

POOKA

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by

Don Ford

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Loveland, Ohio 45140, U S A

Lp Records Collected.....

Continued from POOKA 11, 12, 13

90.	FIDELIO	ATL 4010	"Top Of The Bill", Famous stars of the Music Hall
91.	RCA LPM 2572		What's New - Sonny Rollins
92.	RCA LPM 2628		All Seriousness Aside - Dave Gardner
93.	RCA LPM 2761		It's Bigger Than Both Of Us - Dave Gardner
94.	RCA LPM 2561		The Waltzes of Irving Berlin - Melachrino Strings
95.	RCA LPM 2318		Swing Classics - Lionel Hampton
96.	RCA LPT 6000		Artie Shaw In The Blue Room Of The Cafe Rouge
97.	MOUNT VERNON	VM 503	That Everawingin' Artie Shaw
98.	HILL TOP	JM 6010	Johnny Cash's Country Round-Up
99.	SUTTON	SU 278	Leadbelly
100.	MOUNT VERNON	MVM 141	The Immortal Leadbelly
101.	Grown	GLP 5302	Bossa Nova
102.	PALACE	M 740	Bossa Nova - Volume 2
103.	SOMERSET	P 18800	Bossa Nova - Marco Rizo
104.	CAPITOL	T 1415	Shakin' Up Vegas! - Tony Pastor

The record clubs aren't satisfactory anymore. The best items in jazz come out on the more obscure labels. If you're patient you can pick up a lot of good records in the discount houses that a few years back were selling at three and four times the current price. There must be a system of "remaindering" in the record business like in the book business.

I maintain my membership in the RCA Record Club in order to get a few items now and then. I don't save any money by buying through the club, though. However, since I'm past the qualifying period, I pick one now and then.

The Bossa Nova is exciting and intricate. I hope it stays around a long time.

Speaking of the book business, the cost of paperbacks has risen to the point of being ridiculous. I can't see the inflated prices of 75¢, 95¢, \$1.25 etc. My days of collecting stopped when they priced themselves out of my market. I used to try to buy all S*F pocketbooks no matter if I thought I'd read them or not...just to collect them. Not any more.

Stan, Lou & Duncan really came through with material for me this time. Stan even cut his on stencil for me..what more could one ask? Margaret commented that Lou read so many fairy tales he was in danger of turning queer.

Duncan McFarland is a newcomer to fandom and to the CFG. Considering his age, etc I think he writes quite well. Better than a lot of adults I could cite. If he keeps coming around I think fandom will be seeing more of his writing & more of him in person. His article should bring back fond memories of each one of our first cons. The first con always seems like the best con. We in the CFG plan to encourage and assist him in his efforts to bring out his fanzine.

...from a ... to ...
...to ... to ...
...of ... and ...
...and ... of ...

WHO'S IN SEARCH OF WONDER?

(or, Thru the Ists with Sneer and Grimace)

by Stan Skirvin

"Not I," said the fly.

"Nor I," said the fan.

"Unless," he added, "I can read about it or look at the pictures."

With whatever apologies may be due to Damon Knight, I submit that most fans of the genre would not walk across the street to submit their senses of wonder to direct stimulation. After all, there is always the handy rationalization that it's probably a publicity stunt for a movie anyway.

I hold this to be self-evident, based on more years of observation than I care to recall. However, this conviction has not prevented me from setting hand to typewriter nor will it still my attempts to expound further. (To decline to write about the self-evident would decimate the pages of the fan-zines and I do not care to argue the merits of that when I am attempting authorship.)

It would seem appropriate to review the potential habitats and characteristics of fans who might be seeking to stimulate their senses of wonder other than by word and picture. Curiously, I will note that I would consider a fan (of the genre) to be, for present purposes, one who professes by the written or spoken word to be a follower of the literature and concepts of scientifantasy. (Yes, I said scientifantasy. No, I'm not that old; I just don't want to exclude too many potential wonder searchers by a narrow definition.)

Herewith, a list of -ists:

1) Occultists. Being rather indifferent to this field, I will casually include theosophists and most other -ists wherein "revealed" knowledge is important; objective knowledge is for the peons. I happen to believe that even subjective, personal knowledge can have an objective basis. Thus, even if

they read scientifantasy, I do not credit them with being people in search of wonder. They search for higher truths which will permit them to get one-up on the peons. (Dr. Jack Steele recently pointed out to me that it can be decidedly difficult for a metaphysical type dealing in revealed truths to refute a statement of the general form "...It has been revealed to me that what you have been saying is a lot of crap...")

Attempts at astral projection might qualify these people as wonder seekers, but I have no knowledge of how widespread (or successful) such attempts are.

2) Spiritualists. With their attempts at table-rapping and spirit communication, these people might well classify as true wonder-seekers. However, I think that the number who are fans is negligible.

3) Saucerites. I make a distinction between saucerites and UFO-ites. The former seem to be essentially a latter day offshoot of the occultists. They include those who have ridden in flying saucers and/or who know that the little green men, Venusians, or what-have-you who pilot the saucers have the wisdom of the ages and will save mankind from himself. Strictly for higher truths and I have long since had a revelation about them, too.

4) UFO-ites. Herein, we identify a group which I feel deserves far more respect than I have been willing to accord the three previously named. The impression I have of these people is that a great many of them are active observers, collectors, and correlators of data. Many, I believe, have become competent amateur satellite observers, astronomers, and meteorologists. In my opinion, they are people who actively search for wonder.

However, I also have the impression that few of them have any interest in scientifantasy beyond where it directly impinges on UFO speculations. Hence, worthy as the UFO-ites appear to be, they do not contribute in any substantial numerical significance to the number of fans in search of wonder.

5) Psionicists. Thanks to John W., the psionicists are probably the liveliest group of wonder seekers. Further, except

insofar as they include people attracted from other fringes, the psionists would seem to be composed mostly of fans. However, based upon my admittedly limited circle of acquaintances and reading in fan mags, it appears that the psionists are quite limited in number and do not contribute significantly as a percentage to the wonder-seekers in fandom.

6) Miscellaneous. Among those who might uncharitably be regarded as spun off to a greater or lesser degree from fandom are the dianeticists and the general semanticists. These groups have pretty well shed their fan adherents and, thus, can be disregarded for purposes of the present discussion.

Having thus dealt in summary fashion with what I regard as the most probable habitats of the active wonder seekers, what final conclusions can be drawn about the reality of wonder-seeking among fans? Here are mine:

a) By an overwhelming majority, fans are indifferent to any stimulation of their senses of wonder except by one of the visual communication media.

b) For a majority of fans (and this obviously does not include the sercon fans), scientifantasy represents pure escapism.

c) The sense of wonder can be stimulated by the visual communication media thru the introduction of unusual or little-known scientific, engineering, cultural, or cosmological concepts. Except insofar as such concepts generate sustained and constructive discussion, the whole mess is pure diletantism.

d) Fandom is primarily for fun and very rarely for profit.

Escapism, anyone?

A SCIENCE FICTION FAN COMES OF AGE

by

Lou Tabakow

Since Ford is so hard up for material he was forced to beg for an article about anything, with no strings attached and no editorial bias, I agreed to write a little autobiographical sketch. If the dear reader thinks some of the following delineates a rather overbearing stupid little jerk, bear in mind the fact that I have omitted incidents which show me in a poorer light. The following are my more successful failures.

Like many other SF fans I ran through the V I B G Y O R of fairy tales by the time I was about nine. This three year diet left a mark which is still not altogether erased. I still can't quite convince myself that a beautiful, heiress with nymphomaniac tendencies might not fall madly in love with me and whisk me off to the Rivera and then to some unexplored valley in Africa or Tibet where the days are given over to philosophy and the nights to you know what.

At any rate I spent a couple of disconsolate months foraging in the various branch libraries for any second-rate books of fairy tales that I might have overlooked. I even started stories I had read and tried to make myself disremember the plot so I could enjoy it again with the same naivete.

Then in desperation I picked up a book of Greek myths and was hooked again. With a feeling of superiority I discovered that the plots of most of the fairy tales were lifted right out of mythology. I ran through the Greek, Roman and Norse myths in short order and even tried a few American Indian and other assorted types but found these a little too unsophisticated by this time. Then I discovered Poe.

I was sure that he had unravelled the secret of the Universe in his prose poem Eureka. From there I graduated to Verne & Wells and John Taine whose books I read avidly though I didn't understand them at all. I kept up with the Tarzan books but for some reason our library didn't stock Burroughs' science fiction. At this time I was between ten and eleven and spent many a rainy Saturday scanning dozens of books whose titles hinted at a science fiction theme; but almost invariably a title like "The Man From Sirius" was a slow-paced story about a man from Sirius South Dakota.

Then someone around my eleventh birthday handed me an almost mint copy of the first issue of Amazing. If I remember correctly the entire issue other than one short story was reprints which I had read many times before, but the promise of what was to come filled me with exultation. NEW stories; NEW science fiction never before in print. I lay awake night after night dreaming of what the next issue would bring. I might say here that in the next couple of years I never read a science fiction story I didn't thoroughly enjoy. To a starving man even dry crusts are nourishing.

At this time I decided that being President was fine. Being another Einstein was also fine; but neither could compare with being an author. The editor of *Amazing* was asking for stories from his readers. I was a reader and I had ideas. A typewriter was as far out of my reach as a Cadillac and in one of the books on writing I had gotten hold of I was informed that a hand written manuscript was usually doomed to go unread. I toyed with the idea of hand lettering. I became so adept that to this day I can print as fast as I can write. At any rate I decided the copy was little better than script. What to do? I visited the local stationers who boasted a portable in the window, but he refused to rent me one without a deposit and certainly not without my parents' OK. I broached the idea to my father explaining in detail how I would pay him back out of my royalties. The peasant refused good-humoredly and suggested I get a job after school to finance my literary career.

I was large for my age and had more nerve than an abscessed tooth, so I began to make the rounds of grocery stores telling them my father used to own a delicatessen and I had worked there. Finally my persistence paid off. I approached a new young manager of an A & P store who needed a few hours of help a day. My experience at this time consisted of the buying and selling of mud pies matchsticks and stones a few years before when we had played store. I suppose in the next few days I weighed up about a thousand pounds of lima beans, prunes, navy beans, and coffee. The manager and I were both too naive to short each bag half and ounce or so. His supervisor had not yet had time to explain to him what was meant by the many small signs around the store reading "Watch Your Retail". We were even stupid enough to only charge nine cents for a single can of beans which sold 3 for 25¢. I felt I was getting on quite well. I was at ease with the customers and knew the stock fairly well.

On the third day when I came in to work the manager sent me to another branch store about four blocks away to borrow some bread. The other store couldn't spare any and directed me to the next store which was about half a mile farther. This manager loaded about thirty loaves of bread in a gummy sack which I slung over my shoulder. I had no sooner left the store than I was surrounded by a jeering group of negroes ranging from about seven on up to about fifteen years of age. This was a crisis.

"Whatcha got there Jew boy," said one conversationally.

Another tugged at the sack, trying to peer inside. One of the smaller boys grabbed at the sack and I pushed him away.

"Push somebody your own size," threatened the largest of the boys, pushing his face up close and striking a fighting pose. At that moment I would have given my immortal soul to have the strength of Tarzan and wade in flinging them about like ten pins. Fighting was out of the question aside from the fact that I was afraid. If I once let loose of the sack I'd never get it back. Flight was impossible as they'd overtake me in ten feet if I tried to run burdened with the sack. To yell for help was unthinkable and probably wouldn't do any good. A crowd of disheveled louts and middle-aged drunks were already watching interestedly hoping to see a fight.

A junk wagon pulled by a miserable looking horse pulled to a stop and the driver leaned over shaking his whip menacingly.

"G'wan nigger bums; beat it," he yelled. "Let'm alone."

They jeered at him. He hopped nimbly down cracking his whip, at which they instantly scattered.

"C'mon hop up" he invited, "I'll take you to Central Avenue." He even offered me his sack of Bull Durham which I politely refused and then let me hold the reins while he rolled his own cigarette. I was afraid for a moment the horse might notice a novice held the reins but he plodded along unconcernedly. We reached the store at ten after six. Closing time was six PM. I started stacking the loaves on the shelves. The manager came over with two one dollar bills. "They're sending over a girl to work full time tomorrow morning," he said, kindly. "So I won't need you any more." So ignominiously, ended my first assault on the halls of commerce. But I had two dollars.

I had two dollars, but even the beat up portable I'd priced in the hook shop was twenty dollars asking price which meant at least ten dollars cash.

The next day I visited the local stationers where for 25¢ I purchased a box of rubber letters which could be forced into a grooved wood block to make a rubber stamp. I carried my treasure home, and after about four hours of labor had succeeded in printing about three paragraphs. However it was impossible to print straight lines as the letters themselves had been out crooked. I decided that I couldn't send professional looking copy with this outfit.

The next day I visited the ten cent store and for about fifty cents if I remember correctly I purchased one of those toy typewriters where the type sits in a circle on the top somewhat like a phone dial. By moving each letter around to the proper position you pressed down and got an impression. This was much faster than hand set type and I printed an entire page in one evening. However I was very unhappy with the results. I was learning an economic truism. You can't precision engineer a fifty cent machine to do the job of a fifty dollar machine.

However I was in the throes of creation and bound to finish my brainchild. It took every minute of my spare time for a week but I finally typed Finis beneath the last line. This seemed so much more refined than The End, and would, I felt sure point out I had a very cosmopolitan vocabulary. After reading it over however I was forced to admit that the job was too sloppy to submit. I was determined that someone would read my story, so I bribed my sister to read it by promising to play jacks with her. Since she invariably beat me to a frazzle at the game we both felt it was a fair exchange. Her comment was as I had expected.

"You're crazy!!"

Aren't all SF fans?

MIDWESTCON BREAKTHROUGH

by

Duncan McFarland

Throughout this spring I looked forward to the latter part of June. I counted my dollars, my day dreaming imagination licked its chops, and generally I expected to have the time of my life. What was this glorious occasion for which I so anxiously awaited? A trip to the World's Fair, what else?

But life being its usual unpredictable self I found I couldn't go to the Fair then. The relatives with whom I was to make the journey would be detained by business, and couldn't hope to set off for the Fair until sometime in July. So disappointedly I planned to substitute a visit to the Midwestcon during the 26, 27, & 28th.

Truthfully I really didn't know what to expect at the con. Being young, a sophomore in high school; fresh, and NSF recruit of about six months; and having never met a fan in person before in my life I was kind of apprehensive about going there. Would I be totally ignored? Would conversations diverge into super intellectual topics while I attempted to understand what was being said? Or would there be vehement political discussions with staunch Goldwater supporters threatening to drown me in the swimming pool if I showed my face at the con again? Or would this turn out to be a local version of Greenwich Village, with bearded beatniks belittling "squares" like Hal Clement, and laughing at me because I didn't know the words to the latest obscene folk songs? Or just an ordinary gathering of ordinary people talking about ordinary subjects; debating whether Plymouth would outsell Pontiac, whether there would be rain in Spain, and so on. Or would it be a bunch of science fiction scholars, debating the symbolism in Bradbury's yarns and its application to Zen Buddhism, analyzing the details of the medieval backgrounds of some of Poul Anderson's stories, and extrapolating current trends to predict the circulation of Galaxy in 1974?

I did have the foresight to write a couple of letters to the local fans beforehand, to try to prepare myself for the ordeal. Hence I beat off a couple of pages to both Don Ford and Stan Skirvin, suggesting that they call me up. Well, my fortitude was upped a bit by the fact that both sounded cordial enough on the phone; so on that fateful Friday afternoon I convinced my mother to drive me out to the North Plaza to see what the con would be like.

I first walked over to the swimming pool, as both Don and Stan suggested. Unfortunately I arrived when most of the fans that were there already were eating, but I introduced myself to Lou Tabakow who was engaged in conversation by the pool. Lou showed me around and introduced me to everyone he saw, which got me started off on the right foot. Soon Don Ford appeared, and he introduced me to some people, too. At this time I discovered that a difficulty of remembering names was going to be with me until I started to associate names with faces. After talking with a few fans, most notably with the Coulsons, I noticed that many people started to group around a new arrival. Joining the crowd, and it was a crowd, I caught my first glimpse at Bob Tucker. I promised myself that by some special exertion I'd bull my way in sometime at the con and fearfully ask for his autograph.

CFG meeting so all was looking well.

Sunday was the last day of the con. I went in the later afternoon again, also getting in some miscellaneous socializing around the pool. Chuck Wallbridge was there, but going home for supper. My ride depended on him as my family didn't feel like getting me in the middle of the night again, so I figured I'd probably have to go home with him. However, then Chuck mentioned he'd probably be back after supper.

After a couple of hours of talking, and after Banks Mebane surprised me by subbing to my zine, the group started to head to Wong's Restaurant downtown to eat. I hadn't heard of any dinner at a Chinese Restaurant, and debated whether to go. I had the money, but on the other hand it would be another \$3.00 or so and I didn't want to drain my fanzine resource too dry. The clincher came when Don mentioned to me that Bob Tucker didn't like Chinese food, and subsequently was going to eat at Frisch's. I resolved to go with him.

This turned out to be my personal high spot of the con. Tucker turned out to be quite approachable after all, and welcomed my suggestion that I eat with him. We walked over to the restaurant coffee shop, and ate together. Bob deserves the BNF status he has; he is really nice. Bob even wound up buying me my meal. Of course we arranged that I'd pay him back with my fanzine, but I was going to send them anyway.

Back at the North Plaza we waited for the rest of the gang to come back from Wong's. I needed to make another phone call home. This time I went off to the main office with intentions of going to the basement to the pay phone. However, when I mentioned I wanted to make a phone call, the guy at the desk guided me across the street to a booth. I didn't feel like barging past him, but it was odd he didn't know of the phone in the basement.

After talking a couple of hours by the pool, and watching a fireworks display which coincidentally had been scheduled slightly less than a mile away for that night. I said my goodbyes and departed with Chuck homewards. What a con. I really had a good time, even if I didn't get into any all night drinking and bull sessions. I'm looking forward to next year's con, especially as I'll know my way around then and know a lot of people and I'll even be in some of the slides.

Don invited Chuck and me over to a CFG meeting/picnic shortly thereafter at his house. It was again a lot of fun, and I really started to get into a fanish mood by then, especially when I took a gander at Don's collection in the basement of his home. That evening I plotted out a scheme whereby I could have a fairly complete collection of pocketbooks by the time I graduated from high school, but recently this collecting bug has died down as I take a more sober look at my financial situation. The CFG is a group that is really nice, with a pretty good balance of people in it. In other words, there isn't the bunch of loquacious guys trying to shout each other down all the time, and on the other hand total silence never reigns.

Anyhow, my advice to young, unconfident neos who are deciding whether to go to a con or call on some fans is: don't hesitate! Get right in the thick of things where the fanning is most fun.

Anyhow, I happened to bump into Chuck Wallbridge then. Chuck, I found out, lived a mere few blocks away from me in Hyde Park. This certainly was good news. This was his first con, too, so I hung around with him that night. Actually the main motivation for the latter was that I hoped, successfully, to hitch a ride off of him.

That first night was an interesting one. I met a few fans, talked with them, and really did more listening than anything else. All in all it added up to a pleasant evening, and though still pretty ignorant of the ways of fans, I first began to suspect that the bunch was in fact a combination of all the things I had imagined.

Next day I had realized there was some sort of a banquet planned. A smorgasbord at David's Buffet. After debating a while whether I could spare the \$3.00, and with the encouragement of my mother (she volunteered to shuck over \$1.50), I decided to go. So I went back to the North Plaza that afternoon. Then disasterously I learned that Chuck wasn't going to the Buffet, how would I get a ride over there? Actually it turned out to be a matter of refusing rides, not begging for them. John Bellow offered to take me, and I went with him. My only mistake at the dinner was eating too many of the appetizers, and not saving enough room to really wind it out on the main dishes. Afterward Tucker mc'd. He introduced celebrities, including me as a faned. Which was surprising, but then I guess I am.

Then members of the CFG fiddled around with the projector and screen to set up the slide show. After an illustrious beginning which promptly saw the expulsion of all young, innocent children by their respective mothers, the show got under way. Don Ford had some slides of the previous Midwestcon, and the Discon, plus a few others. These proved of moderate interest to me, my only trouble being that I didn't know any of the fans involved.

Then the CFG flashed on slides of the standard type pulp cover, and added captions. This was pretty funny, and kind of interesting, too. How the covers have changed!

I spent the greater part of that second evening talking, or mainly listening, to John Bellow and some of his friends. Among these was Lewis Grant, and his ability to talk made him look like a promising contributor to my fanzine, which should be pubbed at the end of the summer. (THISTLE AND THORN; 20¢ 6/\$1.00. Payable to me, 1242 Grace Ave, Cincinnati 8, Ohio. Free for LOCs, contribs, and trades. Sort of YANDROish policy. Reproduction guaranteed at least legible, or double your money back.) (Couldn't resist plug.) So I took a mental note.

Anyhow, I got back into general circulation by the pool about 11:30 that night, whence I promptly hunted around for a telephone. I went to the main office and asked the guy at the desk where a phone was. He directed me to one in the basement of the building, just a short distance down one corridor. Then I called up my brother and arranged for a ride home.

While waiting for my brother, I got into some conversation by the swimming pool again. Here I heard Bill Conners thoroughly blast the Supreme Court. Before we could get into any sort of discussion, though, my brother came and I went home.

That night before I went to bed in the wee hours of the morning, I read the YANDRO and DOUBLE:BILL I had acquired during the day. Also Ford invited me to a