

POTLATCH

THE FANZINE OF THE UNKNOWN · NO. 6

SPECIAL
PSYCHIC
ISSUE



NEW EVIDENCE

☆☆☆

FLYING SAUCERS
FROM
ATLANTIS!

IN THIS ISSUE:

Interview: Cthulhu

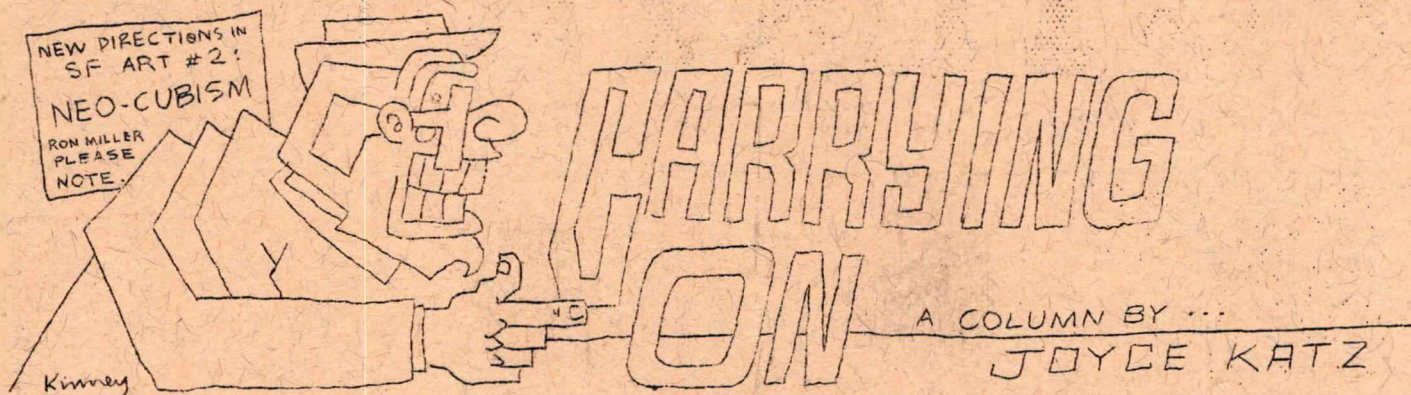
AN INTIMATE TALK WITH EVERYONE'S
FAVORITE UNSPEAKABLE HORROR
by REX REED

ASTROLOGICAL BIRTH CONTROL

A NEW
SCIENTIFIC
BREAKTHRU!

"GNOMES IN MY POCKETS!" - CAPTAIN KANGAROO
FREAKS OUT...

"Edgar Cayce at the Bat" A Psychic Sports Poem

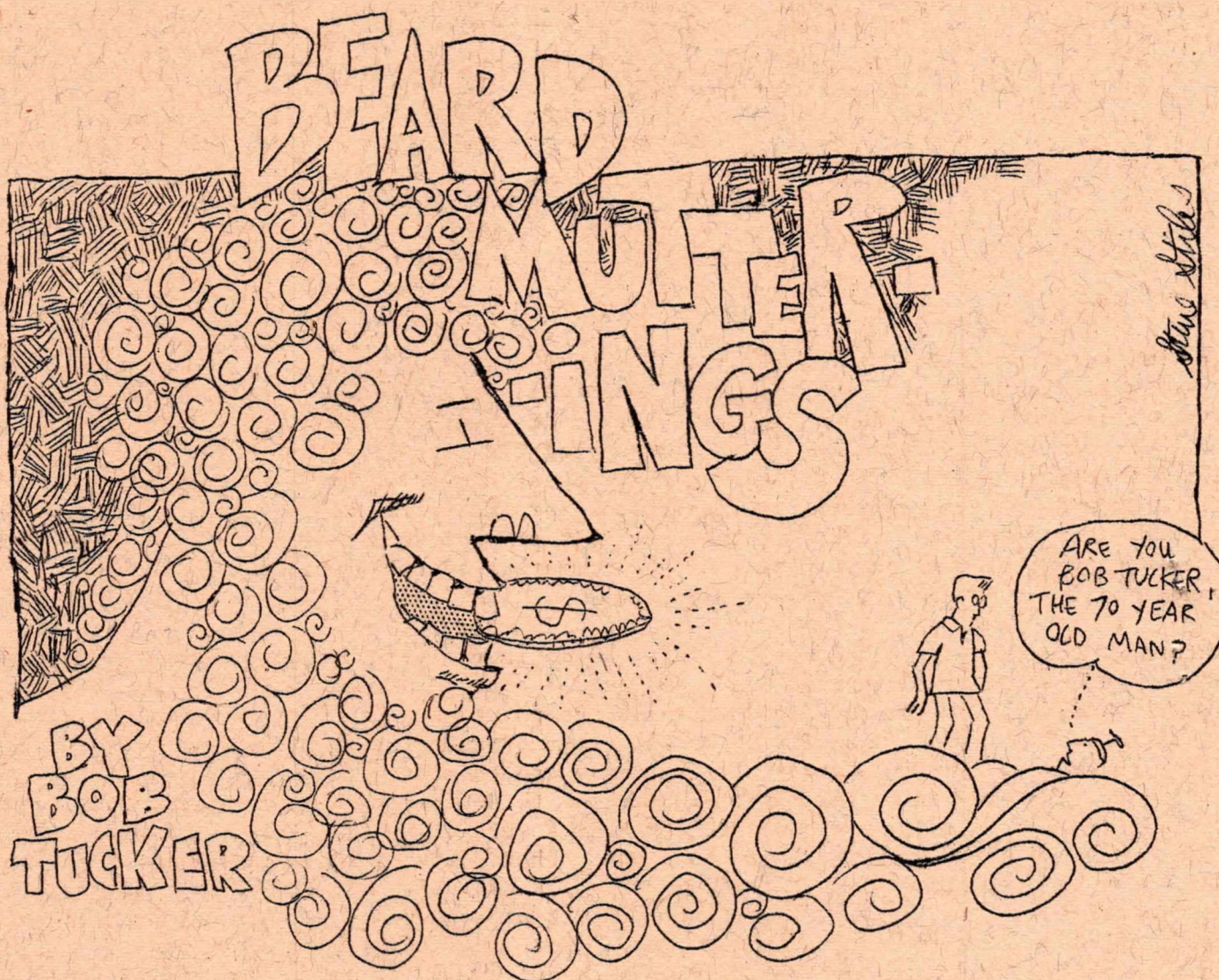


Another worldcon's come and passed, and I find I have less to say about it than I expected.. and certainly little that won't be more graphically described by others of the over-two thousand members. The size of the affair is undoubtedly the most significant thing that can be told: the largest worldcon to date, occupying the largest hotel, spread out over the largest amount of floor space, filling the largest number of hotel rooms we've ever used. The Boston Committee deserves congratulations for the efficiency with which they handled the crowds. Noreascon was, without doubt, the most smoothly-run convention I've ever attended. They made use, as much as possible, of the computers available to them -- much of the handling of memberships was done mechanically.

Naturally the convention had its failings, as do they all---the programs had a tendency to be more educational than entertaining and needed a touch of drama to stop the tendency toward blandness; the banquet food was past the point of being just bad, which all conventioners know to expect, and firmly in the realm of unbelievable; the layout of the hotel did not lend itself to a central milling area, and therefore it was often difficult to locate your friends. Small failings, and of next to no import when considered next to Noreascon's biggest strength: the hotel relationships were virtually perfect. I didn't hear of even one party being closed...well, only one: there was a skinny-dipping party in the pool which was finally closed, not because of the lack of suits, but because of the noise level. Room parties were, so far as I heard, completely undisturbed. More important still, room reservations were without exception honored. Hotel personnel were courteous and efficient; that in itself says more than I can describe about them. It was such a relief to attend a convention with no harrassment or embarrassment from an un-understanding hotel staff. I've never before heard a hotel applauded at a worldcon, but this one was--and it was a pleasure to give the Boston Sheraton the compliments they earned. If for nothing else than their successful hotel arrangements, Tony Lewis and the rest of the committee deserve the respect of the convention membership.

It's a truism that everyone attends a different con; in the case of such a large one as this, with such a variety of activities happening simultaneously, it becomes doubly true. For me, personally, it was not the best of all possible conventions. I felt at loose ends much of the time, and didn't really know how to use the time I'd gained by having no duties to perform at this worldcon. Too, there were people who weren't there that I had hoped and expected to see...and worse of all, people who were there that I never was able to locate. There were moments when I felt the convention was too "untouched by human hands"; when efficiency would well have been sacrificed for other values.

But my complaints are trivial ones, reflecting more of my own negative attitude than any fault of the convention. I suppose my problem was nothing more serious than unrealistically continued on back cover



IKE, THE EAGLE, AND THE PITS OF LUNA: I'm not a coin collector, but... This year (for the first time since 1935) the United States mint has resumed coining "silver" dollars to delight the collector, to enrich the coin dealers, and to wear large holes in the pockets of Joe Fann. The coining of dollars was suspended in 1935, presumably because the depression had put dollars out of reach of all the poor Joes, and presumably because of numerous complaints that the heavy cartwheels actually did wear holes in trouser pockets---of those people who were lucky enough to have dollars and trousers during the depression. (I remember having a dollar once, in those days. I bought an electric clock with it, but I don't remember what I did with the change. Perhaps I spent it on a few nickel beers.) But I don't believe those official explanations for discontinuing the silver dollar; I'm a skeptic. I suspect there was some sinister plot behind the decision to stop making them, some evil plot cooked up by Franklin Roosevelt and Cactus Jack Garner to corner the market. The secret story will all come out someday when some patriotic character leaks a batch of Treasury Papers to the New York Times. But meanwhile, the cartwheels are rolling again.

This year, for the first time to my knowledge, the moon will appear on an American coin. The obverse side of the "silver" dollar will bear a likeness of that distinguished states-

man, President Eisenhower, but the reverse side will be of greater interest to science-fictioners everywhere: the usual American eagle is positioned in the center of the dollar clutching his usual olive branches (symbolic of something, I'm sure), but he is hovering over a bleak moonscape. A half-dozen craters are visible and what appears in photographs to be a low mountain range, but I find no rille. Above the eagle's head and slightly to the left may be seen the Earth hanging alone in space; the whole is a reasonable facsimile of the view glimpsed by astronauts as they orbit the moon at low altitude---but minus the flapping eagle of course. If there be any true coin collectors in the audience who remember another coin (native or foreign) bearing the images of earth and/or moon, I wish they would speak up.

The dollars are available in three distinct versions: the common dollar intended for general circulation (to wear a hole in your pocket) will be a cupro-nickel "sandwich" coin similar to other common coins today and will cost only a dollar at banks. The second version is a forty-percent silver clad dollar which may be ordered from the mint in brilliant uncirculation condition, and will cost three dollars each. The third and most expensive version will cost you ten dollars each when ordered from the mint: bright and shiny "proof" dollars which supposedly are made and delivered to you without blemish or blight, a coin truly in "mint condition" and bearing no eyetracks. This version too will be made of forty-percent silver, and will be the hot collector's item: the last proof dollar was struck in 1904 and is now priced at \$200 or more. (Probably more: I haven't tried to buy one.)

It seems a fairly safe and easy prediction that hucksters at future conventions will be peddling "space dollars" alongside books, magazines, and artwork. Make a note to check Big Hearted Howard's prices at Toronto in '73.

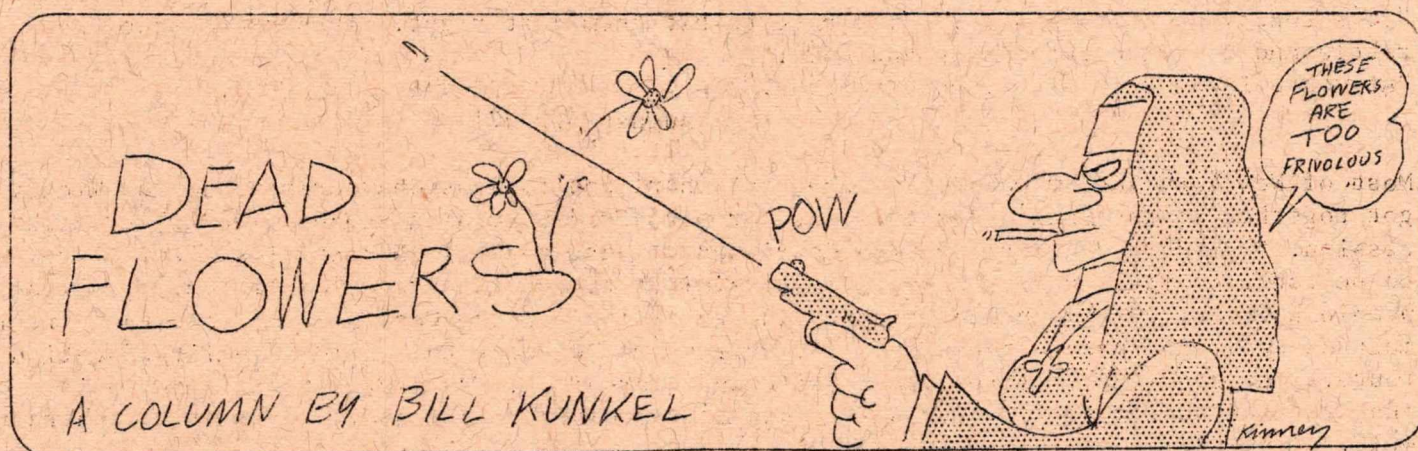
CREEPING, SLITHERING INFLATION: I missed the boat by three years. Only two years ago in my column in Locus, while discussing the shortage of auction materials, the high price of con-going, and other weighty matters of vast import, I offered the brash guess that worldcon registration fees would likely jump to ten dollars in about five years. I'm a hell of a poor soothsayer. Boston this year will charge Joe Fann ten dollars if he walks in off the street with the desire to watch those crazy Buck Rogers people. If Boston is successful (i.e., if they accumulate a sizable bundle of cash to catch the attention of future con committees) the ten dollar admission fee is likely to become permanent, and likely to be applied sooner than merely walking in from the street on the day the con opens.

Have all con committees succumbed to the Korshak Syndrome? Do they all worship giantism for its own sake, in the belief that giantism is progress? Is there a compelling reason to always top last year's attendance figure and last year's income? Am I alone in believing the fun has gone from outsized worldcons?

Erle Korshak may have been the first victim (or culprit) of giantism when, in 1952 for the Second Chicon, he frankly and openly embarked on commercial giantism for the sake of cash and egoboo. He wanted the biggest worldcon ever, and he wanted the most commercial and the most profitable worldcon ever. He got both, up to that date, and the con committees who followed him all struggled to contract the same disease---with varying degrees of success. Those following committees may not have been avidly seeking commercialism and profits, but they sought bigness, bombast, and hoopla.

That is progress?

-- Bob Tucker



Dear Diary

August 2, 1971

My people are still away -- vacationing in the wilds of Montreal. Today's my day off from work, and Charl and I have been spending the afternoon over here, engaged in various types of fanac. There's a RATS! to complete, and this column that I'm involved in. I'd begun the day with intentions of working on the mailing list, but something happened, and I was sparked columnwards.

What it was, was my first opportunity to go through that (mint) collection of schlocky, raunchy newspapers that a friend was forced to ship over here after his father stumbled upon them. Here are a few of the better items I came across:

HORST BUCHHOLZ HAS GOT THE HOTS FOR HIS HORSE

"I've tried to persuade Horst to leave the animal in Germany," his agent, Hans Schwantz, told CLOSE-UP.

"You know how Americans take these things..."

The problem, however, seems graver than that. Horst - or Buchholz if you like - has got it bad for his filly.

"Oh, oh!" laughed Horst, "It's not that bad!"

But it is: Every night, the German stud sneaks out to the stable and with the horse's back feet in two old Reichswehr boots, puts it to her.

"It'll go great with what you call groupies?" Horst asked, removing the boots from the horse's hind legs.

"They like to feel it!"

TOWN HIRES PSYCHIC TO CHASE EVIL SPIRITS AWAY

"Yes, I think I can have the ghosts out of the house by Advent," La Tours /the psychic/ exclaimed confidently. "The longest it's ever taken me is six months and that was because the ghost had hidden itself in a coffin."

"Devilishly hard to find when they crawl under a gravestone or hide out in a coffin. Like looking for needles in a haystack."

As La Tours explained, most ghosts haunt cemeteries and old buildings, being most vulnerable after sunset. The spirit fighter then takes a wooden cross and a silver stake, hides in the cemetery and when he senses a spirit is near, jumps out and drives the spike into the air.

"It's touchy," La Tours said. "You have to hit them just right. Then they groan and rattle and the wind turns fast and cold."

"At most, I can slay five ghosts a night."

August 5, 1971

Most of New York fandom was at Phlange, but Charl and I, Ross Chamberlain and Jay Kinney got together at the Katz's nonetheless, for our "Friday Evening Supper Club" chat&laugh session. By the end of the evening Charl and I began telling "Nun Stories", which are not to be confused with the movie and plan of similar title, but are a lot of fun. Now, most people have one or two anecdotes they like to tell about the Good Sisters, but they are in most cases second and third-hand yarns, whereas We Two went the whole Catholic Education route. Our sagas, therefore, are genuine and accredited. Jay suggested, at one point, that I should write them up for RATS!, but I've decided to chronicle a few of them here as well.

Me and nuns go back a long ways. Of course, the fact that the reality of then and the reality of now are so heterogeneous puts a strain on the images, but after a while it all started to come back to me. Bits and pieces, like, long ago, standing at a blackboard working on a math problem that had caught me unawares. Suddenly, the back of my shirt recoiled from a stiff whoosh of air that had been displaced by a yardstick, swung vengefully about a foot behind me.

The element that dominates my memories is fear. Physical violence was often occurring, and even in moments of relative calm, there was always the threat, hardly veiled, and waiting. The sounds of slapping or swatting would rifle through the rows, then begin to reverberate into lingering echoes. You could feel a tension, a fury dressed in stiff black and white conveying joyless vibes throughout the room.

I can remember, as a small child, laying in bed at night saying my prayers. And the thing I most wanted to ask of God was for him to kill Sister Patricia. More than once I attempted to couch the request among less sinister obtestations.

"Dear God, how are you? Please bless mommy. And daddy and my brothers and sisters and grandparents and aunts and uncles, and our dog, Snoopy. And God? Please let me do well in school: It's very difficult, because our teacher, who is a nun, is a very harsh person and hits children for any reason. She's very old, you see, and I think perhaps she is quite sick. I'm not sure, but I think she would very much like to see you, in heaven, and since she is very old, and sick..."

There was one nun who, when annoyed, would just fling this 8 lb. bookend into the class' midst. And the strike would come so abruptly and with such vigor that one or two girls would, without fail, actually pee themselves in terror. And later, as the Good Sister's ire would cool, she would trace the sound of uncomfortable sloshing to its source and send the girl or girls to the lavatory to "clean up".

But it wasn't all malevolent. Some of it (perhaps most of it) seemed directly attributable to dementia praecox. There was one sister so far into dotage that she had become molded into a sitting position and managed to get from room to room thanks only to a group of faithful bearers and brown-noses. They would gather around and lift her up and then hustle her to wherever she was going. During a religion class once, however, she pushed her luck and reached too far for something, causing her to topple from her seat. And there she lay on the floor, fetal position, still saying things like, "It's all right, children, go ahead reading. And stop talking there, Gregory!" Ultimately, however, she grew too stiff to teach and was retired to the convent for keeps where, perhaps, she was mounted on skis and converted into a penguin-colored rocking chair.

August 6, 1971

My friend George dropped by today. George is an old friend and trip-mate with whom I used to have the most far-out philosophical raps imaginable. He's an engineer working for the telephone company, mapping out the routes for lines and cables and things, and a very interesting cat.

Lately, it seems, he's been manufacturing slugs that fit into subway turnstiles. He also told me about one of the company supervisors he's starting to hang out with -- a witty Britisher, former RAF pilot and officer. This guy started showing him all sorts of souvenirs, like memos he used to get from the British High Command when he was stationed in Kenya. Things like: "The shooting of natives from the veranda will stop forthwith..."

August 10, 1971

While upstairs to pick up my supper tonight, I chanced to spot a new batch of comics in the living room and investigated. There were the usual spate of DC Superman derivatives and a FANTASTIC FOUR and--what's this? Well, well! The cover of EVERYTHING'S ARCHIE #16, the October issue, shows the carrot-topped protagonist along with Reggie and Jughead at the Draft Board of all places, while the red type screams: ARCHIE DRAFTED!!! Be sure to read "A Summer Prayer For Peace."

Well, needless to say, I did. The story opens with the threesome having just been inducted and told to report back Monday for processing. As they step out onto the sidewalk, they quip about army food and suchlike, until they run into "Clyde" who is Riverdale's local hippie element. He is knocked out when he hears about it, especially since "The Archies" are scheduled to play at a peace rally that Sunday.

"Do you cats want to go?" he asks.

"Of course we don't want to go," Archie says, making perhaps the first logical statement in his life. "Who in his right mind would want to go and maybe be killed?"

Clyde then suggests that they protest the action, and the Archie crew does an about-face. Archie, still maintaining the world's most vacant gaze, begins lecturing Clyde on the values of patriotism, or something like that.

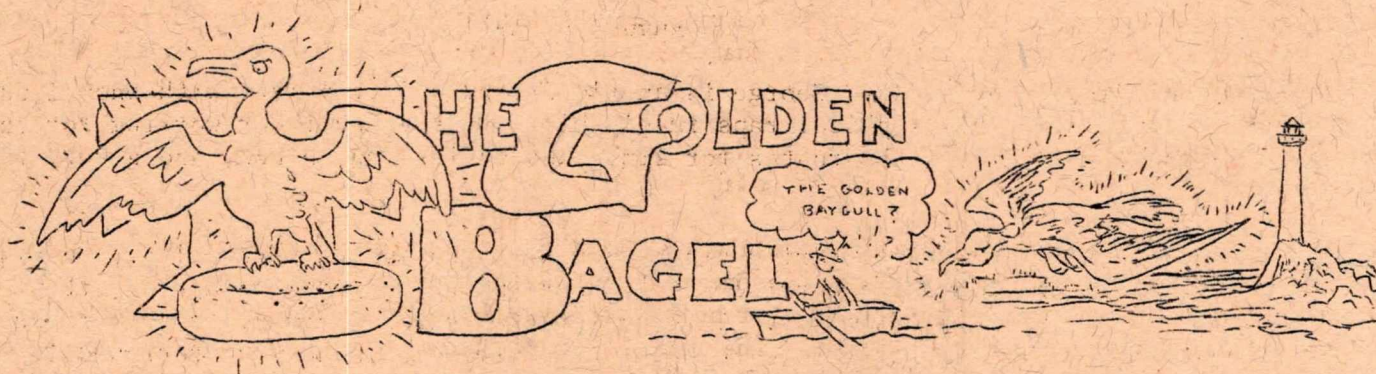
"It just so happens," he says, speaking of the politicians, "that we, the people, elected them and gave them the power! Next time we won't!"

Yes, you see the Archies are as opposed to Viet Nam as anyone; they even once refer to it as a "senseless war". But refusing to serve? That, says Archie, would be copping out. *Oh well* One thing you gotta say about that kid, he's true to form. The story itself, it turns out, is a cop-out: "Remember this," the editors console us at the end, "The Archies are still a year away from being drafted, but this is the way it would have happened; this is not really the end, but a means to an end!" The End.

Huh?

Archie comics have always been the most notoriously offensive comics around, from as far back as I can remember. They still place kids in the half-wit mold that they were baked in thirty years ago, with characters like "Dilton Doily" representing the writers' attitude toward intelligence as a useless, non-functional thing that only makes people absent-minded.

Continued on Page 10



-- ARNIE KATZ

There are, of course, many qualities which go to make a trufan, but I've always thought one of the most important was a Sense of History. Virtually every great fan displays an interest in fanhistory, and I think it is no accident that the most dedicated fanhistorians like Terry Carr, Ted White, Harry Warner, and Walt Willis, have been among our greatest fans.

I suppose it's possible to call oneself a fan and yet have no knowledge of the history, traditions, ethics, and mores that make fandom what it is, but I think it would be pretty damn difficult. One sees "fans" like this at any con, but they aren't even near the mainstream of fanzine or convention fandoms, just ignorant hangers-on. It's hard for me to imagine someone with a real interest in fandom who would be so incurious as to willingly remain ignorant of what has gone before.

I've often found myself using the presence or absence of a Sense of History as a rough index of whether I should do anything to help a particular neofan along. Generally, those neos who show an interest in "roots" are the ones who subsequently become fannish stalwarts. A good knowledge of fanhistory and tradition gives one a perspective on current fandom, and I've never known a fan who was worse off for having thumbed the pages of old HYPHENS or QUANDRYs.

I can't remember this fannish litmus test having failed. I give or loan a few old fanzines to a neofan and watch his reaction. If he doesn't immediately assume that anything he can't understand instantly isn't worth knowing and asks for more old zines, I've found he generally bears watching.

I've been pleased to see fandom again showing an interest in fannish customs, after about six years of not caring very much. Now things have swung in the other direction, and fans are searching out their hobby's past. Why else would Creative Fanachronists all over the country be out there Pickling Bloch for Posterity, sending letters to Sarge Saturn and bricks to Tucker? I expect to see at least one Fanachronist at the Noreascon mouth his cigar like a long-lost friend, and I have it from reliable sources that Gregory A. Benford, Ph.D. has been practicing saying, "You Bastard," in a very Al Ashley-like manner as his contribution to the fanachronism movement.

During the lapse in interest in tradition, it wasn't very rewarding to write about newly emergant fan folkways. As a result, there are who-knows-how-many customs which have gone unrecorded in the fannish prints.

One of the glorious new customs which developed in the last few years is the Michael J. McInerney Memorial Pipe. This veritable cornerstone of fandom is almost legendary among East Coast fans, yet it has never until now been written up for the fanmags. In truth,

the silence was due as much to a desire to protect Mike's privacy as anything, but a recent check with Mike McI Himself established that he had no objection to the custom being explained in print, soooo.....

When Mike announced that he was quitting New York for San Francisco, it was a foregone conclusion that his friends would throw a going-away party.

At the party, Mike indelibly impressed all with his generosity and soliciousness in keeping his favorite pipe full of vaporous refreshment for those who were wont to partake. He filled and refilled it, that none should lack for herbal euphoria. On and on the evening wore, and 'round and 'round the pipe was passed. The fire was not banked until the sun of the next day was climbing into the sky.

As fans floated down the street toward the subway, they vowed they would remember the occasion if they ever came down.

So it was that at the next important fan celebration, the pipe was sent 'round and 'round as it had been at the McInerney bash.

"Boy, wouldn't Mike love to be here," said one of the attendees, as he passed the pipe along for the hundredth time.

"Yes," another replied. "But he's here in spirit, you know."

"How so?"

"Why, he's here in spirit because this is the Michael J. McInerney Memorial Pipe."

And that's what it's been called on every similar occasion since.

One of the most unusual fannish traditions is that every time Steve Stiles enters a room, people clap.

"How did it start," Jerry Kaufman asked me at a recent Fanoclast meeting, after a thunderous round of applause had greeted Steve's entrance into the apartment as he came home from work.

"Originally they clapped for Bhob Stewart," I explained.

"Why was that?"

"Well, Bhob was a great comedian, and as he entered the doorway, he would usually do some inimitable Bhob Stewart shtick. He could put his foot behind his head, you know." Jerry nodded, impressed.

"Then Steve moved in with Bhob, and Bhob kind of stopped coming to meetings. So we applauded for Steve. After awhile Steve was drafted."

"And did you stop clapping?" Jerry asked.

"No, by that time, clapping for people was part of the Fanoclast mystique. So we started to clap for John Benson. Not only did he once room with Steve Stiles, but he could put his foot behind his head even better than Bhob. He could do it standing up, hopping around on his other foot like a hysterical crane."

"Well, that makes sense," Jerry said.

"We were very pleased at the time, since it tied up a lot of loose ends."

"But now you clap for Steve again."

"Oh, yes, when Steve came back, we naturally resumed clapping for him. John was just keeping clapping alive until Steve could come home from trained killer school."

Joyce, who had been listening quietly all this time, looked up. "And what happened to John Benson?"

"Well, we couldn't clap for two people; that would have been overdoing it. So we stopped clapping for John." I hadn't thought of the old days of the Fanoclats for awhile, and my mind drifted off to dwell upon them. "You know, John stopped coming to meetings after awhile."

"Poor John Benson," Joyce said. "All of a sudden, people stopped clapping for him. He must have felt very strange."

Not as strange as Mike McInerney is going to feel the next time he's at a big East Coast celebration, though. I happen to know he's given up his pipe in favor of joints.....

-- Arnie Katz

DEAD FLOWERS, continued...

It's also ironic that Archie has always featured the most subliminal use of sex, while its editor and publishers have consistantly been the greatest impediment in a loosening of the comics code restrictions.

But the great thing about this particular story is the obvious: the Archies will always be a year away from draft age! Does Superman ever intend to collect Social Security? Will Little Orphan Annie ever menstruate? Of course not! What would happen to the Archie Comics Machine if the Boys all started sporting Army crew-cuts and khakis? I admit it would give the writers more opportunities to show Betty & Veronica locker pin-ups, but over all, it's just out of the question.

So, I say to myself while closing out this page in the diary, no wonder the Archies got such big patriotic mouths. They stand about as much of a chance of getting drafted as Trisha Nixon.

--Bill Kunkel



Probably the strangest figure in fandom's history was Claude Degler, a fan of the early and mid-40s who, through his great energy and equally great paranoia, became the living embodiment of just about everything wrong with sf fandom. An integral part of paranoia is megalomania, and it was Degler who broadcast throughout fandom the slogan "Fans are Slans" and regularly wrote about science fiction fans as a super-race, "Cosmen," harbingers of the next evolutionary step of mankind. He formed the Cosmic Circle with this attitude as its basis, and traveled back and forth from coast to coast (hitchhiking) to recruit members for his fanclub; anyone who was willing to be called a member of this club shortly found himself listed as something like "Director, Nebraska Cosmen United." Most of the Cosmic Circle's members were simply sf readers who knew nothing of fandom as a whole, many were actually made up by Degler, and others were well-known fans whose names were used without their permission, as was the case with Larry Shaw. Degler published a remarkable quantity of sloppy and illiterate fanzines as club organs, though the COSMIC CIRCLE COMMENTATOR was his main publication.

The fact that Degler was tolerated and listened to by as many fans as he was seems incredible today. Very few active fans gave him their support, but for a year or two Degler was treated carefully as an equal by most of fandom. He was at this time around 20 years old, and people who met him in person described him as absolutely filthy, a kid who never washed. Laney, who slept in the guest room of George Ebey's house a couple of nights after Degler had visited, described with horror the amount of dirt deposited on the sheets before they were changed; Walter J. Daugherty once conceded that he could tell that Degler washed his face sometimes, because he could see the line on his neck where the washing had stopped. People visited by Degler usually found important collector's items missing from their bookshelves after he'd passed on. Yet with all this behind him on his first trip to the west coast, Degler was welcomed into the LASFS as a fellow fan who needed as credentials only his ability to comment on what was in the last issue of Astounding. To understand this (and it's hard anyway) you have to bear in mind that in the early 40s Hitler's ideas of a 'super-race' of Aryans were taken more seriously than sanity required even in this country while it was at war with Hitler; also, science fiction was still considered juvenilia by most people, so fans of science fiction had to weather constant slurs ("You mean you read that crazy Buck Rogers stuff?" was the most frequent line) and as a result they felt an extremely strong kinship with anybody and everybody else who liked science fiction. But Degler changed all that; by the time he'd finished his raids on other people's collections, his patently insane tirades in print, his publication of fanzines listing people named Frank N. Stein and such as Cosmic Circle officers, the reaction came. Jack Speer visited Degler's hometown in Indiana and published INVESTIGATION IN NEWCASTLE after interviewing people who knew Degler there: Degler had been in and out of insane asylums for pyromania and statutory rape. Before long Degler was thrown out of LASFS and FAPA, and he disappeared from fandom not long after.

...Except that he came back in 1949, under the name John Chrisman. He published WEIRD UNSOLVED MYSTERIES in August 1949, a fanzine devoted to articles about flying saucers (More About the LOS ANGELES FLYING YOYO HOAX; RAYMOND A. PALMER, EDITOR, AMAZING STORIES, (concluded after Degler article)



THE 1 st. BOOKS EVER PUBLISHED ABOUT "FANS & FANDOM"!!!
 THESE BOOKS ARE SCHEDULED FOR PUBLICATION THIS WINTER OR
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ALL WILL BE SENT RECEIPTS.

1. I ESCAPED FROM HELL ! by C.WILLIAMSON DEGLER. The Incredible, True Story of an actual "escape" from Horrors of an Asylum for the Insane, and finally from a Southwestern Prison-and then FREEDOM and "amnesty". Like Octave Mirbeau in Torture Garden, who says "All the World's a Torture Garden!", and like Charles Fort who said "I Think we're Property!", and like Richard S. Shaver who says "we are the deros, abandoned when our ancestors evacuated the planet in forgotten ages--the degenerated mad-ones!", Mr. Degler says, "All the World's an INSANE ASYLUM and WE are the INMATES. This is a Prison Planet--a World of the Damned !"this book contains more mention of, and about things Fantasy and Fantastic, than many "fantasy" books although it is all true. Has more about "Fans" and "Fandom", mention of "Science fiction" and "fantasy" ideas than Anthony Boucher's "Rocket to the Morgue" ! By all means, and above all other books, NO "FAN" OR PERSON INTERESTED IN FANTASY, CAN POSSIBLY AFFORD TO MISS THIS !!! By FUTURIAN HOUSE press. AFTER PUBLICATION, 4.50 or 5.00-NOW \$3.00

2. I ESCAPED FROM THE LIVING DEAD ! by C.WILLIAMSON DEGLER. This second "escape" volume , is entirely different and concerns entirely separate incidents than the above, by the same author. In no way does it duplicate material in the former. It tells an even more Incredible true account of a desperate Escape from a "Concentration Camp for the Insane", and the Unbelievable Horrors that were common-place there; like anything in a Japanese or German Concentration Camp ! The Fantastic "Underground" or "5 th. Column" inside the Insane Asylum, the Horrors of daily life there, the Naked ones on the cold stone floors in the "disciplinary" cells, Baths in Ice-water as punishments, 5 "madmen" who form a secret "escape-pact", blood and razor blades, over an icy roof, escape through the snow, naked, hiding under bridge while road is patrolled, the fantastic trek and escape across a continent----Hitler's picture on the Asylum wall in the Violent Ward---then, 12 Months Later, FREEDOM and return home! Contains many references to "fans and fandom" and S.F. and 'Fantasy'. (as does the above.) NO FAN OF FANTASY OR S.F. SHOULD BE WITHOUT THIS BOOK, although it is non-fiction and is

a true life-experience! These two books may just possibly become best-sellers, but even if they do not, they will in time become much-sought after collector's items, and will represent a Monument to C.Williamson Degler's Life-Work. These books, in this reviewers opinion, rank with Torture Garden; by Mirbeau; with Torture by Hope, by de L'Isle Adam ; or with the work of Edgar Allan Poe.. PRE-PUBLICATION PRICE IS ONLY.....\$3.00 (After publication, the price will be 4.50 or 5.00 as the above book---all money will be returned in the event the books are not published, and there is no need to hesitate about sending money for these books. There is no possibility of anyone's losing anything by sending for them now, and that is what we would strongly advise, as the after pub. price is going to be rather high, and YOU MAY SAVE YOURSELF ABOUT 40% BY SENDING FOR THEM NOW, AT THIS LOW PRE- PUBLICATION PRICE !!! NOTHING LIKE THESE BOOKS, ANYWHERE !

3. CULT OF THE COSMIC CIRCLE or An Attempt to Take Over the World (a detailed, illus., History of the COSMIC CIRCLE ORGANIZATION and the "5 th. Column" in Imaginative Literature & Science, and in so-called "fandom" !)---by C.WILLIAMSON DEGLER. What went on behind the Scenes in the Most talked-about, most Notorious "Science & Literature"; Fan club organization' of all time. The FAMOUS or IN-FAMOUS "COSMIC CIRCLE" ! Intimate revelations by the "revelers" themselves. Helen & Martha Bradleigh, Don Rogers, Frank Stein, Raym Washington, Marlow, Morris Jenkinson, etc. No, this is not a "Kinsey Report", but it should've been titled "SEX HABITS OF THE AMERICAN SCIENCEFICTION FAN". WHAT WENT ON AT THE THIRD MICHICON ? IN L.A ? IN FLORIDA ? MR. DEGLER WAS WARNED NOT TO WRITE THIS BOOK by some rather well-known "Science-fiction-ists" . But here in his book, the Book all of you hoped would be published but didn't expect to ever see, Degler tells all! No punches are pulled. Better titled, "SEX LIFE OF THE AMERICAN SCIENCE-FICTION FAN" THIS BOOK IS A CORKER-NO FAN SHOULD MISS, BY ALL MEANS ! PRE-PUBLICATION PRICE..\$1.50 (2.50 after.)

FUTURIAN BOOK SERVICE IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE A NEW FANTASY PUBLISHING OUTFIT ; FUTURIAN HOUSE ! Send mail or remittances to 17 West 32 nd.st., New York .

Our FIRST BOOK will, so far as we know at this writing, be GIRL OR MONSTER and Others (the Collected Works of C.Williamson Degler.) Possibly titled, 'Maid or Monster' . This book will probably be published before the 3rd other sheet . So there are to be four Degler books, and this should probably have been number 1 . But because it is not connected with the others, and because we wanted to announce it here, in our regular book list, it wasn't included . We will accept orders for this book after Sept. 1, 1949. Remittance must accompany order, to take advantage of the low PRE-PUBLICATION PRICE ! If for any reason, this book were not to be published, all monies would be returned. WE send a receipt to all persons sending advance Orders. SEND YOURS IN --NOW !!! After publication, this book will retail for \$3.50. Pre-Publication Price is Only \$2.00 ! LOOK WHAT YOU SAVE ! DEALERS, HERE'S YOUR CHANCE, TOO !!!

The book contains the title story, (above); and GOLDMINE IN THE SKY, a poignant and heart-touching little drama of the Asteroid Ceres, it's fields of 'Golden Melons' and of Lela, the Golden girl whose hair (and heart)shamed all the golden glories of Ceres, and even of old Sol himself in the glow of an Earth sunset ! Also, DORA'S DECISION(a Strange & Beautiful tale of the Martian Canali ,and Dora's Momentous Decision on the planet of ancient canals & whispering red deserts !) LOOTER'S OF THE STAR-DUST TRAIL, WEIRD & Horrible Fate that befell the Estrella (bird creatures) and the Cosmic Vengeance that caught up with the Invading Octopi from Rho Ophiuchi ! MAGNIFICENT DECISION, heroes decide to die on the bottom of an Un-named ocean on Venus rather than betray their presence to the enemy; THE THINKING BONNET(first called Brain By Radio Tubes), the haunting, unforgettable weird tale of a scientist who went to Arizona for his health and of his incredible experiments and weird doom that befell him there in the Great Gila Desert ! The THING FROM

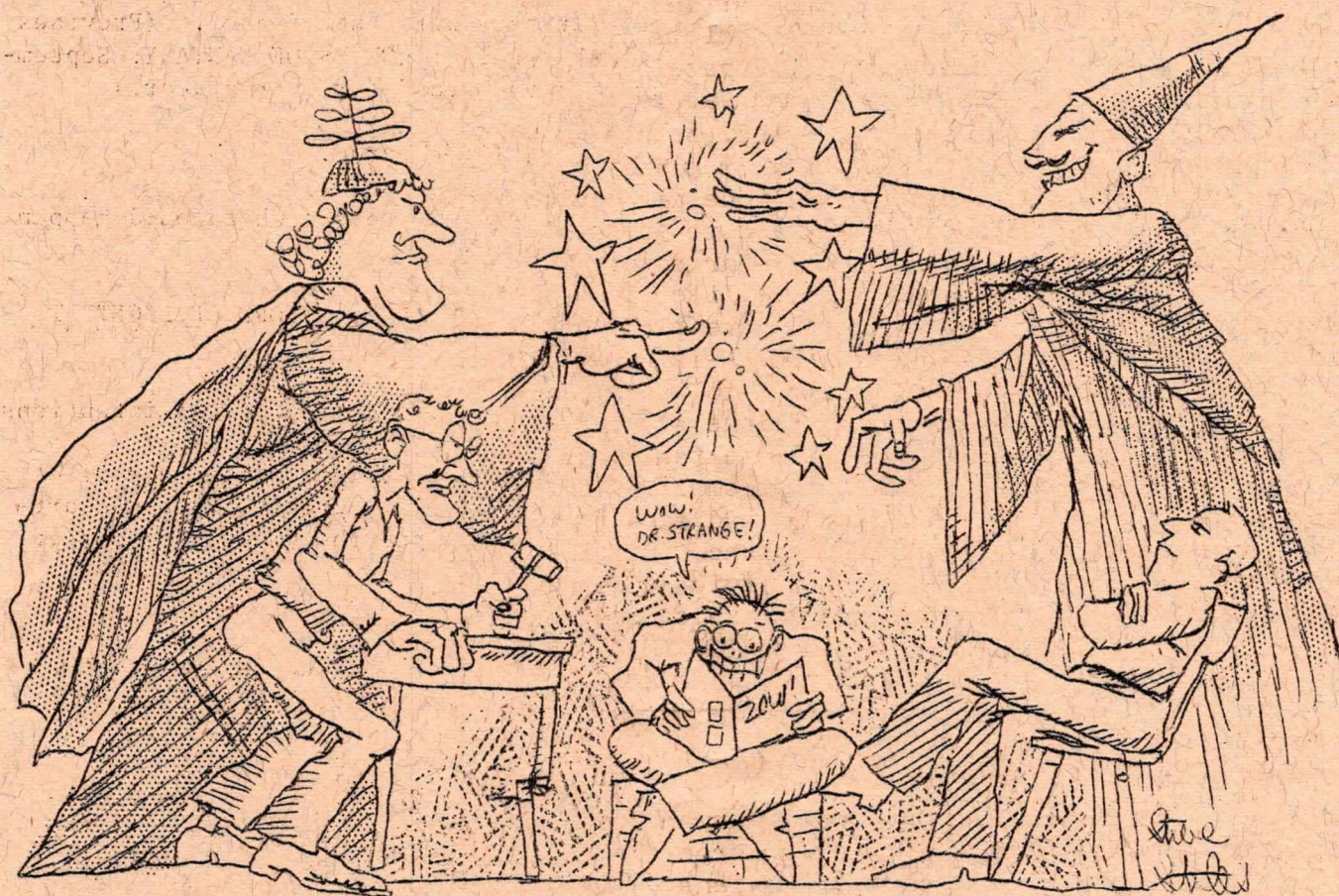
SIGMA OCTANIS , monstrous Traffic with unspeakable beings of the star Sigma Octanis , and of the Hieroglyphs of Lost Atlantis ! WHISPER IN OBLIVION, haunting tale of a last whispered message from out of the Depths of Infinite smallness, from an electron world circling an atom-- that was lost in the Cyclotron that was going to Smash it ! BEYOND WHICH SPACE & TIME --? Scientists like Einstein think our universe is a bubble, curved, round- just as men once learned the earth was round. But then --men discovered other worlds ! Surely, there must be other round, bubble universes or 'space-times' than the one of Dr. Einstein, just as there are other planet worlds. Men once were stupid enough to believe our little earth was the only one and center of Everything ! Also, there is no SIZE- it is completely Relative ! Relative to the size of a human being & our tools, to we who ask the question! A thing is only Larger or Smaller than US- in infinity one group of things is made up out of others, like electrons are made of photons or quanta & neutrinos, these make up atoms, which make planets, and they Systems, and galaxies, and galaxies make up the Curved Universe. Now --is not this too, only an atom or building block in a Super-Universe, and on and on --to where? And are not electrons & neutrinos and photons themselves made up out of things still Smaller--they would have to be-- else they are "mystic" or "supernatural ultimate particles", because any natural thing has to be made out of something, other things smaller! THIS IS A REAL SHOCKER --Recommended reading --even for Dr. Einstein ! Then in addition to all the above stories, the book contains some others, and features & a science article, "KRAKATOA", all about the famous volcano that blew itself out of the sea --with a force several times that of an Atomic Bomb, and was the World's Most Tremendous Explosion ! 4 poems; WHERE PRIMAL SECRETS FROWN ; SHADES OF SEBEK ; THE OUTCAST ; & SAND GRAINS IN BLOOD VEINS.

(Introduction by Terry Carr, concluded:)

SPEAKS) and to advertisements from the Futurian Book Service, "In the Shadow of the Empire State Building," which listed for sale a large quantity of fantasy books that were probably the loot of Degler's visits to other fans. The ads were printed on the wraparound front-and-back-cover which was printed by photo-offset rather than the mimeography of the fanzine's interior. Chrisman/Degler used the offset process to reproduce four full pages of typewritten matter (ads) on each page, which made for awfully tiny print. (Chrisman/-Degler advertised a "FREE MAGNIFIER WITH EACH \$10.00 ORDER.") I received the fanzine shortly after my first letter was printed in some prozine of the time, but being only 12 years old then, and just beginning to enter fandom, I missed the significance of several ads printed inside the front cover in that microscopic type. Being also a completist in anything connected with sf at the time, I routinely filed WEIRD UNSOLVED MYSTERIES with the very few other fanzines I'd received.

Years later Dave Rike was browsing through my fanzine collection on a visit, and he came across the "Chrisman" fanzine. "Hey, that was the name Degler used when he attended the Philcon in 1949!" Dave exclaimed, and he read the fanzine attentively. It was he who discovered the ads that Degler had written for four putative books he was going to write and publish as soon as enough advance orders came in.

It's those ads that I reprint here. They're strange and freaky and mind-bending in their own right, and you can read them just for that, but as shards of fanhistory they're absolutely fascinating. The personality of Degler still comes through loud and clear: megalomania, con-man tactics and all. (Why would anyone stress so frequently that his operation was honest and that "All will be sent receipts" unless he was afraid of being accused of dishonesty beforehand?) I've stenciled the ads with all of Degler's own spellings, punctuations, grammar and general illiteracy, to preserve the true flavor. I'm amused by Degler's attitude toward his own reputation and that of the Cosmic Circle, and his use of the pretentious byline "C. Williamson Degler." What a peculiar, sick man he was; I hope his life since he left fandom for good has improved.



ALTONATE REALITY

RICK STOOKER

During the first year or so that I was in fandom, I considered myself the only fan in booming Alton, Ill., with all of its fifteen thousand people. Oh, there's OSFA across the river in St. Louis, but in Alton proper--just little ole me.

All that's changed, however.

About a week ago I made my weekly trip to Slocum's, the local newstand. As always, ever since reading Ted White's editorials, the first thing I did was pull out the sf prozines and display them prominently in front of the innumerable crossword puzzle books. Afterwards I moved down to the new run of paperbacks.

Suddenly I was shocked to see a short little guy with glasses looking over the rack. Before I could stamp my feet and repeat "Yngvi is a louse," ten times, he actually picked up a copy of AMAZING.

It was the first hard evidence I've had that my efforts had not gone unrewarded. Copies of the prozines had been disappearing, but I couldn't be sure if they were being bought or if I was just attracting the owner's notice to the fact that they were out of date. (Previous to the advent of my weekly campaign, a copy of the first issue of WORLDS OF FANTASY, September, 1969, stayed, buried underneath the mystery mags, on the stand for over a year.)

Perhaps it's just idle curiosity, I thought. This can't really be true.

My heart pounding like an amphetamine mimeograph, I waited tensely to see what would happen next.

When he continued to clutch AMAZING in his hand and pounced on Zelazny's LORD OF LIGHT, I knew I had my man.

"Hello," I said affably, waving my own copy of AMAZING so he wouldn't misjudge my intentions.

Then I stopped cold. What should I say to him? How do you go about introducing a perfect stranger to fandom? How do you impress him with your sophistication, great wit, and heart-warming friendliness so that he is attracted to fandom and gets into the right mood for it?

"Great zooming Saturn," I cried. "Let's start a science fiction fan club."

His reaction was startling even to such a jaded connoisseur of the strange as myself. He got down on his knees and, waving his arms passionately, cried with religious fervor, "I've found a person. Somebody who likes sf!"

Needless to say, all of this did not go unnoticed by the other patrons. The horny truck-drivers in the porno section sneered; the horny housewives by the confessions gave us sad, pitying looks; and the little kids buying bubblegum laughed and spit on us.

But hope was just around the corner. The corner of the comics rack to be exact.

A tall, lean man nearby looked at us, put down the copy of THOR he was thumbing through, and walked over saying, "Goshwowohboyohboy!"

Thus, our third member arrived.

We introduced ourselves; the guy I'd seen at the prozines turned out to be Mark Sewall, and the other is Stanley Forbush, who doesn't really like sf much; but he loves Marvel comics so Mark and I decided he'd qualify at least until we grow large enough to support a separate comics branch.

They'd never heard of fandom before but after I explained it to them a little bit, we formed the Alton Science Fiction Association (ASFA) and agreed to hold our first meeting at my house the next Saturday afternoon.

That Saturday, I was awakened by the doorbell at the unholy hour of 12:30. Screaming vile imprecations at the transgressors, I crawled out of bed and savagely pulled the door open.

There, beaming merrily, were Mark and Stanley.

"Oh, Hell," I groaned. "I said Saturday afternoon, not early in the morning."

"Well," Mark explained. "You see, technically, this is in the afternoon."

I shrugged my shoulders. It turned out to be a perfect opening for the day, but I didn't know that then and merely said, "Forget it. Come on in."

While I pulled on a pair of cut-off bluejeans, gobbled down a bowl of cereal, and collected my mail, they busied themselves looking over my collection.

"Do you have any comics?" Stanley asked.

"Yall, over in the closet is a complete run of FANTASTIC FOUR from #20 on."

"Gee whillikers. I don't have that many." He sat in the corner and became completely absorbed in them as fast as a greased laserbeam.

"What are these things?" Mark said, pointing at my box of fanzines.

I explained and let him examine the two I'd just pulled out of the mailbox.

Mark read both from cover to cover, in his words was "never so disgusted in all my life", and vowed never to touch one again. Fanzine fandom, unlike ASFA, is safe if an ancient power decides to once again--but I'm getting ahead of myself.

Stanley, on the other hand, wouldn't be a bad addition to general fandom, but he can't read anything that's not graphically illustrated, let alone write.

"Well, what do we do now?" I called the meeting to order.

"Let's elect a president."

"Good idea. Nominations?"

Mark squirmed uncomfortably. "Since you're the only one who knows what this fandom thing is, you'd better be president for now."

"Any more?"

Stanley continued to read FF 20. His only comments were, "Supergollygee. This is pretty good. I wonder how they defeat the Molecule Man."

"This, my friends, is indeed a great honor and surprise," I said as I pulled out the gavel I'd bought the day before.

"Bang!" I pounded it. "Next point of business."

"You tell us," Mark said. "You're supposed to know."



"What do fan clubs usually do?"

"Well, sometimes they publish fanzines. --But they don't have to," I added quickly when he scowled. "And we're too small to host a con."

I've read ALL OUR YESTERDAYS and two clubs stood out distinctly in my mind from that. After thrashing through my memory and digging up everything I'd ever heard of fans, I related everything I could remember of LASFS and the New York Futurians. I also added an account of the fictional club meeting Barry Malzberg described in DWELLERS OF THE DEEP and a few items culled from Archie Mercer's MEADOWS OF FANTASY.

"Then, as I understand it," he said, "fans are supposed to do crazy things."

"Definitely. Fans pride themselves on the crazy things they do."

"Good. We can burn the house down." With that he lighted a match and flicked it at my stack of Arkham House books.

"Hey!" I cried, fortunately catching the match in my hand before it could land. "Those are collectors items."

It wasn't until the match had been in my hand five seconds that I noticed it was still burning. With a soft, ear-piercing shriek, I flipped into the wastebasket.

"But it was crazy," he protested.

"Try again."

"Then lets take over St. Louis and hijack it to Cuba."

"Crazy, but slightly impractical."

Then I noticed a grey cloud covering his face as if some fiendish black magic, given a foothold by his rebellious mood, was being worked. In my almost disasterous blindness I passed it off as an early-in-the-morning haze type of illusion.

"You're a crummy president. You won't let me do anything fannish. I quit. I secede. I'm starting the Alton Futurian Society."

"Argh!" I cried, wondering what kind of monster I had let loose in fandom. "You can't quit. This is ridiculous."

"Precisely. I'm just exercising the great American fannish right to feud."

"But there's only three of us."

"Two now."

He was being incorrigible. Argument was useless. It was time to Use Force. As dignified as the Pope, I put down my gavel and stood up as tall as possible, my bearing imposingly erect, my spine like a petrified dildo. A hushed silence fell on the room. Even Stanley put down his comic and watched.

With a wave of my arm I stripped myself of the surrounding illusion and stood revealed in

all my glory as Stook the White, Grand Whizard of Pboth. My long alabaster robes glowed like a radium Mickey Mouse watch and a propellor beanie covered my shock of curly hair. I gripped my staff imperiously.

Stanley looked suitably impressed before returning to the Fantastic Four, but Mark laughed evilly.

"I see it is now my time to strip off my disguise," he said, twisting the mustache he'd suddenly grown. He was dressed all in black, with a Bicpen-black peaked hat on his pointed head.

"Now you know," he sneered. "I am the Black Sorceror of Nonfandom. I am the one who gafiates fen, who snafus the distribution of AMAZING so young sf readers will never learn about fandom. I am the spirit of all those who read sf but hate fanzines. I am the new-stand browser who doesn't know Heinlein from Delany. And now, after I've taken care of you, I'll infiltrate the very heart of fandom itself. You are doomed."

"You cad!" I said. "By the spirit of 'South Gate in '58' I banish you to secondhand bookstore limbo."

"The book sales of Robert Moore Williams to you," he countered, and the battle was on.

I chanted: "200 issues of YANDRO:
 Fuggheaded J.J. Pierce.
 Now go,
 Before the contest gets fierce."

(I will admit here I barely passed POETRY AND SPELL WRITING at Whizard U.)

"May a pile of every ANALOG sold in a month fall on your head...May your mailbox contain only bills and advertising."

The room filled and danced with coruscating lights flashing back and forth between us like rippling, high-tide waves in a Kaleidoscopic sea. Stanley glanced up long enough to say, "Wowiegee. This is like Dr. Strange."

I continued with my enchantments: "LASFS, FAPA, TAFF, and a BoSh pun;
 Bill Rotsler cartoon fun.
 By the locs of Harry Warner,
 Begone, you mangy cur!"

He fell to his knees, agony twisting his face. I countered his every spell. I could feel triumph, like a frosty cream soda, in my grasp. I was about to finish with one last spell when he uttered the most devastating one yet: "By Norman Spinrad and 'FLAWOL', may you be cursed to read nothing but E.E.Smith reprints."

I reeled back against the wall, feeling crushed, as if I'd been hit with a boxed set of the collected works of Edgar Rice Burroughs.

He stood over me with a wicked grin and kicked my face. "Escapist pig. You'll never menace little children with staples and mimeograph ink again."

I moaned. Outside, I could hear the raging storm called up by our incantations of power. Underneath me, the floor vibrated as the earth rumbled angrily.

I had one more spell, but it was so devastating, so frightening in its scope, that I hesitated. Did I dare do it? I certainly didn't want the responsibility for the consequences.

"You are my first victim. Now I can go on to infiltrate and destroy the rest of fandom. You, of course, will never be heard from again. Other fans, in the little time they have left, will think you quietly and completely gaffiated. After I take care of you now, I'll go. Remember, Fandom Is A Goddamned Escape From Reality."

I didn't have any more time to deliberate. It had to be then! Quivering, and sweating the Mississippi River, I uttered the ultimate fannish oath. My mouth twisted as the words of Infinite Power worked themselves out: "Fabulous Fannish Four, I call upon thee. Walt Willis, Bob Tucker, Bob Bloch, and Charles Burbee, help!" Then, utterly drained, I sank to the floor in a stupor.

Lightning flashed and thunder crashed. The sky reverberated with the sound of ten million typewriters pounding. The ground shook as if the Earth were strapped in an exercising belt vibrating at full speed. A falling brick hit Mark on his thick skull and, apparently dead or unconscious, he collapsed. We were in the middle of an avalanche of bricks, plaster, and sf pbs as the house fell down around our ears.

I ran out, pulling Stanley along with me. In his hand he clutched a copy of FANTASTIC FOUR 22 and said, "Boyohboy, I bet the Moleman is up to his tricks again." We had just made it outside when something conked me on the head too and I dropped, unconscious, to the grass.

When I awoke, everything was quiet again and Stanley sat nearby, engrossed--yes, you guessed it--in a comic. I sat up. With the crushing of my propellor beanie, I had once again reverted to the mundane illusion of my cut-offs.

I looked around and saw my house in shambles. The wind blew hither and yon crumpled mimeo sheets, gaudy pulp covers, and innumerable paperbacks from my collection. I didn't cry long. What magic can do, magic can undo:

"BNFs, Hugos, what's all the fuss?
Tho rough and wild are fannish ways,
Make everything as it was,
ALL OUR YESTERDAYS."

Presto! Abracadabra! And things were back in order. Stanley and I went back inside and there we found Mark lying unconscious on the floor of my bedroom. He wasn't the Black Sorcerer; the fiend, having used Mark's body for his own foul purposes, had lost his hold. We called to him, and threw buckets of icewater on him; and in practically no time at all he woke up.

Gazing up at us with a confused look on his face and gently probing the welt atop his head, Mark said, "What the hell happened? I can't remember anything after you said, 'Crazy but slightly impractical.'"

I answered, "You started backing up, slipped, and hit your head on the corner of the desk." He seemed to accept this explanation even though he wasn't lying anywhere near my desk, but I wasn't about to tell him the truth. He went home then, to put ice on his head. Stanley stayed long enough to finish going through my collection.

And so the first meeting of the Alton Science Fiction Association came to an end.

Counting Coups



DAVID HULVEY, Route 1, Box 198, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22801

...I've never lived in a city for any length of time. I was a very innocent rural hick for the first 7 or 8 years of my life. I delighted in helping mom and dad at their chores--to their dismay, and grudging affection. One summer, many years ago, I made it my personal project to eradicate all the weeds on our 2.2 acres (this was the home proper, not the farm two miles away). I'd never seen a TV or a telephone that summer when I was 5 years old. I hadn't even heard of a comic book, let alone SF. The family car was an aging prewar Buick (we later acquired a '50 Buick, then a '60 Buick, and I finally bought a '64 which has taken me to two faanish events. Needless to say, I like Buicks.) Our family radio was an old relic from the depression, as prized as it was useless. Dad refused to bend an ear over it. Mom listened to the News of the Outside World. I ignored it. Somehow I wasn't very curious about the World in General, just those 2.2 acres in particular.

My parents thought I was just being a Good Boy to clear off all that land covered with weeds (from 2 to 8 feet high--we had no lawn mower) and ramshackle buildings. But I knew better. I was looking for Hidden Treasure, 'cause mom read me stories from her cherished collection of books, some school texts from the Timber Ridge Elementary School; dig that name! Several stories concerned pirates and sunken gold shipments. She also read me stories about dinosaurs, and explained how Harrisonburg used to be under water many years ago. Unfortunately, she didn't make the difference between geological time and historical time quite clear to me. I knew the dinosaurs were no more, and that sunken treasure ships were gone. So, therefore, they both must've been around about the same time. Further, I assumed that our own property could hide the remains of a treasure ship or maybe even a dinosaur. So I struck out to find them.

It was very hot, that summer. I sweated through afternoons of weary disappointments. I didn't give up, not even after the snake scared me, the spiders bit me, the ants crawled all over me and the rain deluged me. The gold had to be there, I thought; it just had to. One day I found a quarter in the weeds. I accepted it as evidence that the gold would soon be found. It was just pocket change of one of the pirates, I guessed. It looked very old --I hadn't gotten into dates on coins yet.

But as July passed the chances of discovering dinosaur bones and treasure grew slim.

Then I fell in love with junk. Mom told me that the local junkman was the most wealthy man in the whole county--world to me. She said that people of Standing had reported that Joe Kimble carried thousand dollar bills in his pockets. I was taken to see his junk pile, and it was the greatest mass I'd ever seen in one place. I decided I didn't need gold, only junk.

By summers' end I had a respectable pile in the backyard. Soon I grew bold and journeyed to neighboring lands in my quest. I brought back all manner of broken and discarded equipment. Soon my passion for thousand dollar bills was replaced with simply admiring my junk. I was like the pitied SF collector that never reads the stories he collects.

Alas, this passion ended when dad, tired of the eyesore, had the pile removed for a fee. I was thunderstruck. Dad paid money to get rid of the junk. I wouldn't get all kind of bills now, and wouldn't even have my junk to look at. I was heartbroken.

Junk collector fandom was my first venture into a Commitment. Of course, my parents bought a new radio to ease the shock for me, but that only made me more sorry for myself.

I decided to mark down every number there was. I felt proud to have learned to count in my preschool days, so I wanted to Tell The World. I knew just how: I'd count every number there was. So I started with one--logical enough, I suppose, but at first I had thought to start at the other end to make the stunt doubly notable. Trouble was, I wasted a whole afternoon discovering larger and larger numbers without finding the biggest. When the numbers grew so large that they ran off my paper, I decided not to worry about beginning at the large end--that would be too hard, and paper was scarce.

I worked for several months, until I reached the unbelievable number of a million. I couldn't believe I'd actually gotten so far. I asked mom and dad to tell the papers about it, a kind of progress report for my journey into the realm of numbers. They declined, but did tell all my relatives, who had disgusting habits of fondling kids. I soon abandoned that project, after being sloppily kissed by an aunt. Yech, I thought, to be kissed by a girl--what a disgrace.

Roy Rogers joined the Christ Crusade, well so did I. I used to write it down on paper. On December 1, 1960, at 4:30 afternoon I Saved Myself. Yes, I did this several hundred times, because I just couldn't stop sinning. Finally, after the School Bullies found out I was a pacifist--"turn the other cheek"--I reformed and became militaristic. I fought back. I didn't consider it sin anymore, after all, one so True and Pure as I, surely God was on my side. When I finally met my match, well, that ended too.

JERRY KAUFMAN, 417 W. 118th, Apt. 63, New York, New York 10027

Jay's covers are getting farther and farther out each issue, and I am enjoying them more and more. This one is priceless..I get pictures in my mind of trying to build a jail for astral bodies. Like all comic book fiends, I sometimes stop to think about odd prisons, since in comic books some pretty weird dudes get sent to jails. If the Army ever caught the Hulk, what would they put him in? And why were the old-time comic book wardens so sure of keeping The Joker etc inside? They never did. And supposing Deadman were arrested? Which is a laugh and a half...

TERRY HUGHES, 407 College Ave., Columbia, Mo. 65201

My folks moved out onto a small farm during my junior year of highschool, dragging me with them. While I was on the homestead I basically did enjoy it, except for working in the hay fields! I'd have to go out in the fields on terribly hot days (it was always about 92 degrees or hotter) and toss several hundred bales of hay upon the bed of a hay truck. The

more hay I put on the truck, the higher I had to heave the next bale. Bales of hay are Heavy. And they are infested with jumping spiders, field mice, and snakes. Besides that, any bale, no matter how tightly packed, will shed little hay particles..so that when I would heave a bale up, it would shower me with these prickly things, filling up my shirt, pants, and lungs, and since it was hot and I was sweaty they'd stick to me. Then after getting a truck load, we'd go to the bam and put it up. This was even worse, because inside the barn it was even hotter, lacking even the slight breezes of the outside, and the air was super-saturated with hay and there was very little room to maneuver in. In the barns I also discovered the infamous hay spiders, which are only exceeded in size by tarantulas, but not by too much. Of course, I got to drag this hay out to the cattle in the winter time--the coldest day I had to do this on was a mere five degrees below zero. Ah! sweet memories!

We had indoor plumbing, so I haven't had very much experience with outhouses. But on the few times I used them while on a friend's farm I quickly learned that bad as they are year round, there are two times in the year when they are at the nadir of pleasure: 1) in 90+ degree heat, cause the smell is worst in such heat, and one has to hack his way through hordes of flies to reach the destination, and splinters seem most painful at this time of year; and 2) in the freezing cold, when one must make that mad dash from a warm house into the cold and, as you must know, wooden seats get really cold. Add to that the fact that I was told several times about how wild animals (especially snakes) tend to take refuge in such sheds in cold weather -- I gained a good knowledge of fear by going into a dark outhouse without a light in such weather.

Since I'm temporarily working in a hospital, I checked the magazines in the waiting rooms for something that might interest you. I couldn't find "The Country Gentleman", but I did find "The Missouri Ruralist", "Today's Farmer", and "Wallace's Farmer" as well as the two literary masterpieces "National Hog Farmer" and "Bull-o-gram"!!!!

Just call me the Kountry Kid.

SHAZAM! Even a column by Bob Tucker. I seem to be seeing more and more things by him in general fandom, so it looks like his dropping out of FAPA was a real blessing for those of us who aren't in FAPA.

RAY NELSON, 333 Ramona Ave., El Cerrito, Calif. 94530

Richard Geis asks "Whither fandom now?" As I see it, fandom will continue to expand, and will absorb many other fandoms, such as various kinds of creative anachronisms. The basic idea of creative anachronism is to mix things from one historical period with things from another period. Any historical period can be the basis of a fandom... not only the Middle Ages and the Victorian Era, but also the First Century AD, the French Revolution, etc. Science Fiction fandom would then be only one of many types of creative anachronism, a fandom of the future, and the future could be subdivided according to Donald Wollheim's classification system from "The Universe Makers" into 8 future ages..1) Exploration of the Solar System, 2) Exploration of the Galaxy; 3) Rise of the Galactic Empire; 4) The Galactic Empire in full bloom; 5) the Decline and Fall of the Galactic Empire; 6) the Interregnum; 7) the Rise of a Permanent Galactic Civilization; 8) the Challenge to God. (And perhaps 9) The End.) For each historical era, there will be a separate fandom. In addition, there will be further subdivisions along the lines of language...French and German language fandoms, for instance, already exist and are largely independent of English language fandom. The process of subdivision can continue forever, along these lines and along lines of interest (movies, comic books, pulps, folk-music, etc.) Fandom itself will grow and grow, like the famous chicken-heart monster of early radio, absorbing everything in its path, but each individual sub-fandom will be small, so that everyone knows everyone else in his own particular part of the Great Fandom. To provide unity in all this diversity, there will arise at least one great focal point fanzine, perhaps called simply "FAN". This fanzine, which will start as

an ordinary fanzine like any other genzine, will serve as a communication point between all the "other fandoms", and it will grow and grow, eventually becoming a prozine published in six or eight different languages... and the person who publishes it will make a fortune.

Plastic Model Fandom! Ancient Wargames Fandom! Old Time Radio Fandom! Why must all these remain separate microcosms, scarcely aware of each other's existence? The IWW had the right idea, but the time has come for One Big Union, not of the producers, but of the consumers... the Fans!

There would be a place in megafandom for Dick Geis's little 150-200 member APA, too, but not very close to the center of the picture... off in one corner somewhere, maybe. The idea that any group with only 150-200 members can claim to "be fandom" is just plain stupid.

::I would laugh at these paragraphs, and take them for a joke---and indeed the idea of all hobby groups unified together into a super-fandom is a funny one--except that I've just returned from the worldcon.....and, ghu help us, it's growing more and more as you describe, at least where the conventions are concerned,

RICHARD LABONTE, 64 Marlborough Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

In the days when my hair was growing up, my parents were armed forces folk protecting Canada from enemy invasion in Germany. Once a year, at Christmas, I flew over and was festive; but the initial contact, after a year's absence, was always strained by my mother's shock at my lock-lengths. One year I got a haircut Wednesday, en-planed Thursday late, arrived Friday early, kissed my mother on the mouth and heard her say, "We're going to get you to a barber-shop the moment we're back on base."

The last couple of times, the cry faded to demands for a trimming, as Jerry points out. But it must indeed be a conspiracy.

PETER ROBERTS, 87 West Town Lane, Bristol, BS4 5DZ, United Kingdom

I knew a fannish fnz was lurking in the post when I saw a folded back-cover - always the true test (despite SF Commentary's similar mailing style). The American faan zines are probably the last important group of fanzines I haven't yet received - mainly because they're a recent phenomena with, I think, rather insular mailing lists, deliberately restricted to known comrades. Since it's been some years since I last made a deliberate search of review columns for new addresses, they just haven't come my way. All of which means I'm very happy to see Potlatch...

Acidic experiments, eh? Head fandom is not well-thought of or well-established in Britain and opinion is such that I would hesitate to print any such account in Egg. The fringe fans who do indulge have been dealt with somewhat harshly and unpleasantly in the past and Pete Weston, for example, delivered an obviously heartfelt tirade against "junkies" (which I take to mean pot-smokers) at the last convention, going so far as to suggest vigilante groups to deal with them; this would have been fairly amusing, since I was intending to volunteer to lead such a group... As it was, there was a slight clear-out of fringe-fans nobody knew, which many found a disturbing action, but which didn't seem to cause any real viciousness (I think most of them managed to drift back in later on - I hope so, anyway). Personally I find tripping rather anti-social, particularly because an unfortunate and consistent side-effect for me is a total inability to talk or speak - something I found somewhat terrifying when it first happened.

There are a lot of British convention BNFs, despite Will Straw's speculations on their unlikelihood. Phil Rogers, winner of this year's Doc Weir Award, is a good example; Phil is well-known for his organizing, auctioning antics, and general partying, and many others come to mind - Ted Tubb, Norman Shorrocks, Dave Kyle, and so on: almost all St. Antony members, incidentally.

LANE LAMBERT, Route 2, Bruce Road, Boaz, Alabama 35957

..Many things you mention - particularly those of reading material, Night Life, and countryside description - take me back to the days when I was ten or so and spent a week at my grandmother's during the summer. With differences: as long as I can remember, she's had scores of Reader's Digests available - older ones with tantalizing risque articles such as "The Mysteries of Breast-Feeding" and "What To Tell Your Child About Marriage". Wowee.

Fine put-on faanishness from Arnie and Tucker. I sometimes think that, if Arnie had his choice, he'd have been born early enough in the century to be a part of Thirties or Forties fandom.

I must latch onto an Entropy reprint for Nexus! Thus far, I've caught all of those in Katz zines, plus the one in Cipher 2. Fascinating reading, all. Graham's seems to be pervaded by disjointedness; however, along about the third installment, I realized that this was the way the col was written -- I think. Maybe I'd better read the whole thing again, moving my lips as I do...

I wish I got fabulous fannish letters like you do.... The South has apparently never possessed a Fabulous Faanish Fanzine, anyway. We 'uns are just slow to start, I reckon. ("Pass the grits, maw, and dump 'em in mah beanie.")

::Admittedly, it's Been A While, but I do know of two fabulous faanish fanzines from the South: Confusion, by Shelby Vick, came up to fandom out of Florida; and, Quandry, by Lee Hoffman, from Georgia.

You're completely wrong about Arnie wishing he had faned in Thirties or Forties fandom. Absolutely not true. He wishes he had been around to fan in Fifties' Fandom.

Don't put grits in your beanie; they'll get the propeller soggy.

BANKS MEBANE, Box 938, Melbourne Beach, Florida 32951

Arnie's idea for a Society for Creative Fanachronism is gosh-wow! I'm going to write a letter to Sergeant Saturn again, just as soon as I can put down my Xeno (or was that Zeno? We need an archivist.) And I expect the Great Staple War to break out any day now. A couple of things, though: Dr. T. O'Connor Sloane used only one "n" in his middle name, and Erle Korshak had no "a" in his first name (and there's no "d" in Roy Rogers' last name, Joyce); and you can just call me Jack Speare for all those corrections.

A few issues back you were wondering where all the native Californians went. Why, they moved to Florida, of course.

::Help! A reference I don't understand! What was a Xeno?

MIKE GLICKSOHN, 32 Maynard Ave., Apt. 1205, Toronto 156, Ontario, Canada

In a way, it's a Good Thing that this installment of the Golden Bagel will be seen by POTLATCH readers only; had Arnie presented the idea to general fandom, there'd have been many people who'd have taken him seriously and written scathing remarks about the inability of fannish fans to forget the past. As it is, I can see the SCF becoming a major topic of fannish conversation, with people everywhere proposing new ideas and resurrections for the next meeting. It's at times like this that one regrets the limited nature of one's fannish past!

The re-prints of the Pete Graham material certainly indicate the truth of one of the conclusions we reached on the "fannish fandom" panel at Pghlange; fannish writing has lasting value. It is perfectly possible to read and enjoy these pieces without knowing the people involved in them.

Best of the selections was the last one, on the English money--someone should publish "The Wit and Wisdom" of Carol Carr someday; she always seems to have the best lines in these chronicles!

Harry seems convinced that Will Straw is a hoax, based primarily on his knowledge of the field and Harry's belief that noone who knew that much could be an unknown fan. To add to this possibility there is the name itself; if someone wished to set up a hoax-fan, or a straw man, what better choice of names? And Fort Erie is right on the border so it could well be an American who merely slips across to Canada to obscure his trail (and, incidentally take advantage of our much more generous and efficient, and cheaper, postal service.) But now Will has added some more fuel to the fire; he mentions Hamilton. But Hamilton where? ALL OUR YESTERDAYS does make passing reference to a Hamilton Ontario fandom back in the late forties; what say you now, Harry?

BARRY SMOTROFF, 147-53 71st Road, Flushing, New York 11367

I was a bit disappointed in this editorial. Not that I have anything against nostalgia, fannish or otherwise, mind you. The thing is this, nostalgia has limited appeal and interest. Unless you've lived where Joyce lived or listened to those radio programs, I think you miss the impact of the article. I don't meet those two requisites and I know I did. Perhaps I'm the exception rather than the rule, but I tend to doubt it. Nostalgia is, after all, a longing for something past, homesickness if you will. And if you've never been home, you'll never miss it....

The SCF sounds like a great idea. I can just imagine when it really gets going. Slan Shack Revisited! Hell, I can't wait to see who revives the Cosmic Circle... Come back Claude, we need you!

::But, Barry... can you enjoy anything you haven't experienced, if what you say above is accurate? For example, how can you possibly enjoy science fiction, since it (usually) is not rooted in your own experiences.

RICK SNEARY, 2962 Santa Ana St., South Gate, Calif. 90280

I understand Geis idea...he wants an apa to which all actifandom belongs. But--besides this being a seeming poor time to start an apa, it would have to have a strange membership requirement, to keep it from becoming just another apa. Maybe an ego-boo poll in which the ten lowest names are automatically dropped from membership.

Re: Con reports. Well, sometimes the only distinctive thing about some cons is how rotten they were, and you have to tell it as it was..but generally I think reports should be up-beat. I go to cons to have a good time, even if in spite of the hotel and the committee, and usually do. Even bad food or bad programming can be funny if viewed properly.. A con report that does a lot of carping about what went wrong isn't much fun.. On the other hand, constructive criticism, or pointing out errors that other committees could avoid can be useful. People with inside knowledge of how a con is run, like yourself, can give useful suggestions or wise observations. A lot of space on persons who goofed up or goofed off doesn't help much, as chances are they won't be doing it again. -- I wouldn't worry too much about the fan that reads rosey con reports and then hits a bad one and drops out. I know of a couple fans that have, but generally I feel that if one can't stand a few knocks, fandom isn't for them anyway.

Harter rather over praises the old letter hacks. While the prozines were read by thousands - many of who did turn to the letter column first - the number of people writing was rarely ever bigger than that of a good size fanzine. There might of been a number of brief comments by one-timers, but most of the two-page double-spaced limiters letters were by regulars and the quality of their writing was not all that high. (Anyone who would publish my letters of 1948 couldn't have

been very select.) But, it was reading these letters that 90% or better of fans first heard about Fandom.

A while back you were saying you were sitting around debating whether a fan could become a BNF without appearing in fanzines.. Now you suggest your group has been sitting around for a week, trying to decide when a fringe-fan quits being a fringe-fan. This is as fannish a theological question (or theological a fannish question) as I can remember.. I fear you will hate me for the answer.. but it seems to me a fringe-fan stops being one when he stops doing fringe-fan type things, and strikes out on his own. --Yes! I know that raises the question of what is a fringe-fan-like thing. In my mind the difference between a fringe fan and a passive fan is the fringer mainly goes along with what some one else is doing; the passive fan is independent but not very active. Fringe fans almost always have to be around other fans in person - as it is nearly impossible to be a fringe fan through the mail alone. Fringies can produce fanzines, but only because everyone else in their group is doing it. When he starts having original ideas, speaking with a voice of his own, contributing directly to fandom and not as a shadow of another fan or group..then he might be called a Fan.

TED PAULS, 1448 Meridene Drive, Baltimore, Maryland 21239

Concerning our pseudo-feud: your desire that the subject be dropped, and Terry's comments in the last Focal Point, reflect my own feelings on the matter. But before consigning it to oblivion, I feel that I should apologize to you and Arnie, and to you in particular, for getting personal. We can have different views as to what fandom is all about without personal unpleasantness. I am sorry.

Anyway, our views aren't really all that different. I was a fannish fan long before I wrote any book reviews, and among those who know me personally I'm not exactly considered sercon. You might have appreciated the irony of our whole argument if you'd seen Brian Burley and I shouting ourselves hoarse trying to put over the idea of a small fannish LunaCon next year. (We lost. LunaCon 1972 will be another Big Production, run like a cross between a business enterprise and the N3F WelCommittee...)

::Thank you so much for writing; I'm glad that you and I can once again return to being, if not friends, at least kindly acquaintances.

I enjoyed discussing our fannish views with you in Boston --- and I'm just sorry as can be that it seems likely that Lunacon will be of such monstrous size again; I wonder who it is that wants such large conventions? Both your branch of fandom and mine seem unified in wishing we could get back to smaller, more friendly gatherings. Perhaps next year, for LunaCon '73, our forces can combine to shout down the people who seem so obsessed with size.

It will be much nicer to shout together, trying to win a common cause, than at each other....

LOREN MAC GREGOR, 1020 NE 89, Seattle, Washington 98115

I never got the Country Gentleman. Instead, I listened to the radio in the early morning for the Farm Reporter, who explained what hybrid crops were replacing what, and how the dairy strike was affecting beef sales. I quit when they replaced the Reporter with Garner Ted Armstrong and the Plain Truth about the World Today.

I feel I have every right to object to the inclusion of present-day slang in future-time stories. Some I will admit to. As another far-out example, take far-out, for example. It's been around for years, and will probably continue, as will right-on, groovy (which has been around at least since the forties, as a companion to "In the groove".) But "gear", "boss" and any number of similar

extremely transitory phrases are not, won't be and shouldn't be carried into the future--can you dig it? Actually, I generally object to any slang at all in a story, and feel that very few authors carry it off well. I enjoy Bester's writing, and I'm usually comfortable with the slang that his characters speak, which is my criteria for accepting slang in a story. If I honestly feel a character could talk like that in everyday circumstances, it's worth it.

Enough of this foolishness. As an adjunct, I'd like to include one of my pet objections: that a city in the near (or far, for that matter) future would be beautiful, spotless, and all of one style of architecture. Regardless of the many styles of architectural changes since the 1920's, say, how much has the total picture in New York changed, other than growing larger?

The conflict about hair worries me extremely. The guy who was my boss quit recently because of an 18-month hassle about the length of his hair. He is extremely competent, knows his job well, has a good personality, but his hair is too long. Similarly, in another hospital around here, another friend of mine was told to get his hair cut because the head of the department said (and I quote) "I don't like Communists giving treatments to my patients". The same person told me I would be able to perform quite well as a therapist if I would shave and cut my hair. Obviously it's not a question of competency in the field but rather of how well you conform, and that's really saddening.

John-Henri Holmberg, Norrskogsvagen 8 - 112 64 Stockholm, Sweden

In recent months a slight turn towards fannishness has been noticeable in Swedish fandom. Heralded by the revival of Fanac, the renaissance thus far consists of the fanzine DNQ, published by Ulf Westblom and Per Insulander and unblushingly modelled on Egoboo. Per and Ulf are the sort of fans who can read decade-old issues of Void and end up with their eyes brimming with nostalgic tears for the long-lost era of the Bherkeley Bhoys and innumerable Bbob Stewart cartoons littering the sidewalks of New York City. Inspired by this they have set out to create a faanish fandom in Sweden; the only trouble is that this faanishness is entirely second-hand and brims over with phrases like "it certainly is a wonderful thing", the inner significance of which only five or six other Swedish fans can possibly understand.

I doubt if Arnie is really very right in his thesis that the lack of prozine lettercols is responsible for the current upheaval of serious fanzines. I'm not really competent to say anything about American fandom, but Swedish fandom has about the same problem and we've never had any lettercolumns to take off sercon steam. Rather this seems here to be concurrent with the changeovers in fannish generations: after the first couple of years' serconism new fans settle down to enjoy heated debates on more fannish subjects like - well, you would hardly appreciate an enumeration since they are usually as esoteric as "Who sawed Courtney's boat?" is to a European fan. Anyway, after a couple of more years' tranquility, a number of new fans start popping up and a resurgence to serconism is obvious. When Per Insulander and Ulf Westblom entered fandom about three or four years ago, they were both just about the most dullishly sercon people I've ever encountered; Ulf especially wrote reams of fanfiction which was promptly rejected by Analog and later turned up in his fanzine crowded with essays on Style in Heinlein and The First Swedish Comic Books and Do We Need Religion. By now, Ulf is totally faanish and talks wildly about creating a Swedish Void.

The trouble right now in Sweden is rather the lack of any new fans-as-we-know-them. We have literally hundreds of new fringe-fans, who pay membership fees to the major Swedish sf club, read and sometimes comment on the club monthly, but obviously are unable to figure out anything else to do. These people are neither the organizing or publishing or ever letterhacking types; they're just sf readers interested in a meeting with prepared programs and an occasional article on sf. Hidden somewhere among them there must be the budding trufen, but I'm damned if I can sift them out. And Swedish fandom needs new faces, and pretty swiftly if there's to be even a constant number of fans active instead of a slow but steady stagnation.

I'm really sorry if my using the penname "Carl J. Brandon, Jr." has confused people to the extent of deriving Terry or any of the other Bherkeley Bhoys of their justly deserved egoboo for the often brilliant original Carl Brandon writings. I can only fake an excuse by stating that my using that very penname is in itself a very high praise -- of course I chose the CB name because of its to me very pleasant connotations. And besides I wanted to transfer the hoax to Swedish fandom; my original intent was never to use the penname away from Scandinavia.

Apart from all this, I've recently become the first Swedish fan actually to start living with cats. As in the US, Swedish fan have always for some reason considered cats to be particularly faanish creatures and on equal pawing with humans.... the curious thing is that as far as I know, no Swedish fan has ever actually tried living with a cat.

So about two weeks ago I got two. One is female, black with serious blue eyes and white fluff on her breast; the other is striped grey-brown-white-and some black, has more common greenish eyes and is male. They're not named as yet, and they are hardly able even to purr; they'll be four weeks old comes September 1st. It's pretty obvious that fandom has taken to the things already; I've had several fans coming by just to pet them, and although it's sort of a nuisance to have to feed them every three hours around the clock, you don't grotch much because of that. The reason I took them in at all was simply that I came across them while traveling in the south of Sweden. It was a pretty close call; either I take them with me although they were only about 9 days old or they got their heads bashed in by a farmer who considered himself having quite enough cats already.

And who can resist two kittens just starting to open their eyes like slits?

HARRY WARNER, 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Carrying On was wonderful in this fifth Potlatch. I probably would be as unhappy as you if I had to experience farm life on a daily basis, but in imagination it seems like a perfect escape from all the pressures of annoying neighbors and loud traffic that trouble me in this metropolis. So even though you described your dissatisfaction with your surroundings, that same environment formed a sort of escape for me as I read. You probably never realized as a child that those issues of Grit were giving you a preview of fandom. Unless you're a lot older than you ought to be, Rich Frank was on the staff of Grit when you were reading it and he is a former fan who published a few semi-pro booklets and has recently been quite ill and disposing of his collection. You undoubtedly realize that Mr. & Mrs. Buyer, whatever their real behavior may have been, were the goats in the end, because that autographed Roy Rogers poster would by now have a value far exceeding whatever the insurance company paid them for the house.

I had a more fortunate experience with a radio contest when I was small, incidentally. Ovaltine used to sponsor Little Orphan Annie, and soon after I started to listen to it, a lapel pin or secret code ring or something similar was offered for the aluminum disc that was situated just inside the lid of a can of Ovaltine to make the contents airtight until used. I sent away for the premium and was positive that there would be more premiums from time to time, so I persuaded my mother to preserve all these discs for me from then on. Months and years passed, there were no more premium offers, and because I was hooked on Ovaltine the little disks piled up badly and several times almost got thrown out, but I still insisted on keeping every one, an utterly mad desire because it was obvious that even a new premium a month would never tax the supply while I was drinking a can of Ovaltine each week. Then Little Orphan Annie offered not a premium but a contest. There were lots of prizes and the winners would be determined by who sent in the most aluminum discs. I didn't win the grand prize, whose nature I no longer remember, but I did get a handsome and quite expensive throw rug. That was the experience that taught me never to throw away anything. I've violated that creed only twice since. Once was when I left behind on moving to another part of

THIRD CLASS MAIL



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POTLATCH

Howard DeLore
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Dearborn
Michigan



town a complete run of Radio Guide covering four or five years, with subsequent traumatic effects. The other time was when I discarded two or three price lists from Ken Slater, an act which leaves me wondering when I'll finally encounter some awful consequences.

::Which brings this issue to it's end, with apologies to the persons whose letters were not included--next issue I promise to save more space for the letter-col, so you all be sure to write again. Heard from but not printed were Alpajpuri, Dan Goodman, Aljo Svoboda, Jim Meadows, Bob Tucker, Frank Lunney, Bill Kunkel, Rick Stoker, Mike Wood, Hank Davis, and Diane Berry.

See you all next time? jk

CARRYING ON, continues...

high expectations---Brooklyn fandom has been so much fun lately that I expected the world con to be proportionately better...but, for me, it was only proportionately larger. jk

POTLATCH #6 --- Contents:

Carrying On (Joyce Katz).....	2
Beard Mumblings (Bob Tucker).....	3
Dead Flowers (Bill Kunkel).....	5
Golden Bagel (Arnie Katz).....	8
Terry Carr's Entropy Reprints.....	11
Altonate Reality (Rick Stoker).....	15
Counting Coup (letters).....	21

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