough understood at the time to distinguish radiation sickness from heavy metal poisoning.

Confessions - Hlavaty - I missed any sort of course in biology, had never heard before that coyotes could survive without meat - indefinitely?

I wish I could have been there when Toni explained *paeon* to the Wolflord....

I saw some of Celko's books listed on a website - I didn't even understand the titles!

The *New Yorker* recently offered me a sub at about 50¢ a copy so I took it - not that much in it interests me, but my sister likes it.

Variations - Lynch - I would take any Jaguar I ever saw over a 1957 Chevy, one of the ugliest cars ever made, a sort of last gasp of corrupt art deco. Both the '56 and the '58 were nicer looking.

About 200 typewriters. Fortunately this house has a large basement that can be kept dry. When I moved in I made a lot of sawhorses out of 2x4s and HomeDepot kits, and put used hollow-core doors across them to make large tables, and put the typewriters on those. Recently I put up 14 large industrial shelving units and many of the typewriters are in those - a much more efficient use of space. There is a list for typewriter collectors - typewriters@yahoogroups.com

and much of the traffic is just as silly as that on the fan lists, though in general with a lower level of acrimony.

If you think the DSC flyer looked strange, you should have seen the ballet gang that opened the opening ceremonies....

The last time I mailed a book at the PO near here they had gone back to using the "Special 4th Class" stamp! I generally write "Book" on a book package and "Media Mail" on anything else I think fits the category - which is so vague that in the highly unlikely event they actually opened something and said it wasn't "media", you could quite honestly say "OK, you pick a category!"

I hear from Ron Bennett occasionally, but he doesn't seem to be nearly as active as Terry

Jeeves.

I am still using the Gateway I bought in the fall of 1997, but I was not very happy with their handling of the modem replacement. They apparently have only one modem that fits this model, and sold it to me as a direct replacement - when in fact at least some people there knew it would not work from Windows95. They could have told me that up front instead of having me format the hard disk (twice) in an lengthy attempt to get Windows95 to use the modem. In the end I went out and got Windows98 (2nd ed) from the local Office Depot and put it in with a new copy of Netscape 4.7 from the same place. The browser will not use the modem to dial up and no one can tell me why, but if I dial up from the Control Panel, everything works fine. A minor inconvenience.... I also lost software I had only as downloads - ThumbsPlus and the Norton Anti-Virus - and the TextBridge would not re-install from the original disks. I have installed a new ThumbsPlus and it works fine, and a new TextBridge CDROM is on the way. I downloaded the Norton Anti-Virus but it will not register nor have I found any way to pay for it. It has already detected a virus though, in a DOC file sent me to print for my sister. Printed fine from WordPad and I never saw any adverse effects. The Norton software says it has sanitized it.

The other problem is that Netscape 4.7 apparently has "security issues" for some sites. I downloaded 4.77, but it won't install! On the other hand, the new modem does run at nearly 50k, and all the old DOS stuff (like this archaic bit-mapped typesetter I do zines in) still works. Gateway also sold me 128 Mb RAM board, so I have 160 Mb now - does not seem to have done any harm.

Offline - Koch - I have not made any special arrangements for disposition of the typewriter collection at my demise - why, do you want it? I can't think what could be done in this line, there are still a lot more typewriters than people who collect them! I suppose I could leave them to Georgia Tech, just to annoy them....

Life Is A Oneshot - divers hands - I try to ignore these things, but since I'm on the cover.... Kelly Freas did a very similar illo with himself as the roastee, one of a set of four made to apologize to the ladies of HaRoSFA for some MCP remark. I framed them and they hung in my house in Virginia for years, but when I left I gave them to HaRoSFA as belonging to the club.

I can hardly imagine anything worse than the "shrimp with grits" that Randy claims to have eaten in a Birmingham restaurant - the place should be burned to the ground - with the chef inside.

Tesser's biography of me is a *lot* more interesting than the truth!

Derogatory Reference - Hlavaty - Great paragraphs about the LAPD - alas they hardly seem to be unique. A reform DeKalb County (the next county west of here) sheriff-elect was murdered before he could take office, and assorted thuggeries have been reported of urban constabularies in the DC and Philadelphia areas, not to mention the ever infamous NYPD.

As an Arthur Machen fan I would rather like to read Bernadette's paper, and perhaps send a copy to the Society, which since a feud calls itself *Friends of Arthur Machen* but still has very elegant publications. I don't think I've ever read any Peter Straub though.

A recent *Fortean Times* has a long article on the Comte de Saint-Germain. There were apparently a lot of people with the name even then, and at least one of them a real Count - unlike the subject himself, who was probably someone else.

Twygdrasil - Dengrove - I have installed a good bit of software since the modem died and the hard disk was formatted, but I did not consider it fun!

I had shingles before there enough herpes publicity for the connection to be embarrassing. A mild case, fortunately - I was in Atlanta at the time and went to my mother's doctor.

Good to see you at the con. Anyone could tell you I have never had a beard! Old pictures of me from the 60s do show a rather Fu-Manchuish tendency to the ends of the mustache.... I don't think anyone in fandom ever saw me clean-shaven, and just as well too. Too bad we didn't get to Reed's book store, I remember it as an interesting place.

I was impressed enough by Catherine Asaro's talk to look for her books in the Dealer's Room, but sample paragraphs convinced me I would never read one of them. Well maybe if I were trapped in an elevator with nothing else to do. Not that she was in the bad-SF league with Scarm or Olemy - her prose was competent but dull and I felt no attraction to read any further.

I would guess from the configuration of the streets around Paul Street in Newport News that it was never more than two blocks long. The entire area NE of the intersection of Jefferson Avenue and Briarfield Road was apparently laid out in the mid '40s for small frame houses where the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. employees would live. For lack of bulldozers the houses were built under the oaks that were already there - the three in my yard were certainly older by far than the house.

A foil hat would stop a microwave beam (from above), I think, but in general you are right - to stop *all* electromagnetic radiation you would need to be completely surrounded by a continuous conductor.

The Blickensderfer was a popular machine, especially with travellers as it was small and light - I have one with a full keyboard that weighs only 5 lbs. Someone on the *typewriters* list recently reported being allowed to type on an electric Blick - rather like drinking from the Holy Grail, there are only a handful known to have survived.

There is only the 1944 film of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Karloff may have been in a stage version, but the movie part was played by Raymond Massey. I have seen it several times, and it is readily available on cassette.

The Spanish word *puta* can mean either "whore" or "slut" and *hijo de puta* probably goes back as far as Shakespeare's "whoreson". I have a book called **A Whoreson Mad Fellow** (Grayson, London 1933), a biography of Charles Hippolyte Labussière. The title is a quotation from the grave scene in *Hamlet* and refers to the late jester, Yorick.

Spiritus Mundi - Guy - I was already working for NASA in 1961, but don't remember being that exercised about the Russian space exploits. I think the rough equivalent of the 6th grade was the last I had at the French *ecole* in Concepcion Chile - after that my mother taught us for a couple of years before we came back to a prep school in the US.

Having the guards make fun of your socks rather pales beside the hideous fact that there is a Death Row at all!

I have made a note of your new street address - you will have to let us know the zip code.

I had wondered whether film processors ever got the stuff mixed up - good thing they didn't give you kiddie porn by mistake, you might have the law down on you. I don't do a lot of photography, but since I moved here have had it processed under my sister's Sam's Club account, very cheap.

The recent DSC was my second venture into being Fan GoH - I was Fan GoH at an early RiverCon. To paraphrase the Irish comic, "...but for the glory of the thing it was much like any convention" - there is an ancient account of an Irish bumpkin visiting London for the first time, and as a gag being put into a sedan chair that had the bottom removed for a tour of the sights. When asked how he liked the ride, he said "but for the glory of the thing it was much like a long walk anywhere"!

My feeling about nit-picking is that someone has to do it or the apa would eventually vanish under an accumulation of nits.

Trivial Pursuits - *Janice* - You mean W C Fields' nose wasn't the result of over-indulgence in booze? Another illusion shattered....

I am not surprised that OCR of scanned text from a book like Tenn's **Of Men and Monsters** would contain consistent errors - after all, the "h" in that book that is mistaken for a "b" is the *same* "h" used over and over. This is a 1960s publication and was not letter-press where you might have several "h" slugs, but some sort of photo-typesetting that used the same "h" image over and over as needed.

I only use aluminum foil to line my hat....

If I had kept *Rolling Stone* from 1973 I could find it quickly enough. I think I did have a box of them for a long time but gave them away.

I don't know enough about kosher to say whether kosher beef would be less likely to have the BSE prion - aside from the origin of the steer itself, it seems that the important element might be to prevent contact between the brain and the edible cuts. But the blood circulates through it all anyway - does the fact that the damage caused by the prion appears only in the brain mean that that is where the things concentrate, or merely that brain tissue is the only sort they damage and the prion itself is found throughout the animal? There is some evidence of diseases *similar* to CJD occurring in people who eat brains, but I don't know if the link between BSE cattle and CJD has been shown to have anything to do with brains - the British CJD cases were in people who had eaten beef, but apparently mostly in the form of hamburger. If the scientists ever get a real handle on the problem, I hope the beef industry doesn't suppress the news of it.

As for Guy's *Challenger*, the obvious free host would be *fanac.web*. All 22 issues of IGOTS are up there now - though that is probably no more verbiage than one *Challenger*!

My sister likes *New Yorker*, so when they offered it at what amounts to about 50¢ I got a subscription.

I would guess that the LotR slide you mention someone finding would be protected under copyright law and probably not legally sellable. Be a neat thing to have though!

We now have AT&T (ptui!) BroadBand at my mother's house - the signal is in general unwatchably bad on most channels and they left no channel lineup literature, so I'm not sure whether we get the Comedy Channel. And you know what complaining to them is like - after 45 minutes on hold, someone comes on and lies to you. Their idiot system called three times to confirm the installation appointment *after* the date for it had passed! We tried to get DirecTV, but their tech said we have too many trees in the way.

I quite agree with you about "getting rid" of feuds in SFPA history - sounds like Orwell's "memory hole" in 1984 where inconvenient facts were disposed of.

Comments - *Hughes* - I agree with you about what can be called "science fiction" - just because

invisibility and time travel and matter transmitters and FTL travel seem to be impossible, I don't see that that is any obstacle to writing fiction based on these ideas, and calling it science fiction as long as the effects are supposedly achieved by science rather than magic. The difference between science and magic is philosophical - science is based on the logical manipulation of natural energy and substances according to mathematical rules that always work the same for anyone, while magic (if there is any such thing other than misunderstood science) seems to depend on the favor of gods or demigods or other supernatural beings.

The only solution to the "drug war" idiocy is to do the same thing they did in Vietnam - declare a victory and get out. But "they" will never do it, because "they" find it far too profitable. And the average voter apparently wants the witch-hunt to continue.

The last I heard from the Bakers, the Birmingham DSC came out OK financially, but I don't know any details.

One advantage of my modem dying was that when I finally got the new one to work is was twice as fast - and to get it to work at all I had to put in Windows98, which came with a RealPlayer that reads your hang-gliding CD without any problem.

Frequent Flyer - Feller - What was that crack about the panelists at DSC being "kinder than we expected"? I find it hard to imagine just what you did expect.... There were people who called this event the "Ned Brooks Roast", but I cannot say that I expected any real heat!

Peter Pan and Merry - Schlosser - Yes, that was the point of the Mark Twain story where *Punch Brothers Punch With Care* appears, that the protagonist was maddened by not being able to get the thing out of his head - especially on a train, where the rhythm corresponds to the clacking of the wheels over the track joints. I didn't find it that hypnotic, but I have heard a lot of bad popular music over the years that I wish I could forget!

As to the abuse of the conservationist protestors, "Pepper juice" is an oil, and if you dab it around the eye, some of it will migrate through the natural oil of the skin *into* the eye - this sort of barbaric assault on hand-cuffed prisoners is totally inexcusable, whatever the details of the procedure. In any case, it's the *intent* to commit torture that is evil.

Revenant - Sheila - I remember an old DOS program called BANNER that made banners on the continuous fanfold paper for the dot-matrix printers, but I didn't know there was any software to do it on modern machines.

Old illustrations don't seem to agree on which way around one would ride a broomstick! Perhaps it has to do with whether it is a witch's broomstick.... Children using a broomstick as an analog for a horse might well put the bristles in front as representing the head. Even primitive man had enough instinctive grasp of aerodynamics to know that the feathers go on the back end of an arrow - but a broom with a person on it is no longer aerodynamically shaped in any useful sense.

While I remember reading that someone, after a series of experiments, had determined that dogs cannot make the translation of the TV image to the object it represents, I have no idea how we humans manage the trick, and whether it is "learned", like other parts of perception, in infancy. The existence of the cave paintings suggests that the ability has been there for a long time, even though it gives no direct survival advantage. And dogs have rather poor vision anyway - it would be interesting to know if the same is true of animals with vision as good as (or better

than) human.

The idea that primitive humans could not recognize humans in photos makes little sense to me - how were they any more primitive in that sense than the first man who saw a photograph? The concept of the photograph goes back to the ancients and was no doubt discovered by accident - it was the *camera obscura*, which long predated lenses and film. In a darkened room with a flat white wall and a pinhole opposite, the brightly lit scene outside will project itself (inverted) on the wall, and anyone in the room can see it once their eyes are accustomed to the dark. The first man to see this phenomenon would have recognized the scene instantly, even if he thought the cause of it was magic, because to the human eye a distant landscape is indistinguishable from a 2-D image - all of the depth-perception cues are lost.

I agree, I certainly would not waste much time arguing about something that could be looked up - and almost anything can now be looked up on the Net! Of course you can still argue about the reliability of the source....

Talk about staff shortages - they have said on NPR a couple of times recently that in the next four years, 2/3 of the federal workforce will reach retirement age! Of course there is no mandatory federal retirement age - I was eligible at 55 and stayed another 5 years before the TQM idiocy drove me away. But I found my work pleasant and interesting for the most part.

It would be interesting to see the first publication of the propellor beanie concept, which I am sure predated the first actual propellor beanie.

Tennessee Trash - Robe - Congratulations on becoming state kick-ass champion! The Birmingham DSC went better than I expected. I know what you mean about Bolgeo, but I doubt he realizes the effect he has. If the rest of that group let him get away with it, they're part of the problem.

Of the seven possible non-leap-year calendar patterns, three have five months with five Thursdays each - so it isn't at all rare. It is a little rarer in the seven leap-year patterns - which only occur every fourth year.

I'm sure the zero-tolerance nazis would see the problem of juvenile martial arts trainees - but even they would probably be at a loss as to what to do about it! Fit them with diver's boots perhaps, ala *Harrison Berger*.

Thanks for publishing the formula for ditto juice. It apparently does not need to be exact! I had read somewhere long ago that it contained ethylene glycol, which would be a lot easier to buy than n-Propyl Acetate. This formula with the much greater percentage of ethyl than methyl alcohol may have been concocted in response to worries about methanol fumes. If I wanted to try making the stuff I would be buying at most a gallon of any component - whether the DEA tracks that level of common chemicals I have no idea.

In the old days pure ethanol (pure enough for this at any rate) could be bought in any liquor store. I don't know what the current situation is, or where I could buy a little methanol. I don't even know what n-Propyl Acetate is, though I could look it up and get the MSDS on the Net.

Izzy is an old nickname for Isaac - did he hear it somewhere or invent it on his own?

You've Got Mars - Jeff - My guess is that Jesse (ptui!) Helms put the Green Bay joke into the Congressional Record because he knew it would be a hit with the rednecks back in NC.

There is no essential difficulty in cutting graphics as well as text into a mimeo stencil with a dot-matrix printer - if you had the right software. The FancyFont typesetter includes graphics -

but they seem to use an obsolete TIF format that I cannot produce from my PC. There are old sample TIF files that would work - but they aren't very decorative or pertinent. In order to use FancyFont at all you had to have the Epson printer that was graphics-capable.

Oblio - Brown - Great cover! Sorry you couldn't make DSC, but you wouldn't have enjoyed it much with that tooth! I didn't think it was much less organized than the average DSC, but then I wasn't looking for a lot of organization.

I thought the decision to try Nathaniel Brazill as an adult was nothing but political pandering on the part of the DA. But what I thought of when the story first broke was a vague memory of Jack Chalker's early novel where the hero is named *Nathan Brazil* - **Midnight at the Well of Souls** (1977) which grew into a series of which I have only the first five books.

The question of "what to do" about the recurrence of such catastrophes is one I have no final answer to either. Given the number of guns around and the nature of our society, these events are as inevitable as auto accidents - and no amount of "zero tolerance" idiocy will prevent any of them. Can we ban guns? No - and even if we could, there are weapons everywhere. Can we ban entertainment based on gun violence? Not without a constitutional amendment that would never pass. Can we make teachers bulletproof? Hardly. Can we make people good? Yeah, right.

Hutchins' "line" between entertainment and personal expression in cartoons looks pretty imaginary to me - it's the personal expression that provides the entertainment. I am still waiting for the cartoon that I would find offensive enough that I would call for it to be suppressed. I find *Cathy* offensively ugly and stupid - so I don't read it.

The comic strip editor at the *Atlanta Constitution* has been sneaking in the inane *Six Chix* strip in place of one of the regulars - when he replaced *Helen - Sweetheart of the Internet* I noticed it and e-mailed him. This was apparently what he wanted! We don't get *BC* at all, but *Doonesbury* and *Boondocks* are run on another page in the entertainment section, and *Dilbert* is run in the Business section.

Who is writing Dubya's speeches now? Instead of the typical Bush mumble he is getting very pompous.

Nice page on Joe Staton! I'm glad he's successful and happy, but I liked his SFPA-era cartoons a lot better than the comix stuff.

Newport VA, right. Did they mean Newport News VA or Newport RI? I don't understand your question about my OO. I have no OO, the apa has an OO and as far as I know it is always done by the OE.

New Tools - weber - Cute cover, you DOM.... I have **Glory Road** only in 1963 *F&SF* serialization, so I've never seen the dedication to *Amra* - but both the Howard character and the fanzine predate Heinlein's book.

Yes, I think it was the PO that did refuse to accept my credit card the other day until I signed it. Now if I lose it the thief will have my signature too.

I got the power swatter, which looks rather like a child's yellow plastic tennis racket, from *American Science & Surplus*, who send me a catalog every month or so. The only one I can find is a year old and should have been thrown out then, but they are probably still at 3605 Howard Street, Skokie IL 60076, and www.sciplus.com. I think the swatter was offered again in the last catalog, so you might get it from them online. It won't kill a wasp, but it stuns them into immobility.

Is Dish Network better than DirecTV or about the same? Their website seems to indicate they have a satellite further east and higher up than the one DirecTV said we couldn't get at my mother's house because of the trees. Right now we are stuck with AT&T BroadBand - after two weeks of bad signal they finally sent someone yesterday who re-installed it, works well at the moment. Can't get IFC but we do get the Comedy channel.

Avatar - Cleary - Good luck with the new house! Why did I think you were much younger?

Yngvi - Toni - Me "whooping it up" at DSC? Sarcasm does not become you.... The SFC History website is excellent, I ran across it the other day.

I don't see anything strange about bacon and jelly on toast, though I generally put the jelly on the toast and eat the bacon at the same time. But grits and jelly is disgusting!

Interesting comments in Charlotte's column on the fantasy set in Germany in 1632 - would they have had any cotton at all? They would have had wool certainly, and flax for linen, but cotton would have had to be brought in from quite a ways off.

I watch *Law & Order* often enough that they are often running one I remember seeing before - I suspect that appalling as the ethics of the continuing characters are, they are probably a lot better than what you would actually find in NY.

Armadillo - Liz - Perhaps I've outgrown my pollen allergies - I haven't been bothered this spring. Thanks for "the rest of the story" about the Clinton's alleged Wuite House vandalism and gifts!

No Title - George - Trying to read this was worse than watching *Magnolia* - and I think you were the one recommended that. All I can say is that the rain of frogs was well done, and all of those people would have been a lot happier if they had discovered fandom.

Commonplace Book - Copeland - Excellent! I have a small collection of such compilations somewhere. Sometimes I can even find it:

- **Book of Insults & Irreverent Quotations** by Donald D. Hook and Lothar Kahn (Jonathan David, Middle Village NY 1990)

- **Revelation XXIII** *A Portable Compendium of Terrestrial Inspiration* by John W. Webster, Milwaukee n.d. (with the *imprimatur* of Mat Warkin, Atheist Archbishop of Milwaukee)

- **Whole Grains** by Art Spiegelman and Bob Schneider, Douglas Links, London & New York 1973. Illustrated, but not much

- **The New Necronomicon** *a book of familiar quotes from speculative and imaginative literature* by Joseph Sarno, Telloyan Press, Chicago 1968, one of 25 copies made

I see there are two copies of the **Revelation XXIII** - I'd trade you one for another copy of the **Commonplace Book** so I could leave one in the mailing and put the other with these.

The Sphere - Don - I think people call it "two thousand and one" because that was what the movie was generally called.

Fans are not supposed to die of heart attacks at 47 any more... I didn't know Morrissey, but I knew of Douglas Adams - and longtime correspondent Dave Hall was 47 when he died last year. I have now become his literary executor.

I knew about the BC flap from somewhere - not the local paper, which doesn't carry it. I

thought it was rather obscure to be very offensive and that he was just trying to get noticed - but I didn't know about the interviews you mention.

I think a history of SFPA should include any of the feuds that can be explained - there were some I didn't understand at the time!

