

Those taking any inference from the fact that Peals is now pink and blue are.....wrong. Mimeod by Dick (A.B.) with the assistance of Frank Dietz. Edited mostly by Belle C. Dietz from a flat marked 4C in a house on a hill atop another hill. No charge made to visitors for the healthful exercise. Turn right at the hill crest and stagger through the plate glass doors marked 1721 Grand Avenue, in the "borough of universities", The good ol' Bronx, beside which the rest of New York City (especially the Bowery) pales. A*N*D, thish is a dedicated one, consigned to singing the praises of that Fabulous Faction, the Envy of British fandom, fanzine, discussion and secretive baby producers extraordinaire, those individuals.....well, on with the show, so we'll cut and call it the

inchmery APPRECIATION ISSUE

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Ills....

Andy Reiss did the cover, via Stenofax stencil and stencilled his own on pages 2, 3, 10, 17, 20, 26, 28, top & bottom of 30, 31.

Joe Casey did his p. 7, and the spot illos on pp. 21, 23, 25, 25-1/3, top of 25-2/3 and stencilled the Atomillos at bottom pp. 25-2/3 and 29.

Elph (Elaine Phillips to all you) did the illo on p. 11 from a too-large one by Joy Clarke, stencilled the Atomillo on p. 32 and added the lettering.

Atom did pp. 9, 14 and 16 directly on stencil for us (bless his sweet rushed soul) and gave us the ones on pp. 25-2/3 and 29 as a going-away present in London. (We found homes for them, Atom.)

Captions on Nicki-page (#12): Some by Joy, some by Joe Casey, some by Belle.

One more credit line: Ted Johnstone was the one who originated our pubbing house name. Sorry we forgot to mention this in the lastish. We leave you in eyestrained splendor created by (thank you Ted-boy) --



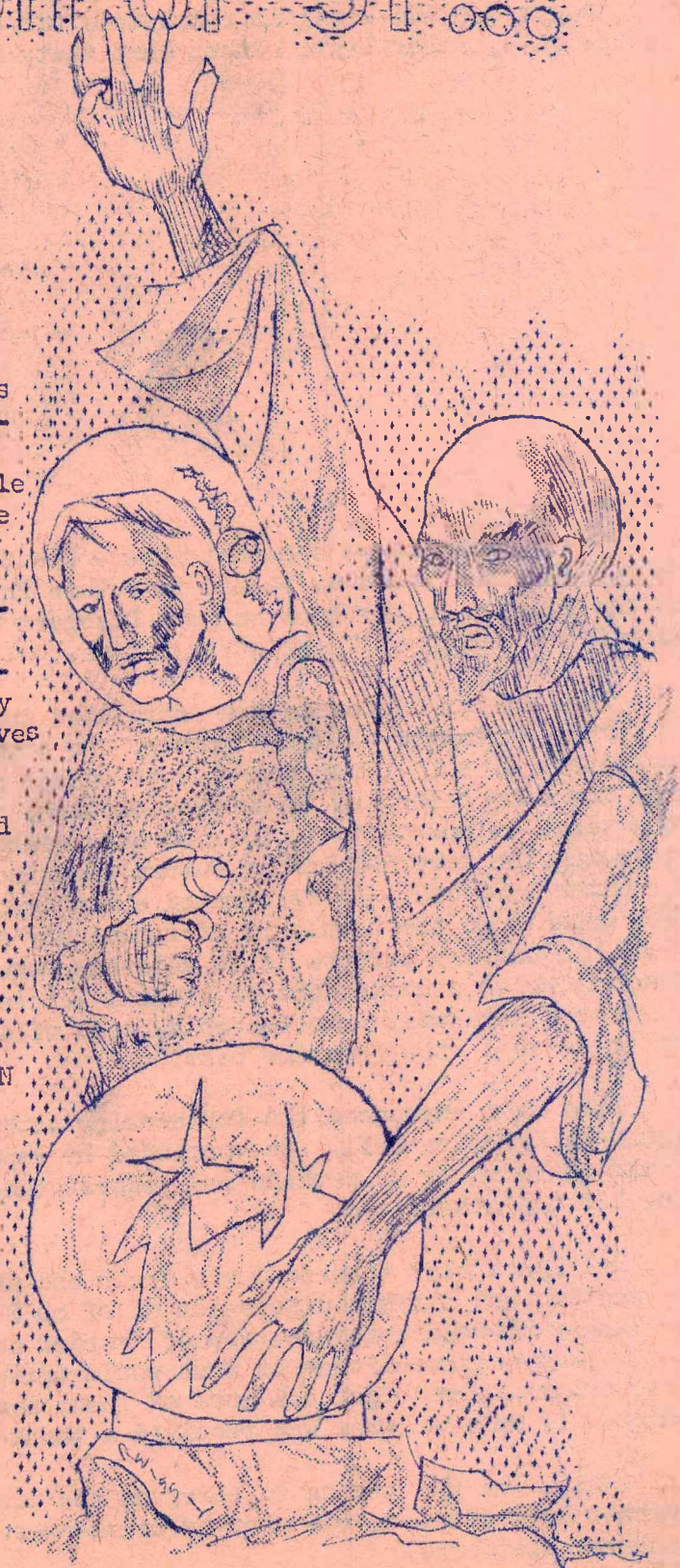
Definition of SF...

The following definition of science fiction was written by Sam Moskowitz during the car trip to the Philcon this past November 14th. Collier's Encyclopedia had contacted him as the expert on science fiction to do a short article for them on that subject and to include a definition of science fiction.

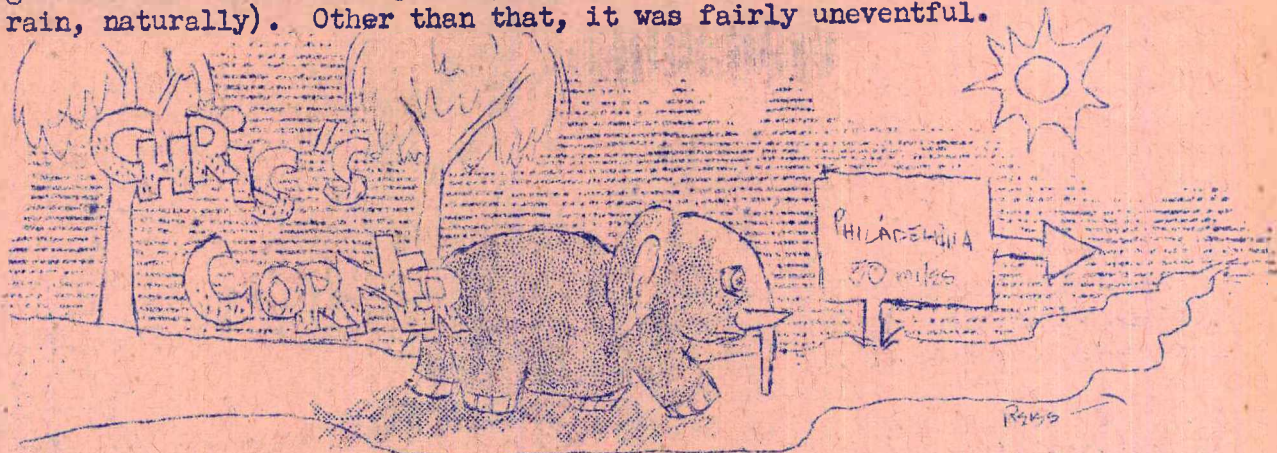
Many of you know that such a definition has been attempted many times without much success. Each had a loophole; none would stand up to testing by specific examples. However, Sam believes (and this editor concurs) that the following definition has closed up the loophole. You are all herewith invited to test it out and comments are very welcome.

"SCIENCE FICTION IS A BRANCH OF FANTASY IDENTIFIABLE BY THE FACT THAT IT EASES THE 'WILLING SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF' ON THE PART OF ITS READERS THROUGH INSISTING UPON AN ATMOSPHERE OF SCIENTIFIC CREDIBILITY FOR ITS IMAGINATIVE SPECULATIONS ON SCIENCE, SPACE, TIME, SOCIOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY."

--Sam Moskowitz



This year's Philcon proved to be a most pleasant event. First of all, we had an uneventful ride to Philadelphia insofar as possible arrest by the Philadelphia Police Department was concerned. Of course something had to happen and so the outer part of the car muffler fell partially off on the way down a turnpike and Frank Dietz had to get out and break it completely off so that we could proceed. (All of this in the rain, naturally). Other than that, it was fairly uneventful.



The program began somewhat late - about 2:15 - with Hal Lynch presiding. He appealed for ideas in regard to future Philly conferences and cited a comparison to the LunaCon in New York and the Disclave in Washington. However, no suggestions were forthcoming, at least at that time.

Hans Stefan Santesson was introduced and gave a preview of some of the features in future FANTASTIC UNIVERSE issues. He stated that he spoke representing the professionals of sf. (Poor Hans had to combat noise from a bunch of teen-agers outside the door belonging to another meeting. Finally, someone in the back of the room wised up and shut the door so Hans could be heard.) Hans spoke very humorously regarding the material in his future magazines and discussed issues as far ahead as the March 1960 one. He reiterated a statement that he has made previously---that what appeals to the people in sf fandom may not appeal to the general public and since his primary purpose is to sell his magazine, he feels that he must introduce material which he considers of general interest. "Otherwise," he said, "I would be asked to take a walk into the cold, cold wilderness and, believe me, it's damn cold out there as I know from the past!"

Hans then announced the forthcoming anthology of stories from FU, to be published by Prentice Hall. He concluded by repeating the oft-heard plea that fans should go to their newsstands and request their sf magazines by name and not just his, but the others too.

Hal Lynch then thanked Ozzie Train and George Heap for having helped him plan the meeting and a short discussion of sf on TV ensued, mentioning in particular the Sunday Showcase presentation of "Murder and the Android" and CBS-TV's "Twilight Zone". Hal suggested that, if fans would write letters to the networks praising these programs, we might see more of them; a suggestion with which I wholeheartedly concur. (I have written and received a thank-you reply since this Philcon -Chris)

(While Hal was trying to carry on the discussion, the Ellingtons' small daughter kept stealing the show by criss-crossing back and forth across the speakers' platform.)

Chris' Corner (continued)

Hal then introduced L. Sprague de Camp who appeared to have grown a beard for the occasion--at least that's what he told me--and on him it looked good. Mr. de Camp discussed five questions raised in a poll about sf which had been circulated by Earl Kemp.

The first was: Do you feel that magazine sf is dead? His answer to this was no, he felt it was down but definitely not dead. Second, do you feel that any single person or incident is important in this decline? Mr. de Camp felt that the decline was the result of impersonal social forces, as opposed to individuals' actions and that it went back to why sf was published in the first place. "Obviously", he said, "it is the general public and not sf fandom in which the change has occurred. In the first part of the 19th century there was a large market and demand for magazines of all types. They were the vogue at the time and variety was wanted. There were enough writers with a smattering of science to be able to write an sf story acceptable to the public.

"The audience was receptive because unknown earthly lands had been pretty well eliminated by exploration to permit writing fantasy about them."

(At this point Ellington's daughter, lollipop in hand, again wandered across the stage.)

Mr. de Camp continued. "An example of the earlier fantasy story is Edith Hull's 'The Sheik' which was written about 1920 and dealt with romance among the Arabs. Who today can become romantic about the Arabs? Our modern writers, such as Graham Greene, author of 'The Quiet American', writes about a foreign land (Indochina) but does so in a somberly realistic fashion. You just cannot get romantic about foreign countries nowadays."

He then mentioned the oft-used phrase "willing suspension of disbelief" and showed that it is necessary today to find a place in which the writer can be romantic. For that reason he himself has had either to go to the distant past or the far future so that realistic facts will not spoil his illusions. This is not a new device, he said, for even Homer did this in his "Iliad" and "The Odyssey".

"But, in the last decade," said Mr. de Camp, "something has happened to lure away the sf writer to more lucrative fields. He simply cannot make a living in sf. TV writing is not satisfactory since a writer is assigned a subject and then must write and write to fulfill TV's inexhaustible appetite. Men's magazines are flourishing at the present and many pay quite well. The juvenile field is also very good, along with popular science writing. The biggest field, however, is in technical writing, such as that for engineering and medicine. Science has caught up with so much sf that it has made matters difficult. To a great degree it has lost its romanticism for the simple reason that the settings have ceased to be exotic."

The third question was: What can be done to correct the decline of sf? His answer to this was short and to the point--nothing.

The fourth question was: Could original paperbacks be a salvation? He answered that it might help but it wouldn't save the situation.

The fifth question asked of him was: What would you like to suggest?

Chris' Corner (continued)

Mr. de Camp said that he felt our knowledge of social factors was tenuous and this makes it difficult to predict what the future of sf might be. He felt that psychochemistry was an important field; that in the future instead of man trying to make his environment adjust to man, we will try to make man adjust to his environment.

As to writing sf, he felt that the only alternative left to a writer is to create impossible situations such as time travel, alternate universes and esp and use these as the basis of his stories and he definitely feels that there will still be sf writing in the future.

An intermission followed, after which Dave Kyle was introduced, supposedly to give the background of sf conventions and the purpose of sf fandom. Mr. Kyle got up and inquired whether sf fandom is serious or social and reiterated the question: Does sf fandom have a purpose? However, he did not answer any of the questions he posed.

Bob Madle was introduced and reminded everybody to vote for their TAFF candidate as TAFF needed the funds. He also gave a little background of the new organization, "First Fandom", which is to include old-timers in fandom; i.e., those who had been active prior to 1938. Their purpose is to try to bring back into the field some of the formerly active fans and they plan to publish a magazine which they hope will be of a constructive nature.

The most active part of the meeting then took place, which was a debate between James Taurasi and Ted White in regard to Mr. Taurasi's proposal to hold a convention over the July 4th weekend in connection with the New York World's Fair (entitled "FairCon") in 1964.

Mr. Taurasi spoke first, very simply, and to the point. He stated that, while he personally was anxious to have a FairCon in '64, the FairCon Committee-In-Formation had only two purposes. One was to have a worldcon, if possible, by being voted such by the 1963 convention, and the second was to hold a regional convention celebrating the 25th anniversary of the first world convention. He made it clear that the Committee had no other purposes regardless of what his own personal thought on the matter might be. [Editor's note to bring this up to date: Definite word that N.Y. will get the World's Fair in 1964 caused the Committee-in-Formation to evolve into a permanent committee and to decide at its next meeting to hold a regional FairCon.]

Mr. White spoke vehemently objecting to the FairCon (as a worldcon) in 1964 on the basis that it would result in the ditching of the rotation plan and that he was afraid that if the plan was broken for that year it would not be resumed in the future and the worldcon might end up being held always in the east. He also felt that the 4th of July 1964 was a bad time because it was only a two day holiday and that New York City at that time would be crowded and costly. White also said that this was not the 25th anniversary of the first world convention because it would not be the 25th convention.

Mr. Taurasi in rebuttal stated that he was not saying that this was the anniversary of the 25th convention but the 25th anniversary of the first convention and again reiterated the position of the FairCon Committee-in-Formation.

Mr. White could only say in reply that he disputed Mr. Taurasi's use of the

terms "should" and "must" in his editorial in S-F Times and called the whole idea a grandiose scheme.

(At one point during this discussion Mr. Taurasi's son Jimmy got up and began to roam about the room. He was told by his father, in no uncertain terms, to sit down. This child promptly responded as he was told. In the meantime, Ellington's small daughter continued to wander about the platform, a disrupting factor of the meeting.)

It is my impression that if a victor had been chosen in the debate, the winner by a clear margin would be Mr. Taurasi, at least as judged by audience response.

The meeting was thereafter adjourned and most of the attendees went to Harriett Kolchak's home where a very delightful party ensued.

[illegible]

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EARTHBOUND

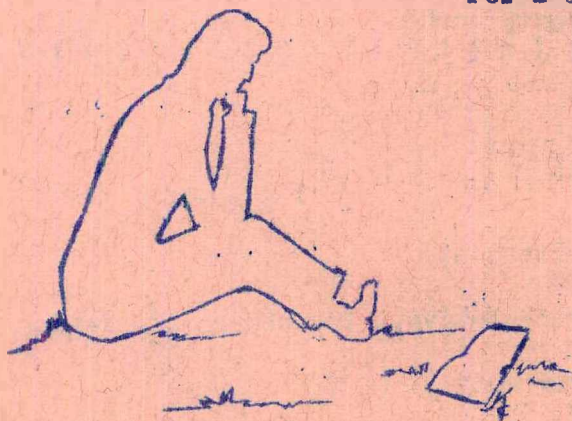
by Joseph Casey Jr.

My heart lies with the sultry stars,
the passionate stars,
The flaming orbs of rainbow fire--
Oh, to rise above this mire!

My heart on gliding wings of light,
soars thru empty night,
To touch each burning, singing sphere
That but my list'ning heart can hear.

Mere points of light in nighttime skies,
they hide from my eyes,
Concealed behind each cloud or tree--
Ah . . . but, my searching heart can see.

I sit upon this ball of mud,
stardust in my blood;
But soon my soul and mind must part,
For I am jealous of my heart.



OLD

CRANKCASE

OIL

by FRANKSTER

There's been a lot of talk these past couple of years about the fanzine fans and the convention fans, and the wide gulfs which separate these two types of fans. Discussions of this sort usually come up when choosing the most popular fan representative as in the voting for a TAFF candidate, or when voting for a Worldcon site.

The difference lies in the activities of the two groups. The fanzine fans claim they are the only real active fans, engaging in writing, publishing and correspondence, and that the convention fans do nothing more than attend conventions. Little note is taken of the fact that most so-called convention fans are the more avid readers and collectors of science fiction, who form the hard core of many local fan clubs and are the ones who do most of the work to sponsor the Worldcons and regional conferences.

While there are some fans whose activity falls into only one of these categories, my observations show that the majority of active fans today are actually both convention and fanzine fans, surprising as it may seem. Which means that the whole fuss is no more than a tempest in a teapot, and any such labeling holds true in only a minority of the cases.

This wider participation by the majority of active fans is usually overlooked by people discussing this situation, mainly I think because they are trying to make a point and the overlap does not help their argument. I think it's about time a serious study of the question was undertaken which I believe will show that this distinction does not hold true for most fans.

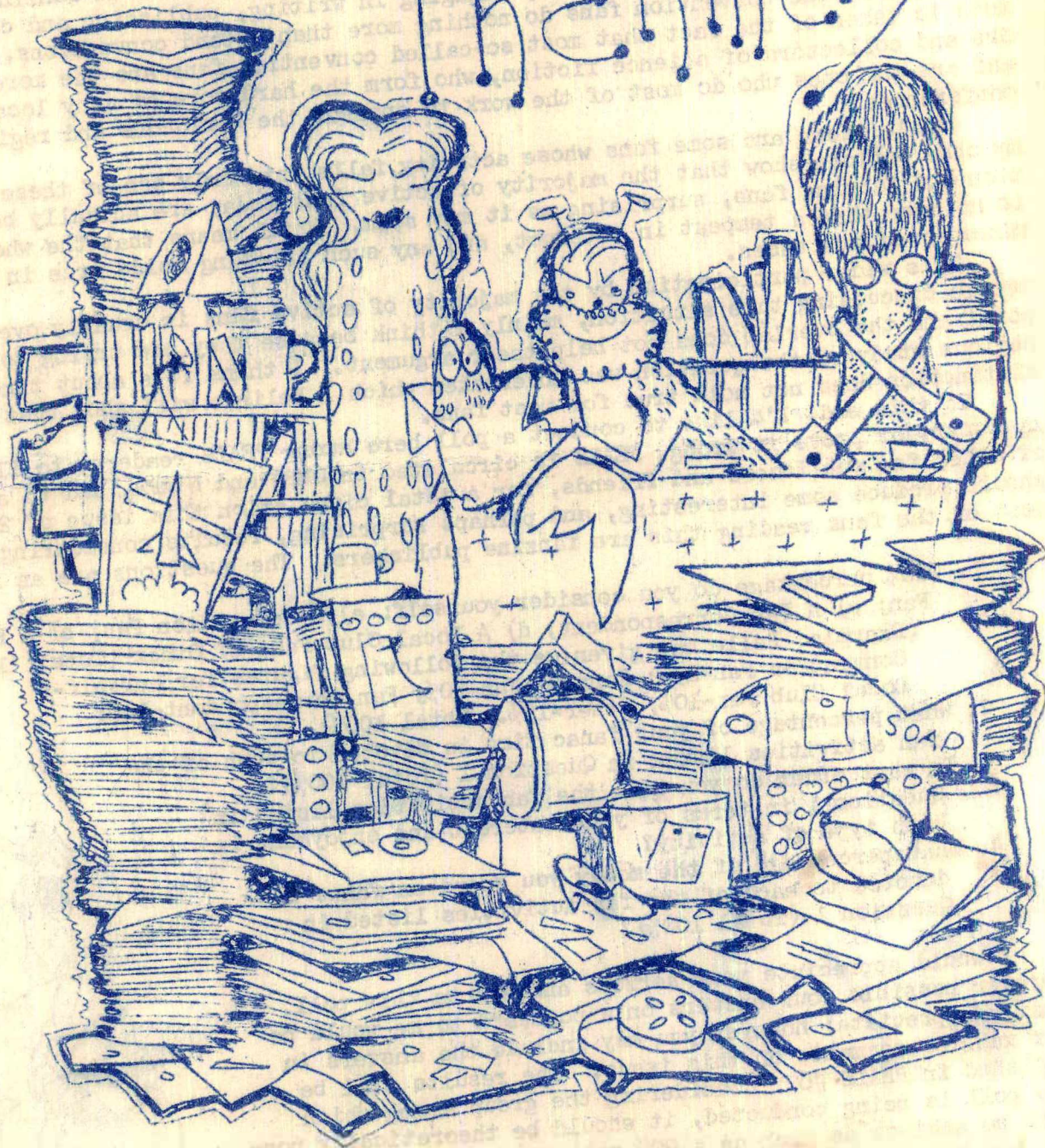
To this end, I'd like to conduct a poll here among PEALS readers, to illustrate my point, or prove it wrong. PEALS is circulated in OMPA and N'APA, and to a number of other fan publishers and friends, for a total circulation this issue of 200. This should produce some interesting, and perhaps surprising, results considering that most of the fans reading this are fanzine publishers. The questions are as follows:

1. What percentage do you consider yourself: a) A Convention Fan; b) A Fanzine Fan; c) A Fan Correspondent; d) A Local Club Fan; e) Other (Total 100%)?
(Example: Belle has given me the following figures for herself--
Convention Fan-25%; Fanzine Fan-40%; Fan Correspondent-10%;
Local Club Fan-10%; Other-15%. Total 100%)
2. What percentage of your fanac time is devoted to each of the fan activities listed in Question 1 (Total 100%)?
3. In what order do you rate the fan activities listed in Question 1 in terms of your interest and enjoyment in each type of activity?
4. What percentage of the money you spend on fanac is devoted to each of the fan activities listed in Question 1 (Total 100%)?

I would appreciate your serious answers to this poll. Wherever possible your answers on a postcard to me would be greatly appreciate; however you may include the answers in your mailing comments on this issue. The results will be published in PEALS #6. Considering the group among which this poll is being conducted, it should be theoretically possible to achieve as much as a 90% response. This is doubtful, but let me see what you have to say on this and we may be able to approach this figure.



this is Inchmerry





by Ethel Lindsay

I had a letter from John, giving me a two week deadline and suggesting that I do an article on the topical and controversial subject of "Inchmery". [Editor's note: This article was originally written in December 1958 for one of John Berry's fanzines and was never used by him.] So, I phoned Sandy to say I was coming to check up on them and see if they were still as I remembered them. As you can see, I gave them fair warning of my intentions and, after hearing my tale, you will surely admit that they will do anything to be original. Only, what puzzles me is how Vin~~e~~ knew over 9 months ago that I would be arriving armed to Write An Article on Inchmery!

The morning of that day, Sandy's zine App~~e~~ arrived. I skimmed through it hurriedly before rushing on duty and resolved to read it during my journey to them that night. My eye had caught these words - "Inchmery is 4" and as I hastily galloped downstairs I had a blurred memory of three names. Vaguely I thought-- they must have got a cat--but what a high-falutin' name to give it!

As I chug-chugged my way all round the Southern Railway--4 changes--I read App~~e~~ whilst keeping my eye on the stations. It was a complicated journey with which I won't bore you. I had not got as far as the "Inchmery is 4" announcement before arriving at Peckham.

A long narrow door--with a long inscription; to wit: "Joy and Vin~~e~~ Clarke. Inchmery Fandom. H.P.Sanderson. Joan W. Carr. Aporrheta. Eye. Joy Goodwin. Triona Law." They told me that on Chuck Harris's first visit he said, on entering the room, "Well, I've read your preamble!" A long narrow staircase up and then a view of Joy sitting at the fire, a string of what, at first glance, looked like diapers and at second glance still like diapers, and on the couch beside Joy....
...a baby.

And Baby Makes Four (concluded)

Now I am very slow at putting two and two together. Whilst making the conventional greeting remarks, what was going through my mind thusly was: "They must be looking after it for someone." I peered at the baby and said, "Where did this come from?" Sandy gave a little giggle and said, "In the usual way". Joy crowed "You haven't read App yet", and I said, "But I thought it meant you had got a cat". We all laughed heartily.

Whilst I sat down they asked about my journey, and then they started to recount a hazardous one they had undertaken lately. This was fine by me; I nodded, and said yes! and no!! and really!!! at appropriate intervals, but I couldn't have told you a word of what was, no doubt, another of these damned fan travel stories. Behind my pleasant mask my brain was seething with scores of questions. Like so:-

(a) On the face of it, this lot were telling me that Joy had produced a baby and kept it a dark secret til the last. (b) Could this be true, or were they capable of borrowing a baby and trying to kid me? (c) There wasn't anything they were not capable of! (d) But would they go to all that trouble? (e) What trouble? For a joke they would go to endless trouble (f) That was five diapers hanging there, what could one deduce from that? (e) And at my left was a box filled with all a baby could need. Having got to (e) I made up my mind...they were on the level. I think it was the box that convinced me; I had looked at it thoughtfully and immediately got a mental picture of Joy writing out the list for it.

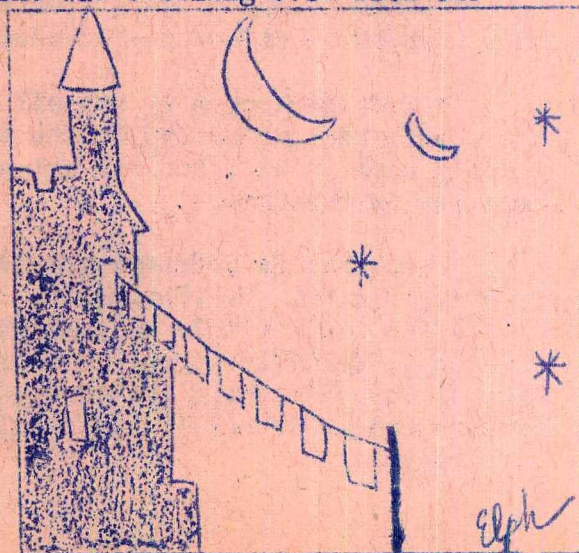
At that point I got up and grabbed my copy of "App" and read the next line after "Inchmery is 4". It said, "Her name is Nicola Belle Clarke. Mother, father and lodger..."

At last I capitulated and took a good look at the baby, mentally added Vinç's beard, hastily took it away again, and congratulated Nicola on choosing such a nice family to be born into. To produce Nicola as a surprise to me, they had never done any actual lying, but my! - the way they had been bending the truth around!

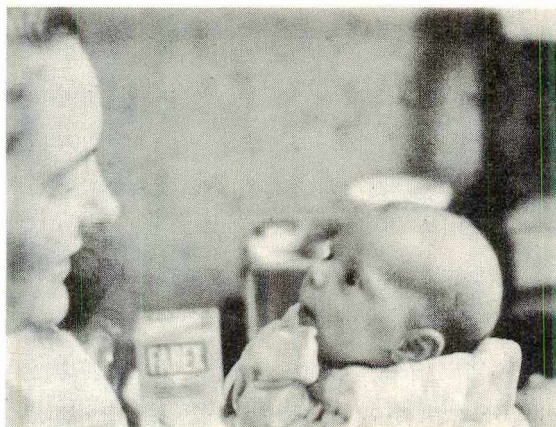
This was to be an article on Inchmery, so let's start with Nicola. She is wee, cute, makes fascinating noises and faces and she smiled at me. Joy is letting her hair grow long; it is now past her shoulders and she was bubbling over with the fun of my bewilderment.

Vinç and Sandy were a sight to behold. I should imagine they sit looking at Nicola for hours on end. I said to Joy, "Boy, is your nose out of joint!" and she replied: "It's a good job I can cook!"

So this is the picture of controversial Inchmery that I can give you. Joy giggling, Vinç looking so proud it's a wonder he doesn't burst, and Sandy saying, "There, darling, do you want to burp now?"



INTRODUCING *Nicola Belle Clarke*



"Mummy, does E really equal MC^2 ?"



"Yes dear, Astounding is changing its name to Analog Science Fact & Fiction!"
"Glub?"



"You mean they think I'm Penelope Fandergast, Uncle Sandy?"



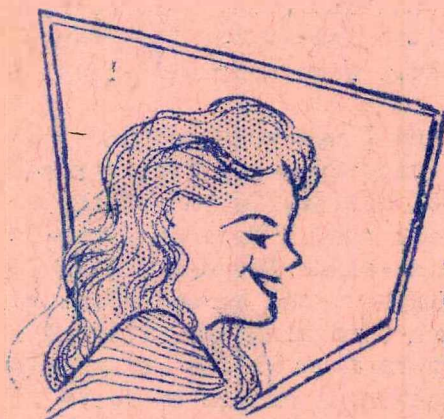
"I know it was a lousy pun but it wasn't THAT bad!"



"And then what did Campbell say?"



"But other fans live on bheer!"



Joy Clarke

by Ella Parker

What do I know of Joy Clarke? Hmm, that's a teaser. There's only about six of her, each one interesting and stimulating to be with. I had been around the London Circle for some time before we met. I'd heard a lot of conflicting stories about the kind of person she was which led me, inevitably, to form some pre-conceived notions of my own, only some of which were right. The first thing about her you can't fail to notice is her tremendous enthusiasm. She is interested in whatever is being said to her and---more important---in the person to whom she is talking and she shows it. Joy's energy is boundless; I always shudder when I go to see her, just in case it should prove to be contagious. I'm naturally indolent myself. She has a phenomenal memory and a talent for organisation---the natural result of a methodical mind.

Joy's sense of fun is never very far beneath the surface. She can laugh as heartily at a joke leveled against herself as at one on somebody else and she has a lovely sense of the ridiculous.

All of this is going to make Joy sound inhuman if I don't make haste and admit that she---like all of us---has her faults. You must remember that this is my own estimation of Joy and has been formed after an acquaintanceship of just over 18 months. She has a temper and it flashes out quick as a dart, once roused. The show of temper is soon over, even if the hurt that caused it isn't soon forgotten. I don't think she would forgive easily or soon. But she is every bit as loyal and tenacious on behalf of her friends as she is in her dislikes.

I've been told: "you don't know the real Joy yet". This may be true. I must be honest and speak as I've found and I've always got on well with her and found her a likeable person. The day she abuses the trust I have in her I'll have no hesitation in saying so. It won't appear in the fmz, tho'; I'll write to her or see her about it personally. Til that unlikely event takes place I'm perfectly happy for it to be known that I'm proud to number Joy Clarke among my friends.

Vinç Clarke

by Chuck Harris

Vinç was the second real faan I met. Armed with a letter of introduction from Walt Willis, adorned like a bridegroom in my Best Suit, I had presented myself at the street door of The Epicentre and knocked politely.



The door flew open and I met my first real fan.

"Er, er...." I said, brightly.

Bulmer spun round and bellowed into the gloom of the stairway, "Vince, man here selling vacuum cleaners" and, like an echo, came the inevitable indignant answer from the landing. "All our vacuums are spotless. Good morning!" and the door was slammed shut again.

Fortunately, it was whipped open again promptly and I was welcomed and feted like the prodigal son and dined sumptuously on fried Spam and five varieties of pickles. This was nine years ago. I was Chuck Neofan, 22 years old, pathologically shy and hyper-sensitive about being deaf. And I do mean hyper-sensitive; only a few months earlier I had refused point-blank to meet Willis when he wrote that he was coming to London and would like to see me and, although I was passionately interested in science fiction, I was determined to avoid all personal contact with fans. It had taken a dozen letters from Willis and nearly as many invitations from The Epicentre before I was convinced enough to leave Rainham and go to see them. I had made it quite clear that I would stay approximately thirty minutes, that I had read every science fiction book ever published and that under no circumstances would I part with money for fan magazines.

They had to throw me out in time to catch the last train and I still don't know how I managed to get home with that huge load of books by authors I'd never heard of. (It would be a lot easier to return them now that I have a car but I haven't quite finished with them yet.)

I was back there the next morning (but in slacks and sweater this time) proudly waving a poem I had written before breakfast and hungry as hell for ego-booster and Spam. Now this poem was the veriest garbage, a piece of utter mishmash that would give uneasy qualms to Normal George Hissself. Vinç and Ken were, at that time, the largest fanzine publishers in England and they knew crud when they saw it. They fell upon this mess and they lauded it to the skies. Ken, who had even then probably had a million words already published, looked at me with a clear light of admiration in his eyes as if I were a reincarnation of Milton whilst Vinç praised the rhymes and the scansion and the wit and, for all I know, the colour of the paper whilst I sat there lapping it up and loving every minute of it. Before they even had fried lunch we had planned to edit and publish a fanzine---it was to be called CORN UTOPIA---and my Poem was to be in it and I was to write an EDITORIAL too!

I was hooked, well and truly hooked, and I was loving it. We never did quite get around to publishing CORN UTOPIA but that was just incidental. I had found what I'd been looking for. The Epicentre split up and Ken got married whilst Vinç and I joined up with Walt Willis and the rest to form the gestalt which gave birth to HYPHEN.

Even now, nearly ten years after meeting him, I still couldn't tell you how old or how tall he is or any other mundane details about the man. To me it's more important that he shares my sense of humour. I appreciate the sort of wackiness which prompts him to assume a Cantonese accent when answering the phone to announce: "Yung Ho's Chinese Laundlee. You want washing?" without knowing or caring who may be at the other end. In science fiction his taste echoes my own; we both worship at the Sturgeon shrine. I share his dislike of organised religion and I like his taste in politics, wives and daughters.

But Belle asked me for half a page and I could go on for hours like this... and one day I will do too in my own fanzine...but in the end it all boils down to one sentence.

Vinç Clarke is my friend---I like him very much.

Sandy Sandelson

by Ethel Lindsay

Sandy was one of my first fan contacts and all through his years abroad I corresponded with him. We met first at the Mancon and I have fond memories of the hilarious time we shared with the other members of the Manchester club.

He started his fanac in this club and shortly after he went abroad he invented "Joan Carr" and, as her, began and edited the zine "Fez". This must have been the most thoroughly carried out hoax in fandom and many people have mourned "Joan", who was quite a character.



In appearance, he is slight in build, wears glasses, has pronounced cheekbones and looks fastidious. In speech, he is precise, loves puns, has a faint Mancunian accent and has been known to giggle.

He is generous and likes to give. He likes to potter with wires. He collects things: books, records, mags, fanzines---you name it, he has it.

He is a hard worker in fandom, has taken on many chores and is at present Treasurer of OMPA and the SF Club Of London.

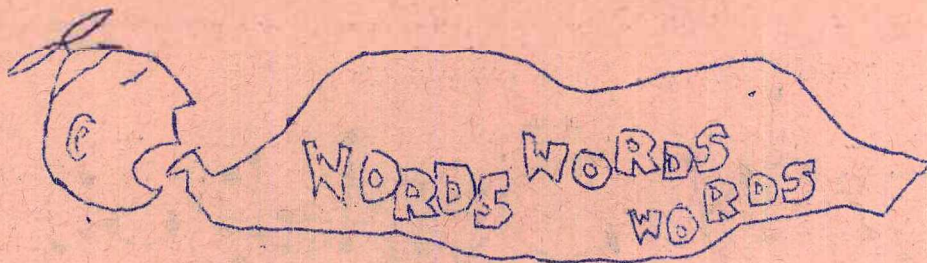
He produces a 50 page fanzine...regularly. He tries to do too much and looks worried finding enough hours in the day for it all.

He rarely mentions it so people tend to forget that he is a sergeant in the Army. Because of this, he can turn a cold disciplinary eye upon you, can wield a sarcastic tongue and he is a master of details. When he says such and such is so, don't bother to argue; it is so!

He is a loyal friend; once you win his regard, you keep it. He hates unfairness, irregularity, fuzziness.

I think of fandom as rather like the mundane world---each fan has his/her family; the fans he/she "grew up with" ---and this is the category in which I think of Sandy. It is like having another brother, only unlike my mundane one Sandy does not prattle on incessantly about football.

He's a nice guy, is our Sandy.



by Sid Birchby

Inchmery fandom visited us the other evening, and in a quiet moment when Vinç was browsing through the bookshelves, Joy and Sandy were looking at 'Peals' No. 4, and Nicky was wondering what else to throw out of her Karry-Kot, I said, casually,

"I daresay few, if any, of you know the origin of the word 'gherkin'."

"Rubbish!", replied my wife, in a brisk, wife-like tone. "Everyone knows that."

"No, no!" cried Inchmery with one voice, "We have forgotten. Please tell us."

Gratified, I explained: "A gherkin is a small pickled cucumber, and comes from a Dutch word agurkje."

"Meaning...?" asked Sandy.

"A gherkin. However, that is not all. The word is of Persian origin. Picture if you can a sturdy Dutch merchant ship as it berths at Amsterdam, loaded with all the riches of the East; the captain's cabin is decked with silks and fine carpets while a blonde, shapely odalisque feeds the Old Man with sherbert and Turkish Delight. Suddenly the mate dashes in to say that the Captain's wife is coming down the quayside, looking for her share of the loot. Need one ask what she gets?"

"A small pickled cucumber, if I know men," said my wife. "Serve him right if she throws it at him, or cracks him on the sconce."

"Sconce?" queried Joy.

"A word meaning the skull, derived from the Low Latin sconsa, a night-watchman's lantern."

"How?" asked Joy.

"It was the duty of the watchman in a medieval monastery to patrol the latrines at night and wake up any dozing brethren therein."

"You mean by tapping them on the sconce with his lantern?"

"History," I said loftily, "does not reveal."

"That," complained Vinç, "is the annoying thing about History. It never does reveal anything worth knowing. Take that business of Cleopatra and the Asp."

"Take what business?"

"Well, they say she committed suicide by clasping an asp to her bosom. Haven't you ever thought it might have been murder? All the court intrigues one reads about in 'Antony and Cleopatra' sound as if someone was covering up."

"You are dead right," I replied, "and as it happens, I can tell you just what occurred. The 'asp' is said to have been a deadly serpent, but observe! It comes from the Greek word aspis, from which we get the well-known word 'aspic'."

"Oh yes," said Joy, "a sort of jelly used in making such dishes as prawns in aspic. Very tasty."

"Just so. What happened was that Cleopatra hired a new cook...a Greek...for a big party she was having, and he brought on his specialty, which no one had ever seen before. What has confused the historians is that it looked like pieces of snake in a gelatine mould. It was, in fact, the world's first jellied eels."

"By then the party had got to the custard-pie-throwing stage, and someone picked up the dish and slipped it down Cleo's party-dress, just for laughs."

"And that killed her?"

"It did. How would you like a mess of jellied eels slithering down your shirt?"

"Hmmm..." mused Vinç. "Are you quite, quite sure that's what happened?"

"I am," I said haughtily, "and that's my last word."

"I've been thinking," said Sandy, "about this odalisque."

"About who?"

"This blonde shapely odalisque that you said the Dutch ship's captain had in his cabin, feeding him with naughty Oriental tit-bits. I understand that an odalisque is a female harem-slave, and I have to remind you that there is a young child present. We don't want any of your Turkish Delights here, you know."

I smiled winningly: "Be easy, man. The word comes from the Turkish oda, an apartment, or chamber, and means a chambermaid. This girl was just a stewardess; a stowaway, actually, who had slipped aboard at Smyrna in a sack of figs..."

"....syrup-titiously?"

".....syrup-titiously, because she wanted to study modelling for the Paris fashion-houses. However, she soon ate all the figs and had to show herself to the captain..."

Words, Words, Words (concluded)

"Watch your language."

"....and he put her on cabin-duties for the rest of the voyage and promised to introduce her to Balmain. So you see there's nothing in the least lusty-busty about the incident."

"Very well, I withdraw my objection."

"Mind you," I added, "this word 'odalisque' once caused an awkward incident in the Savoy Hotel during the visit of a certain Turkish prince who, after ogling a pretty young servant-girl with no success, asked the maitre-d'hotel in a loud voice how much he charged for his chambermaids and then chased the poor girl three times round the Palm Court."

"The longer you talk," said Joy, covering Nicky's ears for shame, "the lower you sink. In less than five minutes you have nauseated us with your gherkins and jellied eels, mocked at religion with your lavatory-minded men's-room stories, and corrupted the tender affections of this poor innocent child with your accounts of Oriental debauches. What next do you have planned for our entertainment? A Black Mass, perhaps?"

"I was merely about to explain," I protested feebly, "about orgies..."

"Why?"

"Well, one subject leads to another, and there was this chambermaid..."

"I think it's pitiful," said Sandy, "He'll be on to travelling-salesman jokes any moment now. It must be a kink."

"It's from the same Greek word, ergon, as 'work'," I howled. "Everyone knows you've got to work damn hard at orgies."

"Okay, that does it," said Vinç. "Let's go, folks. I've checked through his collection. Just junk."

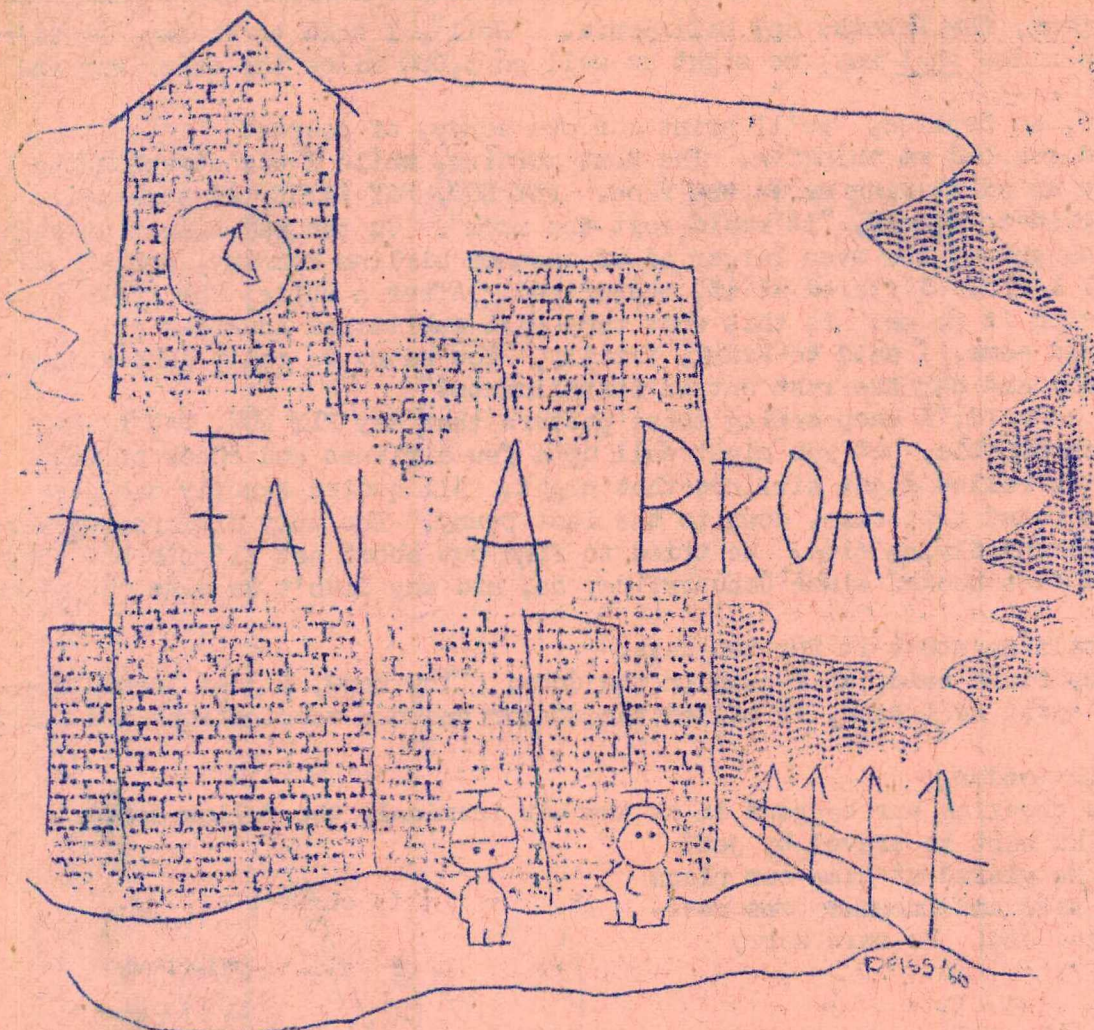
Inchmery got to its feet and stalked out.

"Degenerate!" hissed Sandy, over his shoulder.

"From the Latin!" I called out to their backs. "One who departs from his kind..."

The door slammed. My kind had departed from me.

the end



Our decision to go to London for our two week vacation was not made lightly, I'll have you know. First we had a major vacation problem. Where to go at the end of September? On the east coast, summer officially ends with Labor Day and most resorts close up for the winter directly afterward. We looked around for one that wasn't too expensive which would still be open when Frank was able to get his vacation - at the end of September. (He works for a large firm; I for a one-gal office so mine presented no problems.) We began to look over the suitable resorts somewhere around June and to send for brochures. Well, that was our first mistake. Once you send for one brochure from one resort, they immediately send your name to the resort associations with a high sign that, look, here's another pair of suckers and send them stuff. Every mail then brings you tons of descriptive resort literature of every type. You're buried under the hordes of it. They put on extra postmen and deliver it night and day.

We got disgusted real early.

First we stopped opening it and just piled it up in a corner. Then we started throwing it out as fast as it came in. It usually took us a good five minutes to get the mail out of our jammed mailbox every evening. How we cursed American enterprise! And still we hadn't found a good resort that would be inexpensive. We learned to judge by looking at the type of paper and illustration on the envelopes whether this would be a cheap or an outrageous resort. Then the local places got tired and the faraway ones took up the slack. Mail arrived from Florida, Georgia,

Texas, Wyoming, Utah, the Dakotas and California. "Hell", I said to Frank, "if we're going to go 3,000 miles that way, we might as well go 3,000 miles the other way and see Inchmery."

"Very funny", he replied, "we'll print our own money, of course?"

But that had started me thinking. The next morning, while I was straphanging in the subway, I saw an ad staring me in the face. FLY NOW, PAY LATER, it screamed. "No, no", I muttered to myself, "it would cost too much". On the way home that evening, my eye was caught by the even larger ad of another airline company, emblazoned with FLY NOW, PAY LATER. I stared at it, mesmerized. After a while, the train wheels began to sing it to me. Is this what they call subliminal advertising?

When I reached home, I said to Frank, timidly, "You know, we could make a down payment on the fare and pay the rest out in installments?"

"You know", he said, "I keep seeing these posters that say FLY NOW, PAY LATER. of course, it's impossible, but you might call up a few airlines and check on it."

Between us, we called eight airlines that night. All quoted exactly the same price for tourist round trip fare, down to the last penny. The only differences were times of departure and flying time. We tried to find out about jet flights but they told us those had been booked since January, ha, ha, and why didn't we make our plans a bit earlier?

We avoided talking about it for two days.

The third day Frank said, as I came in the door: "You know, I just looked over our passports..." just as I said, "I called the doctor and our vaccinations are still good..."

So we went to London.

As Frank was checking our baggage in at the air terminal, the fellow asked: "Look, do you folks want to travel by jet? We have space." We glared at him--our plans had already been made and Inchmery was meeting us at the other end. We were sorry later.

Max and Elaine Phillips drove us to the airport and we made them rush all the way for fear we'd miss the plane. We were told on arrival that the plane was half-an-hour late. We saw Max and Elaine off instead of vice-versa.

An hour later the plane arrived and we boarded. The captain announced that we'd taken on too much fuel and the plane was overheavy; there'd be a slight delay while we unloaded some of it.

An hour later, they announced we could take off.

Fifteen minutes later, the loudspeaker coughed apologetically and spewed out the news that the radio had gone out of order and it was really best to sort it out while we were on the ground. We were sitting up front right near the pilot's compartment and we heard one of the crew remark, "Ah, the joys of flying!"

They pulled out the whole radio and replaced it and another hour later we took off. The appearance of the crew demonstrating the Mae West life preservers brought applause from the hot (air-conditioning doesn't go on until you're aloft) and already travel-weary passengers.

They served a light supper (the airline was BOAC) and tea and coffee. "Tea?" said Frank. "Ah yes", I answered, "we're back in the land of the excellent tea and



the lousy coffee". "You're so right", he muttered, sipping the noxious brew.

We got little sleep because of the short night when you fly east and the many cheerful children in surrounding seats.

We were very happy to see Inchmery at Victoria Air Terminal and get our first glimpse of Nicki. They had tickets for us on the railway to take us to Queen's Road, Peckham and it was, as Joy wrote us, "a straight ride right through the muckiest parts of London"; only we were so busy yapping we didn't look out the window much.

I'm afraid we rather surprised Inchmery by our lack of energy. We had had a very busy summer and were terribly tired and all we wanted to do was rest. Sandy got the whole two weeks, pardon, fortnight off and acted as guide and interpreter. Vinç was on sick leave for the first few days but after that we saw him only in the evenings; Joy managed to get two days off.

We'd done a great deal of sightseeing the first time we were in London and now what we wanted to do was wander around and taste the flavor of the city. We dragged Sandy through interminable shops and in and out of myriad restaurants. We walked the streets endlessly, filling our eyes with the city's old buildings, winding streets and odd little stores.

Every night we reported back to 236 Queen's Road, consumed one of Joy's marvellous meals and listened to Joy and Vinç telling us they felt they weren't doing enough for us.

We had the most wonderful time.

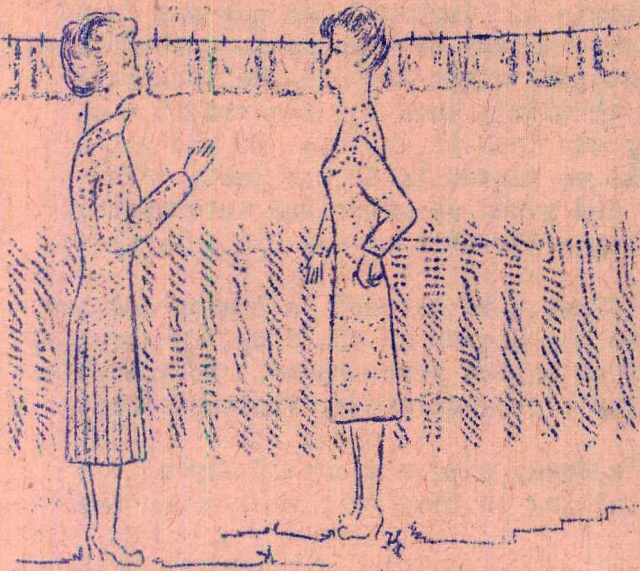
I had decided that, since baby-sitters were almost unknown in England and we couldn't take Inchmery out to dinner all at once, I would cook a couple of American dinners for them, to show them how it's done as I remarked to Joy, dodging the book she flung my way. So Frank and I set out to shop for food. We were surprised by the differences between American and English food stores and even more so to find that with their salaries roughly one-third of ours, the food prices were almost exactly the same. Most English stores don't give you a paper bag with your purchase; you're supposed to buy a shopping bag (they call it a carrier bag) or have your own. And the things they didn't have! Very few packaged things that are easy to prepare. No such thing as canned mushrooms or canned kidney beans; practically no cake mixes and what there was was expensive by even American standards. The whole idea seems to be to make things as hard as possible for the British housewife. Frozen foods are apparently just becoming popular and TV dinners are unknown. Frozen peas are sold loose (this startled me) and ordinary green peppers are hot (like chili peppers). Their jello (which they call "jelly" as an abbreviation of gelatin) is in rubbery solid form, unlike our powdered stuff, and needs to be melted before it can be used.

As to kitchen gadgets, they too are practically non-existent. Nowhere could I find a potato peeler. Canopeners are in the primitive, press-it-on-a-can-and-turn-the-key stage. Sugar bowls are called sugar basins and have no lids and salt shakers have one large hole instead of several little ones and furnish quite a shower of salt for an unsuspecting American user.

The butcher shops had meat on display in the windows without ice or refrigeration and one butcher almost fainted with surprise when Frank went in and bought two pounds of ground beef all at once. As the average British housewife doesn't have a refrigerator, she usually buys meat for only one meal at a time. One of the things about England that puzzles me is why, lacking inexpensive refrigerators, they don't have ice boxes. In the States 20 years ago these abounded along with ice companies which supplied the blocks of ice that you put in the ice boxes to furnish the cooling. Funny that superficially the two countries should have so many similarities but scratch the surface and you find vast differences.

More differences were pointed up when it came to little Nicki. Most of the British babies I saw in the streets were white-faced and much too plump. Nicki looked like an American baby, tanned and rosy-cheeked but my biggest shock came at diaper-changing time. I discovered that the British are still using terry-cloth for diapers,

which went out in the States about 25 years ago. (For the benefit of British readers, American use a thin, highly absorbent cloth called "birdseye" for diapers.)



"What funny towels." "These are diapers."

met with smiles and politeness wherever we went. Sandy accepted all this as normal; Frank and I couldn't stop talking about it.

We were amazed also by the appearance of the women and the quality of the food. Both had changed drastically since the London WorldCon in 1957. Then, London was a man's town and the women were drab, appeared shapeless and were very much in the background. On our 2nd trip, London was enjoying gorgeous summery weather and the women wore light colorful dresses, lipstick, make-up, high heels; had up-to-date hairstyles. It was a wonderful and very startling change. As to the food, England has a poor reputation for restaurant food and we found this to be unfortunately true in 1957. In 1959, the difference was immediately apparent. We enjoyed every single restaurant meal we had and enough food was served so we didn't feel hungry after a complete dinner (as Americans are so fond of saying about English meals).

Inchmery's flat is unusual according to American standards. It's above a 2nd-hand furniture shop and you go one flight up to the kitchen; three steps above that to the living room and one bedroom and there are two more bedrooms on a third floor. A real, honest-to-goodness duplex! They are situated on a main road and it was quite startling at times to be seated at the dinner table and have one of these two-decker busses come along with people looking at you from the top deck at just about your eye level. During the night there'd be a screeching of brakes and we'd rush to the window to find there'd been another accident on the road. There were about 3 during the 2 weeks we were there, all minor, thank goodness. We also found that when two cars collided, the drivers didn't rush out and assault one another verbally or physically as they sometimes do in New York. There are advantages to England.

A great deal, perhaps too great, has been written about the British "reserve". Well, we didn't find very much. People were very friendly. Perhaps part of this so-called reserve is due to the difference in inter-person relations. An American, once he is your friend, will comment on your appearance, notice anything new, ask the price and be suitably impressed. The British consider this very bad manners. No personal inquiries are made and this tends to give Americans the impression that the British don't care. I suppose they have the normal complement of curiosity but it is firmly suppressed. After a while if I wanted opinions on something I was wearing, I up'n asked for them. Worked fine. Maybe something else that contributes to this so-called reserve is a small Statesside custom that is completely missing in England.

When an American says "thank-you", another American will reply "you're welcome". The British have no equivalent of this and no reply to thank you. Also they expect all New Yorkers to be from Brooklyn. After a while I found myself talking with a Brooklyn accent because it was patently expected of me. I drove Inchmery crazy with this. After I had discovered that they don't say "you're welcome", I began to say it to them in Brooklynese, i.e., "Yer welcome, I'm shoe-er". I did tell some of the English that I came from The Bronx but gave this up when I was asked if that was a suburb of Brooklyn.

I guess some of the things we did appeared strange to them. Frank and I are not exactly what you'd call "normal" tourists. Frank became fascinated with British traffic. He once remarked that if you took an American truck, cut it in half lengthwise and then crosswise, the result would be a British truck, or van or lorry or whatever they're currently calling them. He would disappear for hours to stand in the streets and watch the traffic. Inchmery probably thinks we're good examples of those crazy Americans - you know, the kind who carry their own rolls of toilet paper. (We had that too, having been there once before and seen their rolls of stiff white paper, glazed on one or both sides which they think is toilet paper). However, paper like American stuff was on the British market and Inchmery had it; we didn't need our own after all.

The London Circle's one day con, the Symposium, was held the next Saturday after we arrived. Inchmery had to make a lot of preparations; Sandy put hours of music on tape and packed up his portable tape-recorder to take along; Vinç searched out lots of electrical connections so that the various record-players, the taper, movie cameras and projectors, etc. would be able to be connected to the outlets. One of the things about England that fascinates me is that they use both two pin plugs and three pin plugs and, for all I know, four pin plugs so that fitting adapters is S.O.P. In the States we use a two prong plug and that's it, except for very heavy appliances which may have a third for a ground. We also had to search out and find a camera shop that would rent a 16mm sound movie projector so that the films we had borrowed from Al Lewis ("The Genie") and from Dr. Alan E. Nourse ("Born of Man And Woman") could be shown. This proved a problem; 16mm is apparently not very popular in London. After visiting what seemed to us to be all the camera places in London (and telephoning the rest) we found one but they wouldn't let the precious camera out without a projectionist. Our hearts sank when we heard this. In the U.S. labor is the most costly ingredient in any product and the necessity of hiring a man's time, we feared, would run the price of rental up beyond reason. However, we'd forgotten the disparity in wages. Projectionist, screen and camera all came at the price of 8 pounds (\$22.40) for one evening. To us it was so fantastically cheap, I could hardly believe it. We offered to defray this, but Inchmery didn't think that fair since we were supplying the films and had made them travel 6,000 miles. It was put up to the London O which, we later heard, had agreed to pay. The Symposium itself, was a very light-hearted affair. Frank and I were startled to find ourselves the joint guests of honor with Walter Gillings, the British "father of sf". Frank told me that if any speechifying was necessary, I could have the pleasure, bless his l'il soul. When we were introduced I had a few words carefully memorized but promptly forgot them so we just smiled and I thankfully sank back into my seat. Frank Arnold acted as Chairman of the affair and discussed the proposed program which was to consist of a couple of panels and an auction as well as the films we had brought. One of these was a fanzine editors' panel and the names of those participating were called out as being all the fanzine editors present. Behind me, Ron Bennett and Sandy Sanderson (who had been omitted) solemnly shook hands. "This is what we've worked for", they told one another.

However, because the atmosphere was more party-like than convention-minded, both panels fell by the wayside. The projectionist showed the two 16mm films. Bjo got loud, loud whistles when she appeared on the screen in a scanty costume, and

A Fan A Broad (continued)

"Born of Man and Woman" (which I myself was seeing for the first time) went over very nicely. Both were beautifully done films and I found it hard to believe they were amateur jobs.

They held the auction, with Ted Tubb leading off. Ted turned it over to Mike Moorcock shortly and Mike really did a terrific job of selling every last little item. We were sitting close to him and the best part of his auctioneering were his sotto voce comments which sent us into gales of laughter but were inaudible to those sitting farther away.

Mike and Pete Taylor also did a couple of funny songs, complete with Mike's guitar accompaniment and they were so good that the only thing the act needed was a bit of practicing to be of pro quality.

Frank and I were having a lot of fun teasing Sandy. He was smoking a long cigar and at first thought we were objecting to the smell of the smoke but it was just that he has a long slim face and the cigar didn't go with the face. Particularly at the upward angle at which he held it, it looked like a misplaced...like a misplaced...well, anyway, it didn't go with the face. Sandy was unconvinced though and calmly wandered around with his head in the clouds (of smoke).

Frank was handling the camera and we got the usual number of complaints from people threatening to sue for light shock and people calling loudly for doctors to treat their third degree burns. Atom even sat down and drew some illos of a battery of dazzling lights with long legs on them; that being all he could see for an hour after Frank turned the camera his way.

A cold buffet supper was served early in the evening but about 5 a.m., Atom went out and got a whole carton of hot dogs on rolls. American-type. I never remembered to ask him where he got them at that hour of the morning. Everybody was quite prepared to stay until 8 a.m. The railways stop running at around midnight and don't resume until then, but by 6 I could remain awake no longer and I collected Frank, Vinç and Sandy (Joy had been smart enough to catch the midnight train home) and we hunted up a cab and went back to Peckham.

Ethel Lindsay had invited us down to visit her in Surrey; Joy managed to get time off and on a beautiful sunny day, we made the trip. The English countryside is truly beautiful; Ethel is the nurse in charge of a small house on the hospital grounds where she is employed and the house, and particularly her room, were lovely.

She took us on a boat ride up the River Thames to Hampton Court Palace and I wish I were a sufficiently good writer to properly describe both the ride and the trip. We swung by odd little houses poised on the banks, and once passed a bobby lecturing a motorcyclist. Alternating sunshine and shade dappled the water and produced lovely visual effects. We took some movies but they don't do the ride justice.

Hampton Court Palace has the most gorgeous gardens I have ever seen, with beautiful flowers in full, glorious, vivid bloom, and carefully-manicured trees and shrubs. We wandered indoors and passed through endless large history-filled rooms, with huge portraits of past English royalty, large tapestries and paintings of pageantry scattered over the walls. Joy tried to convince me that I resembled one painting of a famous long-ago court beauty but, unfortunately, she had picked one that I considered very unpretty and met with scant success.

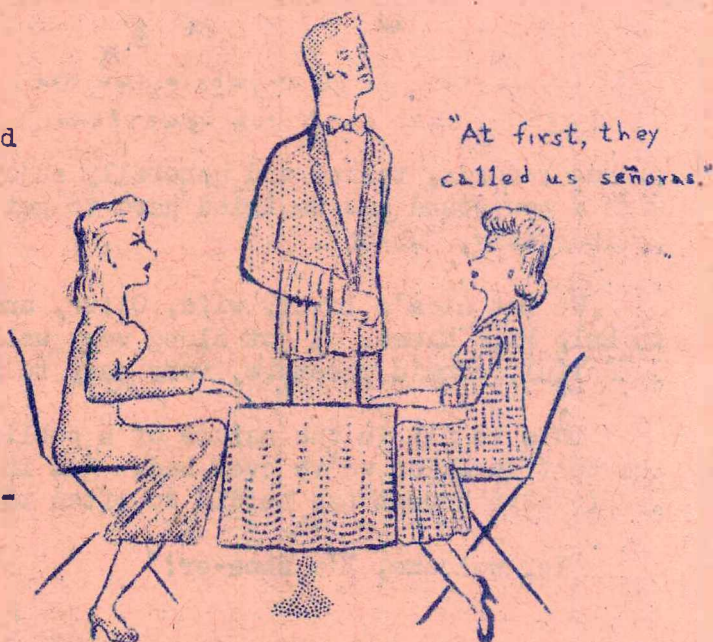
We went back to Ethel's charming room by bus and dined sumptuously on the roast meat, wine and all the trimmings with which Ethel plied us. That day is indelibly



"We tried to tell Sandy the cigar
didn't go with the face."

engraved on my memory as one of the most pleasant I have ever passed and I find that I have total recall on any portion of it. I remember that Ethel and Frank tried outdoing each other in paying for bus fares, entrance fees and snacks. Ethel insisted that we were her guests but we told her that Americans were world-renowned check-grabbers and we were just keeping up the tradition. She managed to best Frank once when he had nothing smaller than a 10-shilling note on a bus. She evened the score somewhat by handing him back his note, sticking her tongue out at him and paying for the fares herself. While I'm on the subject of Ethel Lindsay, let me comment on the sunny personality of this good-looking nurse, not to mention her shapely figure. Joy and I audibly envied the view in her direction, particularly, we told her, from the rear.

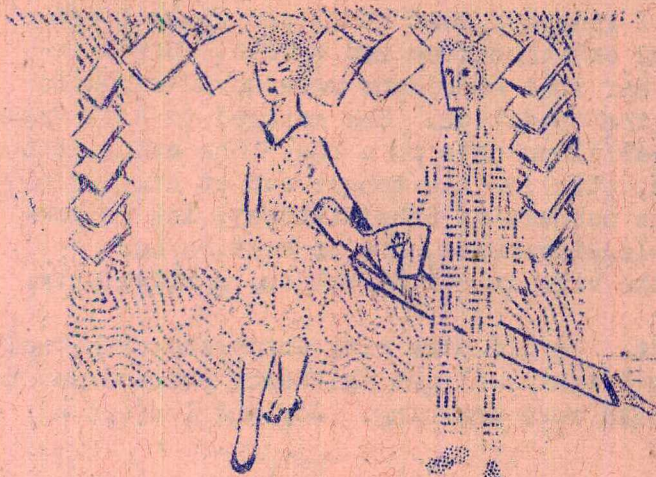
The rest of our stay went much too fast. We did more city wandering with Sandy. We passed Trafalgar Square several times in bright sunlight and Sandy pointed out to us the rainbows that the big splashy fountains were spawning. Joy and I spent a day shopping and then repaired to a Spanish restaurant for a scrumptious Paella dinner. It was quite a good restaurant in the West End and the waiters eyed us rather disdainfully. We had no furs, you see. They placed us at a table near the door with a window at our backs and I smiled to myself. They started out calling us "senoras" but by the time the sweet was served, we had been promoted to "ladies". I guess we didn't slurp our drinks or spill anything on the tablecloth or giggle out loud. I suppose they finally came to the conclusion that we were some of those eccentric rich dames. This was one of the few times that the English class system intruded itself on my consciousness. In a comparable American restaurant, the people around you might be anyone from Rockefeller's son to Susie, the janitor's daughter. You couldn't tell from their dress.



When the check came, I grabbed it fast but not before Joy was horrified at the amount. The funniest thing of all was that this was a really expensive restaurant for London and yet the bill for the two of us (with imported fresh strawberries and thick cream for dessert) came to less than it would have cost for me alone in a comparable New York restaurant. No wonder all the British TAFF candidates are flabbergasted at Statesside prices and, conversely, no wonder Americans are accused of being spendthrifts when in England.

We went to the theatre afterward and came home feeling thoroughly pampered. Joy is wonderful company and a very pleasant person. At one point during the intermission she had me in silent hysterics. A gal came down the steps and Joy said, startled: "What has she got on her front! They look like rockets! Are they real?"

All the women seemed to be wearing what amounted to a uniform; apparently what the "upper class" wears to a play. A well-cut black dress, low in the back. "The good little black", said Joy in explanation. Catch any group of American women wearing the same thing anywhere and most of them would go home and change! (So, all right, we're crazy! But we products of a mass-produced life want to look different from each other; at least in that we maintain individuality.)



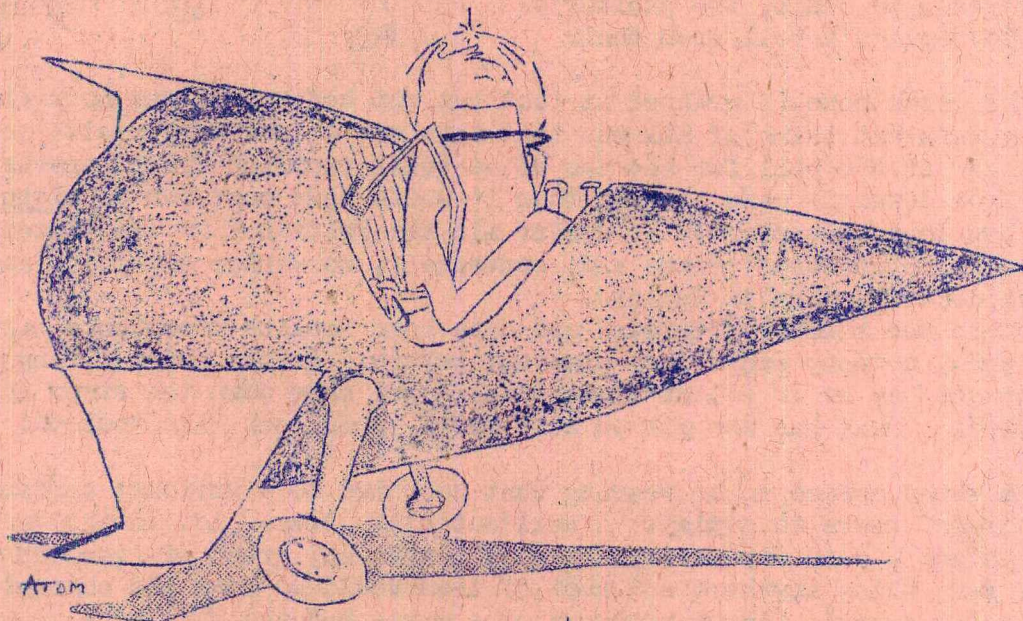
"If we wanted to go anywhere we had to get Sandy past the newsstand."

played records, talked and generally enjoyed one another's company. Nicki came up with a new sound and we tried hard to get her to repeat it. She said, very deliberately, "uh-oh".

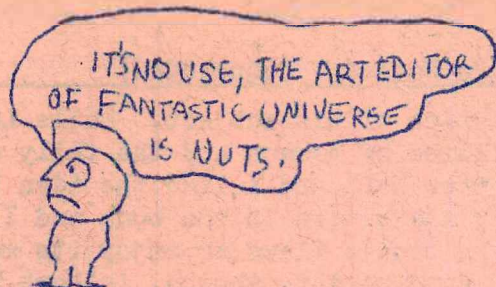
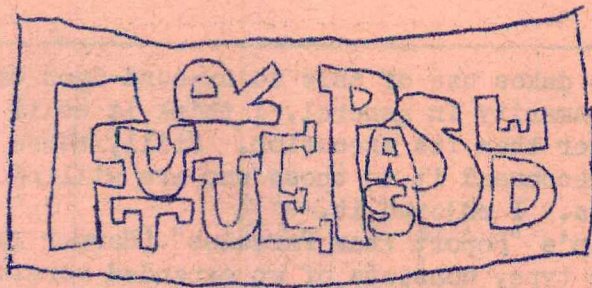
We met Atom's lovely wife, Olive, and a rather shy George Locke who came over to help Vinç mimeo. I got along very well immediately with Ella Parker who is a wonderful, candid creature, very easy to like and almost as talkative as I am.

This is all in the nature of a public thank-you to Inchmery for giving us the best vacation we've ever had. And in my mind's ear, I can hear Sandy mimicking my Brooklyn accent (as he did so often to tease) and saying:

"Yer welcome, I'm shoe-er!"



-end-



by Leslie Gerber

"This is not a story with a catch; neither is it what they call science fiction," says the narrator of this story on its first page. And although you won't believe it, he's right. Nevertheless, I doubt that any reader who picks up "The Devil That Failed" by Maurice Samuel (Alfred A. Knopf, 1952, 271 pp.,) will be inclined to quibble about that. You'll even agree with the enthusiastic blurb's writer's commendations of the book, although said individual writes that the book is "half a thriller and half a parable," and I'd say it's about two-thirds thriller.

The story concerns a young, rather cool-minded intellectual who falls asleep in a park one day and wakes up to find himself imprisoned in a sanatorium. Slowly, he learns that he has grown over a short period of time to a height of 13 feet, that he is now cut off from society, and that he will never be able to see his family or friends again.

After this orientation period, the author holds his plot more or less stationary to explore the characters and reactions of the involved characters; Alan Cleaver, the protagonist; the weird Dr. Sartoris, and the sanatorium attendants, who find themselves strongly though diversely affected by their patient. Cleaver, determined to force more information out of Dr. Sartoris, goes on a response strike; he acts like a mindless idiot and refuses to respond to anything Sartoris and his staff do. During this period, to keep his mind busy, he begins to think about various things, and he discusses "Gulliver's Travels" with himself with a point of view which will fascinate all fantasy readers. The tensions build up to a strong climax during this section and, despite the absence of action, it's just as much a thriller as the rest of the book. Then comes the climax, fit for an O. Henry, and the swift and expert denouement. It's a thriller, all right, but it is also a parable, and it's a book which will fascinate almost any reader. I recommend it without reservations.

I'd like to note the experimental "Stuyvesant" typeface in which the book is set. It's a radically different type, but one of the most attractive and readable I've seen. I'd like to see it used more often. As usual with Knopf books, there's a note on the type in the back.

The next four books have something in common, and they'll be treated together. The something they have in common is religion; all four involve some aspect of religion in some way. But the way can be quite varied.

"Heavenly Discourse" by Charles Erskine Scott Wood (Vanguard, 1927, Penguin Books, 1946, 252 pp.) is one of the finest satires I've ever read. It consists of 41 dialogues between various characters in heaven, and through this manages to take slices at anything and everything from Anthony Comstock to anti-Semitism (one of the best in the book) with not a few things in between. Some of the sections may be considered outdated, but they're still very funny. I think you'd enjoy this if you are possessed of a liberal viewpoint; otherwise, you might disagree with the book too much to enjoy it. But try it even if you're an arch-conservative; you might be converted.

In the opposite direction is C. S. Lewis's "The Screwtape Letters" (Macmillan hard cover 1942, paperback 1959, 160 pages) which leans toward the conservative viewpoint. The book consists of letters written by an old and experienced devil to his young apprentice devil nephew, instructing him as to the best way to assure the

Future Passed (concluded)

damnation of his subject. While Lewis makes use of this to expound upon the spiritual frailties of humans and the folly of humanity in general, I think it could have been a better book and I like the idea better than its execution. Still, there is much humor and satire in the book and I'd recommend it to those who are willing to overlook a book's flaws to enjoy its merits. I enjoyed it.

Even better, though, is Mark Twain's "Report From Paradise" (Harper 1952, 92pp.). This book, handset in a rather antique type, consists of an expanded version of "Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven" plus a short item entitled "Letter From The Recording Angel." Twain, as you know, was an outstanding believer in democracy, and this book shows it; Twain's heaven is one in which all men are equal (except for religious patriarchs and great artists who are a sort of liberal hierarchy) and the race of man is extremely unimportant in a huge place populated by innumerable species from all over the universe. The book's wit is outstanding and its message is no less than uplifting. Of the four books, I enjoyed this best. It's certainly worth an hour or so of your time. The "Letter From The Recording Angel" is absolutely hilarious.

Fourth, and most intriguing of the books on hand, is "Your Sins And Mine" by Taylor Caldwell, "the world's most widely read woman novelist" (Gold Medal, Oct. 1955, 127 pp.). This was first printed, in condensed form, in McCall's Magazine, and the book says it drew hundreds of letters from clergymen as well as people in all walks of life. I can believe that, for this book was the "On The Beach" of its day. Like "On The Beach", it was written by a writer of best-sellers, although I suppose Taylor Caldwell outsells Nevil Shute by 10 to 1. She is also much less of a novelist and while Shute's book is primarily about what happens to people with the world ending, Caldwell's is just about how the world ends. And unlike Shute's book, it has a happy ending--so happy as to be sickening.

The earth is dying in "Your Sins And Mine," not because of H-Bombs but because "God has cursed it". He is determined to wipe out the race of man before we do any more harm. The earth refuses to bear crops; instead nothing grows but poisonous weeds. Plagues are sent against men, etc., etc. You can guess how it goes. Taylor Caldwell is not the most original writer in the world. But somewhere near the beginning of the book, as the plagues have just been "noticed", the narrator falls down on his knees in the middle of his farm and says, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner". Within hours the weeds are gone from his farm. (I have his exact words; they're on page 37.) He spends most of the rest of the book trying to remember what he said. Finally, he remembers, spreads the word, everyone in the world gets down on his knees and prays for forgiveness, and that's it. Ugh? Ugh!

But strangely enough, the book has a certain effectiveness. The situation Miss Caldwell imagines is not by any means original, but she makes it seem, if not real, at least believable. I can still see those weeds and shudder at the thought of the strange insects which hid in the weeds and whose bite caused death. All the reactions in the book, from the government's on down, are exactly what you'd expect and there is only one real person in the book--the narrator's father--but still somehow, it'd oddly effective. Besides, it's of historical interest if no other interest and if you ever see it on a secondhand paperback rack, it won't be a bad investment for your dime.

Put some variety in your life. Read a science fiction book!

--Les Gerber

SANDY SANDERSON

for

T A F F !



- by Harry Warner, Jr. -

This Hallowe'en, two churches in Hagerstown sponsored UNICEF trick-or-treat activities. A couple of dozen teen-agers collected several hundred dollars in money and several thousand words of published criticism. The American Legion post in Hagerstown tried to persuade the public into refusing contributions to these church groups, on the grounds that communist countries are included in the beneficiaries of the donations.

It occurred to me that this is a good example of a situation that fandom will encounter more and more frequently as the months and years pass, assuming that there is no radical change in the world situation. Already, a similar state of affairs has broken into the fannish prints on two occasions. Repetitions are bound to occur.

Fandom's situation is simply this: It's spreading out all over the world, encountering previously isolated fannish individuals and organizations in nations where no fans were known to exist a few years ago. I think that the time has come when each of us must decide for himself what to do when faced with these situations.

Some months ago, an NFFF project to contact fans behind the Iron Curtain was given considerable publicity. Some members were enthusiastic about the idea, others feared the consequences of dealing with communists. More recently, rumors have been published about the International Science Fiction Society's connections with communist-front organizations or individuals. The rumors have been denied and may be false, but they're symptoms of a stage of world affairs that fandom must face.

It's simply this: Fandom now exists in most of the large nations of Europe and some of its smaller ones, in some shape or form. It's quite probable that the more advanced nations of Asia will be found to be inhabited by the genus fannus almost any year now. And in many parts of the European continent and other areas in the world, communism is infinitely stronger than it is in the United States. We can't wish the situation out of existence. It is a situation that affects fandom.

Fandom is a collection of individualists, not a governed body for which policy decisions can be made by someone at the top and blindly followed by everyone. So fans as individuals must make their choice. You can play it safe by staying out of contact with these far-away fans and remaining outside organizations in which they hold membership. Or you can decide that isolationism as a policy in today's fandom is as impossible as it proved to be on a national basis in 1939, and plunge into world fandom, even if Khrushchev joins OMPA and NFFF.

I don't intend to urge one course of action or the other. I think it depends largely on each fan's personal situation and plans. Don't kid yourself: if you have or want a government job that requires full security clearance or have always wanted to make politics your career, you're going to need to be extremely careful of your company in fandom from now on. Under today's national conditions, the

Fandom's Choice (concluded)

presence of just one militant communist in European fandom could lead eventually to the presence of most of fandom's organizations on the list of doubtful security risks.

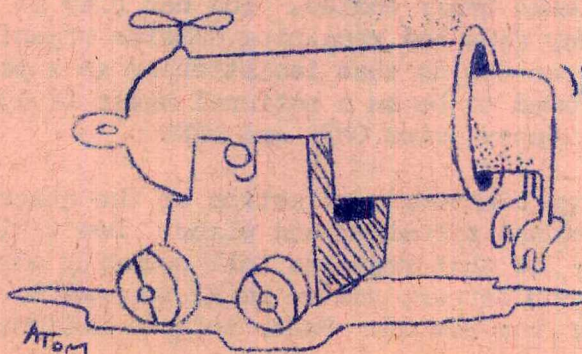
On the other hand, if you aren't vulnerable from the work standpoint and you feel confident enough of the future of the United States to withstand any propaganda that you might find in your first letter from the president of the Vladivostok Science Fiction Society, there's no reason why you shouldn't continue to enjoy fandom.

For what it's worth, I have no qualms about the matter. If I get into a political hassle with a devout communist anywhere in the world, I have enough faith in my own persuasive powers to trust that the outcome will be his conversion to capitalism, not my surrender to communism. I wouldn't take a job that involved the investigations and oaths that are required to work for the FBI, simply as a matter of principles.

Please don't get the impression that I'm accusing every fan in non-English speaking nations of being a semi- or complete communist. After all, there's only one chance in ten that any fan in Russia would be a member of the communist party. I'm simply pointing out that the political structure and outlook in many nations is utterly different from our own, and that the person who would be considered a way-out liberal in the United States would be a hidebound conservative in many European nations. We've got to be prepared for encountering all manner of political philosophies and shades of belief in those lands, because they co-exist with more conservative creeds over there in a way that is unknown around here.

There's only one other thing that I'd like to point out. If you think you'd better drop out of fandom altogether because of the risk that some other fans may be socialists or fascists or communists, you'd better prepare yourself to make a lot of other changes in your method of spending your leisure time and your money. If you buy a camera today, the chances are excellent that it was made in Germany or Japan and that some of the persons who worked on it are still unreconstructed enemies of the United States. If you listen to serious music, you'll have a hard time restricting yourself to simon-pure musicians, at a time when most of the recordings are made in Germany, Italy and Russia. I hardly think that the Jaguar and Volkswagen people make certain that none of their employees had anything to do with Dachau. Carrying things to their extreme, you'd even be forced to leave the United States, because it holds membership in an organization that contains scads of communists, the United Nations.

----The End----



THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS



I have received several letters expressing curiosity about the meaning of the illos for Chris' Corner. Since it's an interesting tale, I'll tell everyone at once.

Christine Elizabeth Haycock Moskowitz is one of the most versatile women I have ever met. Not only does she have a wide range of interests, abilities and talents but she manages to do well at everything she turns her hand to.

She is not a collector of science fiction (although, when time permits, she is an avid reader) but she does collect elephants. Not real ones, you idiots, but figures and figurines. She has, at last count, over 1,000; some quite expensive and some dime store variety, in addition to elephant pins, printed fabrics, planters, rugs, cookie jars and salt & peppers.

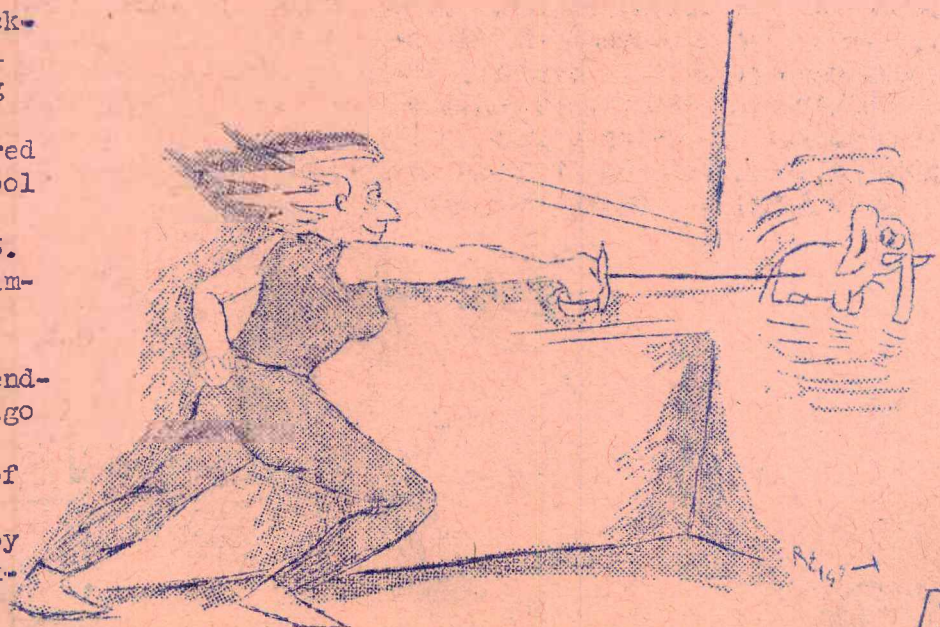
She is the star pitcher on a women's softball team in New Jersey and plays regularly during the season.

She takes fencing lessons and was, at one time, the women's fencing champion of the State of New Jersey. Occasionally now, again when time permits, she fences in matches.

She has a load of cameras and photographic equipment, belongs to a photography club and has won several prizes for photos entered in contests. Latest acquisition is a movie camera and lights. She develops, enlarges and prints her own still pix and mounts her own slides, using the bathroom as a darkroom with a lightproof system she constructed herself.

She was on active duty in the Army Medical Corps. and spent a year in Japan. She now holds a commission as a Major in the Army Medical Corps. Reserve.

As to her medical background, well, she acquired it the hard way, not being fortunate enough to have wealthy family. She entered Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing in Newark, New Jersey, graduating in 1945. She passed her nursing examinations with the highest average in the State of New Jersey. She then attended the University of Chicago where she was awarded a scholarship on the basis of her excellent scholastic ability, earning her way by nursing at nights and weekends and studying when



The Story of ChrisMos (continued)

patients were asleep. She continued this during her studies at the Undergraduate School of the U. of C., taking a Ph.B. She went on to take her B.S. from the Division of Biological Sciences there and then attended medical school at the State University of New York, College of Medicine, in Brooklyn, where she got her M.D. Nursing still furnished the necessary funds. At this point she enlisted in the Army Medical Corps.

Her year's internship was spent at Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, D.C. where she was the first woman intern in the Army as well as at Walter Reed. She was then sent to Japan where she did mostly gynecology work in Tokyo. Upon her return she took a year's graduate course at New York University Postgraduate School of Medicine in N.Y.C. in the field of surgery. She has just recently completed a five year surgical residency and has opened her own office and begun practice in Newark, New Jersey. She has been appointed to the staffs of four Newark hospitals, working in gynecology and surgery and, in the past year and a half, has had two research papers published in national medical journals.

Although she hasn't much time to work at it, she can also draw and paint.

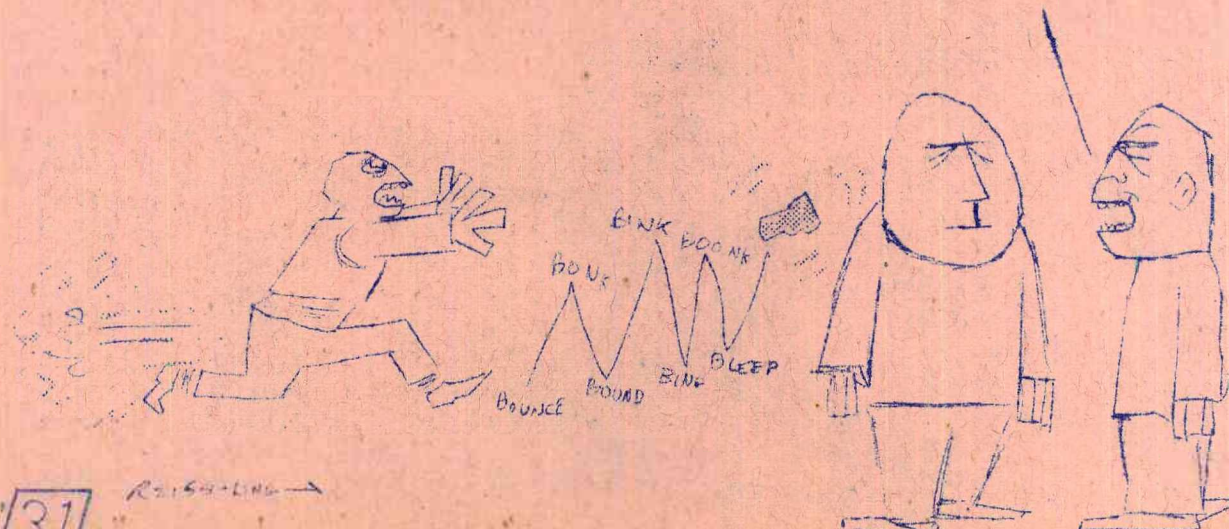
Naturally all of you are aware that she has been married to Sam Moskowitz for one and a half years. She is an excellent housekeeper, doing all her own chores (no maid) and is now trying to add to her many skills and talents the painstaking one of cooking.

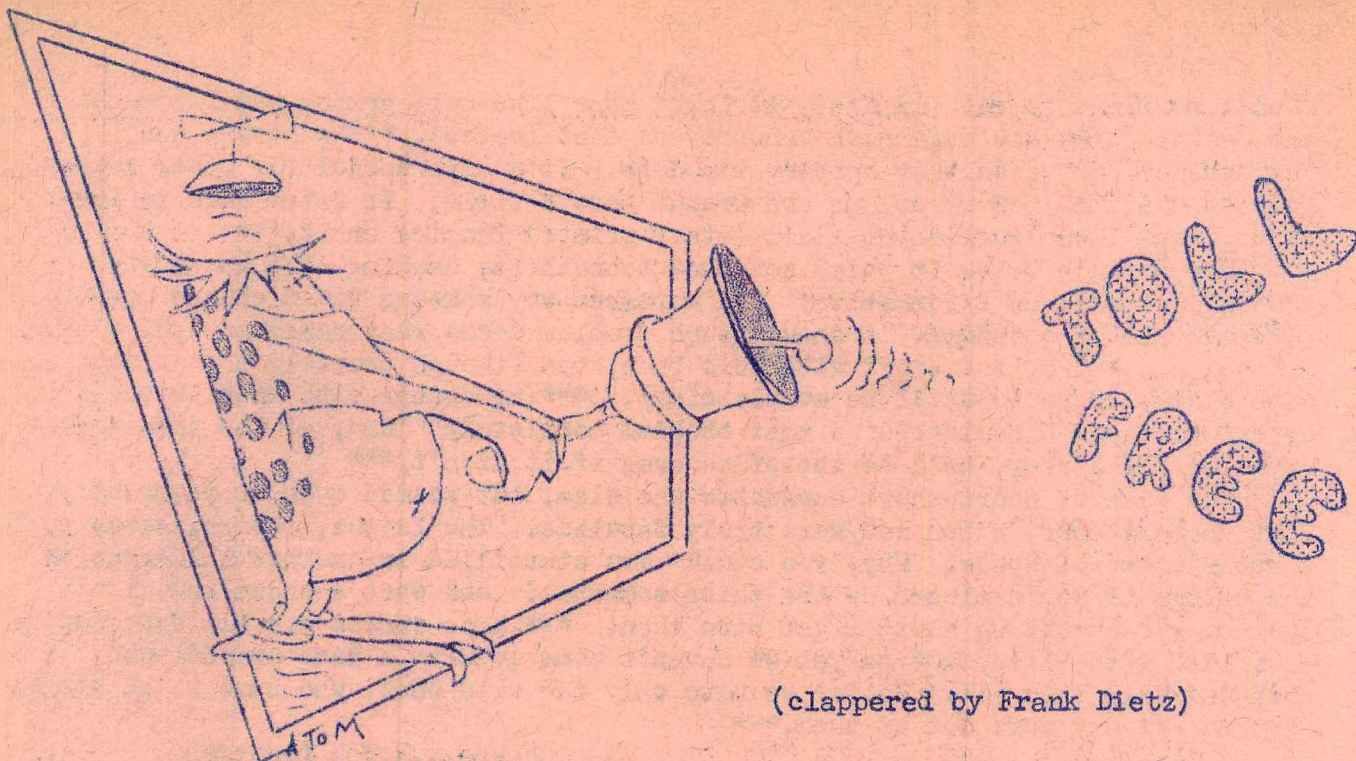
Anyway, the illos for her corner usually illumine one or more facets of her varied, interesting and capably-handled life.

P. S. If any of you gals in the audience are dropping dead of envy, kindly choose a spot large enough for two and move over, please. Me too!



"HE SAYS IT'S BRITISH JELLO!"





(clappered by Frank Dietz)

BOB

Dear Belle: Peals #3 arrived in good shape today after its harrowing trip across the country from the bustling Bronx to lazy Los Angeles. I appreciate it very much, as I'd faunched to see Chris' article on mescaline ever since it began to be used as a standard reference source for ensuing articles on the subject (which subject, I hope, will burn itself out shortly; it Is Not Good for newcomers /the ones you help in via FU/ to be exposed to this sort of tomfoolery right from the start; might scare them off). Chris's column was of high interest, but it isn't nearly as long as I had envisioned from the comment referring to it. I had half expected page after page of cogent medical comment, and this is only slightly more than 1/2 page. Awell...

You're right about dropping the subject of mescaline, except that so long as fans continue to publish articles in favor of its use we feel that it's necessary to give the other side--the realistic side--of the story. There's no telling when some young neofan might get sucked into the trap and end up as a dope addict, if all he reads are articles telling How Good It Is and How Much Better A Person It Can Make You.

Other than noting that Elph is a sort of anagram for Help, I can't figure out who is masquerading behind the name.

Hoh! I croggle fittingly at Frank's lead-up to your interlineation-type line and then flip completely at that. Very good. Which brings up an interesting pun I slipped out with several days ago. We've been giving play reports in English and someone was giving a report, in the course of which he/she (don't remember which, but think the latter) happened to mention that one of the dukes in the British court was quite ired at one of the other members of the court. "Aha", said I surreptitiously, "the fellow was ire-ish!" Two people got it. Non-fans are so dense. ***Mundensity?*** (Though the two people who got it were non-fen /one was my English teacher, a fannish sort if not a fan; the other was a rather attractive ((was Grid Queen this fall)) girl in the seat across from me/. Don Durward is also in the class.)

How did you accomplish those varicolored headings atop page 3? It doesn't

look like mimeo to me: in fact, it looks more like multigraph, and I thought the Seattle crew had a fannish monopoly on that process. ***We have a hand letterpress, on which that heading was done. It's also useful for other things, such as the illo for my column and Ground Zero's title. It dates back to 1949 or so, when I was publishing a completely printed fanzine on it.***

The article below it paled somewhat beneath its heading, but was quite amusing, as well as informative. I'd wondered why someone would change over to blue ink all of a sudden. A showthrough problem seems reasonable enough, but you get quite a bit of the stuff with this blue, too (though probably not as much as with black, or you'd still be complaining). ***The change with this issue to Granitone paper has cleared up that problem completely. And, at the amazing low price of 35¢ a ream, we'd be satisfied even if it didn't.***

The page of short-short anecdotes was nice, but passed over in favor of Tintinnabulations, which was/were truly fabulous. The layout, though, seems to be a gross waste of space. Why, you could have stencilled in another half-page of the column if you'd closed up the thing somewhat! And what a shame you didn't, for you were rambling along right nice then. ***Those spaces are all supposed to be filled with illos, but as yet we haven't come up with a tame artist, who can sit down and fill them all. So far we have only the wild ones, who have to be strapped down to get any work out of them.***

Cheers.....Bob Lichtman

ANN

C Dear Belle and Frank:

H Since I note that PEALS was sent to me for the reason (?) 'you have such a
A nice smile'...I felt I OWED you one. You have satisfied my curiosity about
M French public lavatory systems. It appears that the customer gets washed
B down with the --- oh, NO! - what am I saying? I can see right now what would
E happen if I went to Paris. I'd send back to the States for a shipful of
R orange-crates, some linoleum and a saw. I'd start putting seat-holes in the
L crates, and enough linoleum around the hole to prevent slivveritus of the
A buttox. Some sweat, but much satisfaction. A squeeze-bottle of ammonia would
I soon clear up the over-powering stench....(gad....how do they stand that?)
N

I will let this rest right about here...and see you in your next ish...will
20¢ per copy keep me in?...here 'tis! ***Yes'm, and thankee kindly.***

.....Ann Chamberlain

LEN

M Dear Belle & Frank,

O Many thanx for sending us PEALS No. 3. Nice, pleasant l'il mag, easy on
F the eyes, and interesting to read.

F As with most doctors - who are also literate - Chris writes a very good
column. Would that it were longer, and more detailed.

A The midnight-blue (which looks more like blue than midnight to me) is very
T readable, and a good, entertaining job of writing by one BD too.

T Forry has quite a collection of stf toys too, including the space dog mit
rolling eyes, Robby the Robot, Flying saucer, etc. I don't think he has the
human skeleton kit, tho. However, I should think it would be educational
(for kids), and prevent latter day squeamishness. Also be good for teaching
'em the "facts of life" (sex sans "dirt"), IF they did include both male and

33

female models. I don't think these kind of toys are gruesome or harmful to the young mind IF presented to them in a logical, calm manner as a means of instruction re the mechanics of the human body, etc. Of course, if they are used to scare the kids, presented to them as an item of morbidity, that's another story.

Best Wishes from Anna & yours truly.....Len Moffatt

BILL

D
O
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H
O

Dear Belle and Frank,

Just got PEALS, the issue that came out before the Convention. When you have a new issue, I would like to receive it.

I guess you saw in FANAC that I am fairly well settled down here now. ***Bill's in Frisco.*** Danny and I have a house together. It's mostly furnished now; we just have a few things to buy. I haven't started looking for work yet, but soon, soon.

I finally broke down and put myself on the OMPA waiting list. I wasn't quite sure who to notify, so wrote to both Sandy and Ron.

The fannish-feud picture in New York is simple indeed compared to the one here. It is very convoluted and involved. There are people of course who like everyone, but the picture of B liking A and C very much and A and C hating each other's guts is repeated with ramifications and variations til one is dizzy. I was going to draw up a chart, but it's too confusing unless one gives names which I don't want to do. The explanation given is that in New York there are so many fans that they can have many different clubs; out here fans are so few that we all have to associate together, whether we like each other or not.

At the combination house-warming, Christmas party, and Birthday party for me (it's the 23rd) which Danny and I had, Ron said, "Oh, my God, they are all six in the same room!" This didn't happen too often because as soon as one would enter one room, usually another would leave immediately.

Give my regards.....Bill Donaho

HARRY

W
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R

Dear Belle: An article for Peals is enclosed. I don't know just how you'll react to it, because you may think that I overdid your advice to make it serious. If you don't like it, or think it's too apt to stir up a hornet's nest in OMPA and N'APA, send it back and no hard feelings. ***This issue of PEALS will see wider circulation than just OMPA and N'APA, by about 100 copies. Reactions to it should be interesting.***

Thanks very much for this issue of Peals, which was a delight to the eyes and didn't leave me too much with the sense of being an outsider, even though I'm not a member of either group for which it was destined.

I certainly side with Chris Moskowitz about mescal. Maybe it isn't too dangerous in the hands of intelligent people like Ashworth and Huxley. But it sounds worse than alcohol or other kinds of dope if available to the general public, because of that complete inability to judge distances and times and utter willessness into which it throws the individual. Imagine what would happen on the highways if people took the stuff and then tried to drive home before it hit them, or how long men who took the stuff even occasionally would be able to hold their jobs. You can drive a car or work when you're under the influence of most other narcotics and intoxicants, after a fashion, until you become such a confirmed addict that you're a hopeless case. But apparently mescal puts you out of usefulness every time.

Your courage in washing out a mimeo drum astounds me. I remember the last time that I flushed out my fountain pen: it took half the afternoon and the sink remained violet-blue for 3 or 4 days. I'm not made of such stern stuff, and I rather think that I would simply call the nearest laundry to pick up some heavy wash if I decided that the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph was worth a cleaning. Yours, &c.,Harry Warner

