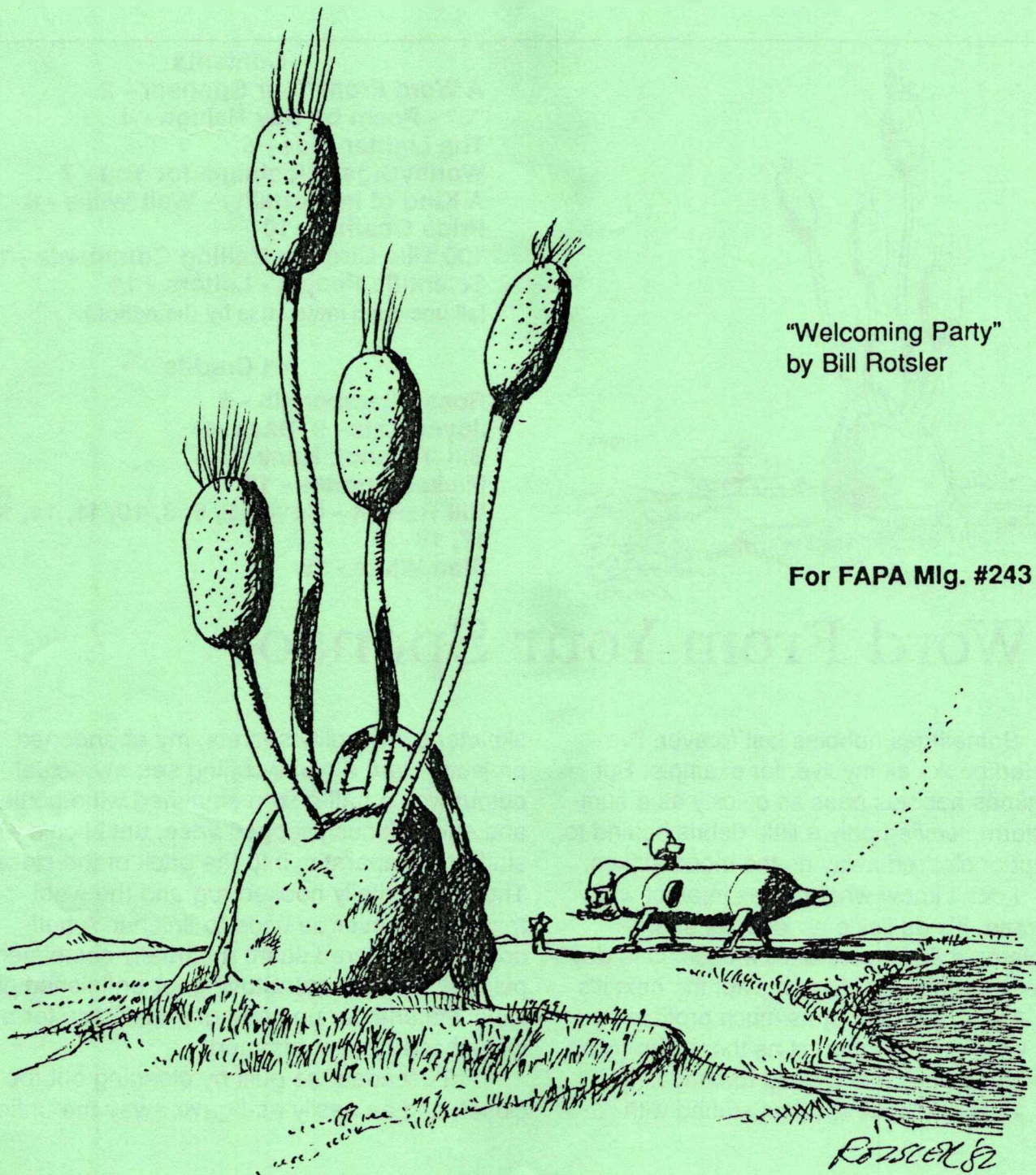


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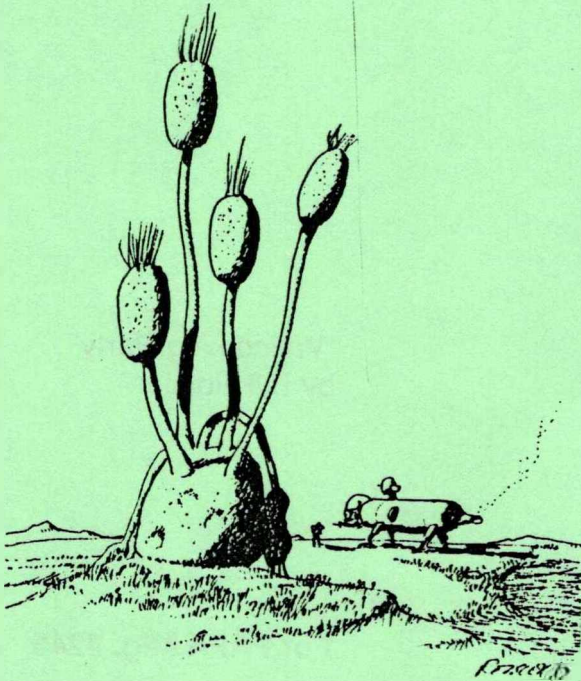
"Welcoming Party"
by Bill Rotsler

For FAPA Mlg. #243



QUANT Suff #7

QUANT Suff #7 is done for FAPA and Fandom by Joyce Worley Katz, 330 South Decatur, #152, Las Vegas, NV 89107, in May 1998. Thanks to **Arnie** for the repro chores. Member fwa and afal.



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A Word From Your Sponsor

Sometimes hobbies last forever. I've collected books all my live, for example. But sometimes hobbies pass as quickly as a summer storm, leaving only a little debris behind to be kept or cleared away as the mood strikes.

I don't know what makes interest wax and wane. It's as fickle as love, as unpredictable as a three-year-old's moods. One day it's there, burning bright and avid; the next it's gone. And there's about as much profit in trying to whip up new interest as there is in trying to fan flame back into a dead romance.

I used to have a closet stuffed with

skeletons, my guilty secrets, my abandoned projects. Here a glass-cutting set; my actual output was a half-dozen smashed wine bottles and one hideously jagged vase, until I coldly stuffed the apparatus into the back of the closet. There, a partially hooked rug and the wool that would never be used to finish it. A half-done embroidered scarf; a partially completed paint-by-number set. Stuffing for unfinished pillows; material for unmade dresses; lace for a lampshade I never trimmed.

I escaped the guilt by cleaning out the closet, and as easily as I gave away the unfin-

ished projects, that's how easily I shrugged away the hobby each represented.

Ray "Duggie" Fisher was similarly mercurial about hobbies and pastimes. I couldn't begin to list all the avocations he adopted and abandoned. Chemistry, rocketry, photography, and fires. Politics, gambling, astronomy and choirs.

Shortly after we moved to St. Louis, a new bug bit--rock hounding and the lapidary arts. As usual, he jumped in full-heartedly, impassionately visiting every store in the Greater St. Louis Area to view specimens, marvel at the stones. We joined the St. Louis Rock & Mineral Club, and attended meetings faithfully. Weekends were spent crawling through quarries, or squatting in the gravel near charming riverbanks.

You might not know it, but Missouri is a gratifying area for rock hounding. Oh, we don't have the jade of Wyoming, or the gold of the Rockies. But there's some nice jasper, a lot of agate, and even occasional crystalline deposits.

In the St. Louis Area, there are geode formations that open to beautiful, if low-grade, amethyst formations. And, there's a spectacular geode that yields up Union Street Agate, called that because it was first found when builders blasted the roadway.

Over near Dexter, Missouri, there's terminal morain, where the southern-most glacier finally melted, leaving its deposit of silt and stone. Lots of rock there, from god-knows-where.

We've also got the Mississippi. While it's providing the Midwest with its biggest waste-basket, it also is tumbling rocks downstream. In the area below the joining of the Missouri and Mississippi, you might find anything at all. Stones that end up on the banks are round and smooth from their journey; agate, jasper, obsidian...a treasure trove beneath the mud.

The hobby was intriguing. From my point of view, it was more involving than most

of the things that captured Ray's interest. His brief flirtation with archery had whizzed by me; his passion for firearms was mercifully brief; his romance with mathematics left me totally uninvolved. Rock hounding was better. I liked sitting on the riverbanks; the pictures in his books were pretty to see.

And, there was always the tantalizing hope of jewelry, the glittering goal of all the mud-moshing.

As easily as we slipped into the hobby of rockhounding, we eased out of it into the more focused passion for lapidary skills and equipment.

We started with a diamond rock saw, an expensive and sizeable venture. Ray set it up on the desktop in the kitchen, and soon the room was covered with chips and sand, as he began to slice stone.

Obviously we needed a polishing wheel, to turn the raw slabs of rock into paperweights.

To tell the truth, all this was hard. Ray was into it, but it took a great deal longer to slice a rock than he liked; and it was even harder to polish one.

That's when we bought the first tumbler, a small quart-sized hopper that rotated its load of pebbles to smooth them to a sheen.

It worked...it turned over and over, sloshing the gravelly mixture with rhythmic beat. But again, it was damnably slow, and he wanted better.

That's when we decided to spend the big bucks and go for the vibrating tumbler.

Now this was a beautiful instrument, all steel and polish, seated on rubber legs that gripped the desktop.

Ray bought a load of high-grade stone at the hock-hound store, and loaded it up with water and the gritty polishers. A flip of the switch, and it began to chuckle. Then it settled down to a shimmy which, we were told, would in one week produce highly polished nuggets of jewel quality.

That evening we noticed that the desk

was shimmying, but we didn't give it a thought.

The next morning, the shimmying seemed visible throughout the whole room, shaking the paintings on the wall.

When we came home from work that afternoon, the woman from the apartment below us was talking to the landlord on the porch. "I don't know what happened. All of a sudden, the entire ceiling caved in."

Quietly, quickly, we walked up the stairs and flipped the switch, turning off the vibrating tumbler.

That ended our excursion into the lapidary arts.

I still have a few polished stones, my booty from the affair. But we never told any of the neighbors about the tumbler.

Eventually we sold the lapidary equipment and used the money as a down-payment on a printing press, so we could publish **Odd**. So, you can really say that we rock-hounded our way into fandom.***

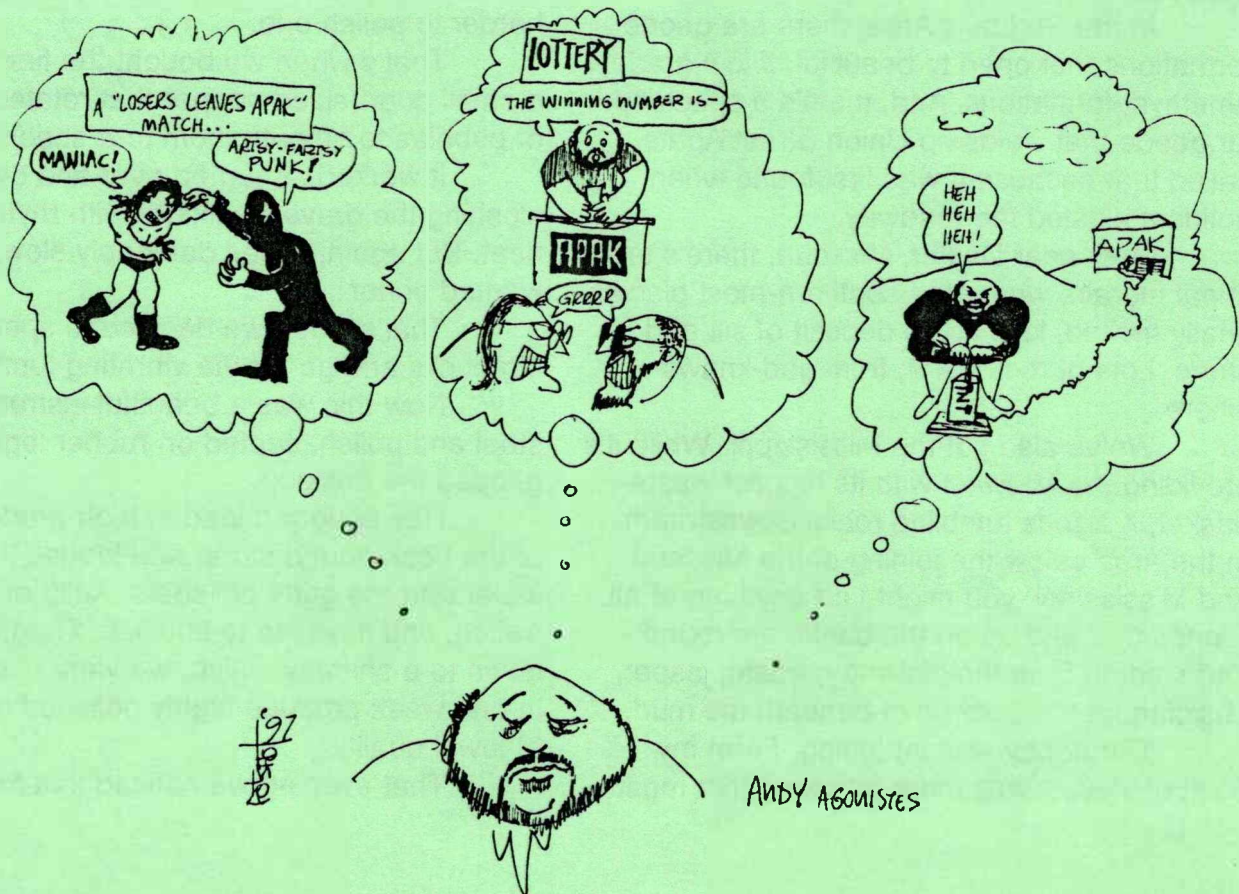
A poem by Ray Nelson

3?

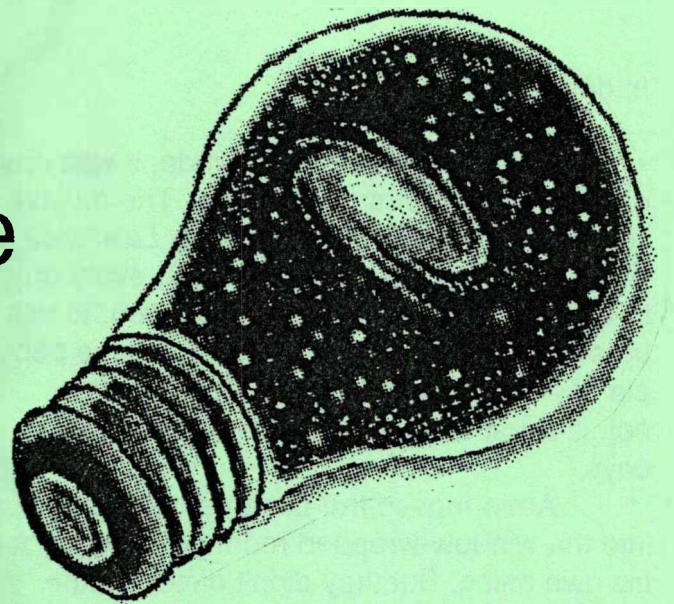
Blind from birth,
Could you know
Darkness?

Deaf from birth,
Could you know
Silence?

Realistic from birth,
Could you ever know
Reality?



The Lighter Side



It's getting worse.

It's been a problem right from the start, but in the last year, the phenomenon has accelerated. All these years, I've kept quiet about it. But now I think it's time to end my secrecy. Fandom needs to know.

Arnie is turning into a creature of the darkside. That's the only way to explain it.

After a statement like that, you may well understand why I've chosen to keep it a Katz secret for the last quarter century. Lots of husbands and wives have secrets; lots of wives guard their spouse's reps, keeping the kinky tendencies private, hiding the dank underbelly of a sleek exterior.

So it has been with us. Content to let fandom bask in the light of the Katz wit, I've hidden our sordid little secret for 25 years.

It started subtly enough. When we purchased the first pair of lamps for our first apartment, way back in 1970 in Brooklyn, he chose the ones with the burlap shades. "Those are pretty dark," I warned him; "The burlap will mute most of the light."

I didn't think anything about it when he insisted; I like muted light, and the burlap shades seemed appropriate for our post-hippy yet still rustic lifestyle.

A few years later, we went to buy drapes for the living room windows. I showed Arnie a few selections down at the local Korvette's; an airy open weave, some frilly lace, a deep green silk.

He chose the dark green. Floor to ceiling. They looked great, and produced about the same effect as World War II blackout curtains.

"Ah, well," I thought, "the room looks nice, and you can't see the dust when it's so dim. Plus, the curtains will probably block any fallout in case of nuclear war."

At the grocery, I'd reach for the 100 watt bulbs. He'd trade them for a pack of 60s. Finally we compromised on expensive 3-wayers.

When they were in the burlap-sheathed lamps, I'd switch up to the 150 setting, to build a little island of sunny light on the tabletop. Arnie'd walk into the room, and turn them back to the 50 watt setting, reducing the sunny light to a circle of foggie dinge.

Mostly I didn't say anything. It's a wife's role to be compliant, you know. But once in a while, I'd explode on him, particularly if he asked me to operate the stereo, or adjust the television settings. "Dammit, Arnie, I can't see the controls. You might be able to see in the dark, or operate equipment by touch. But I need more light."

He'd "pooh-pooh" my outburst, set the controls himself, and the moment would pass.

In darkness.

When we moved to Nevada, it was obviously to a brighter state of being. The Mojave sun bears down like a scene from *Lawrence of Arabia* and produces so much light every day, that it seems the night has to glow too, to use up some of the surplus sunshine. (Some people say that glow is from the neon, but it's not...it's just left over rays from the bright days.)

Arnie moved the burlap-shrouded lamps into the window-wrapped room he'd tagged for his own office. But they didn't diminish the light level, at least not much.

So he took to closing the Venetian blinds. "Dammit, Arnie, don't close the blinds. You took this room because it was sunny and bright; why are you blocking the light?"

Mostly he ignored me. When he didn't dismiss my complaints outright, he made up lies: "The blinds have to stay closed because of the copy machine. It has to be dark because of the videogame monitors. I want it dark so I can see the computer better."

Defeated, I let him be. Now and then, I'd

sneak into his office while he was sleeping, and crack the shade a little so I could see our trees.

But the phenomenon continued to grow.

Some families have televisions stacked on top of each other. When they buy a new t.v., they just set it on top of the old one. I've seen, and I'm sure you have too, as many as three television sets pyramided, or even four. Why do they keep the old ones? I've never known.

The Katz household has a similar situation with lamps. They're not pyramided, but instead left dark and useless in their original spots, unreplaced. At the moment, we have burned out lamps scattered through the house, occupying the spaces where new ones should go.

He likes it like that. As long as they are sitting in their places, no new lamps can flood the rooms with bright light.

He extends this aversion to include all other light sources as well. During the cold winters in Brooklyn Heights, sometimes we'd use candles in our kitchen, which seemed to connect directly to Siberia. They added a glow of comforting light and a surprising amount of heat.

But, we were quick to give this up, once we moved to Nevada. There are no candles on the Katz table. He claims not to like them for fear of fire, but we know better, don't we?

He couldn't really overcome the Christmas tree lights, but he did the next best thing. He set them to twinkle, rather than staying steady on. Twinkling means they're only on half as much; the rest of the time they're dark.

I used to leave the outside Christmas lights up year round, and use them on nights when we were having Socials. They made a cheery beacon; an easy way for arriving guests to spot the house. But I had to stop



that. "That's too bizarre; too outre. The neighbors will think you're crazy," claimed this paragon of the conservative straight and narrow.

But I know it's cause he didn't like the illumination.

The latest is the strangest step in our descent into darkness. Arnie has become angry at certain light fixtures. And, because he's angry, he won't give them anymore bulbs.

It's true. I know it sounds bizarre. But this is Arnie the K we're talking about.

It happened this way. Following a burglary a couple of years ago, we had a security system installed. The gun-toting -guard-who-comes-when-we-call told us that the best deterrent to a repeat crime is outdoor lights. "Leave them on all night," he advised.

This put Arnie on the spot. For months, disliking it, he'd dutifully turn on the patio light every evening. But, it bothered him.

Six months ago, he started his dark campaign. "These bulbs burn out too quickly," he complained, as he replaced the patio light. When the light burned out again four months ago, he repeated his complaint, more strongly. "There's something wrong with this fixture; the bulbs should last longer."

The last time the bulb burned out, he balked. "There's something wrong with the patio fixture. It uses up the bulbs too fast."

And then he said it: "I'm not going to put any more bulbs in it."

So here we are. Blinds closed, burlap shades over the lights, burned out lamps stacked like dark cordwood, patio light off.

Where do we go from here? I can only guess, but here's a warning. Lately he's been measuring the Vegas Valley on the map, counting out the miles from Sunrise Mountains in the east, to Sheep Mountains in the west.

I think he's building a parasol for the city.***

WorleyGigs: Nostalgia For You

I'm peculiarly well-suited to compose an essay about nostalgia. After all, my life is composed of nostalgia. I collect old things, I read old history. I'm steeped in antiquities, with more detailed knowledge of old things than of, for example, current day politics. I surround myself with old objects; I collect old glass. I read old fiction, or fiction about old days.

Even the news I write is tomorrow's nostalgia, the replies to future trivia questions.

And, I'm an equal-opportunity nostalgist. I can be just as nostalgic about sweeping generalities as intimate life details.

Among my souvenirs are boxes of mementos dating back to my childhood. And, to other people's childhoods, also--I save curiosities from other lives as well as my own.

This leads me right to my business proposition: I believe I am well-poised to quit the fast-paced life of electronics journalism, and swing into a new career based on my obvious affinity for stifling sentimentality. I plan to start a business. I'll call it "Nostalgia For You", and I'll provide nostalgia for those who don't have any.

You say you throw away your letters and last year's greeting cards, dispose of worn china, get rid of old clothes? Then you're a prospect for purchase, a customer for my custom. I can, for a modest fee, take over the smothering sensations of nostalgia, and provide what you lack in emotionality.

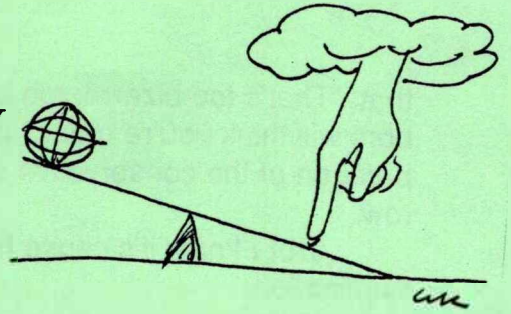
I'll save your old pictures, and if you have none, provide a pack for you to display as your own. I'll frame the old corsage, cry over the babyshoes, love your mother's hand-made quilt.

You won't need to be embarrassed any longer, when people inquire about your past. I'll jump right in there with my own passions and pity, providing putrid verse on demand, or slippery tears when touched by the feelings you don't possess.

I believe I may be able to turn "Nostalgia For You" into a chain, hiring only the best in nostalgia-providers, to create a personalized atmosphere of sentimentality for the high-paying customers who'll flock to buy our services. ***

A Kind of Immortality

by Walt Willis



I never had much time for relatives. I remembered them from my childhood as peculiar strangers wearing black clothes and smelling of camphor, who appeared from nowhere at irregular intervals to exclaim foolishly about how one had grown, as if one had been confidently expected to dwindle and eventually disappear.

The only two who were at all real to me were my great-aunt Martha and her husband Matt, who lived behind a tiny shoe repair shop in the working class district of Ballymasarrett, about half a mile down the road from us. I used to visit them occasionally with messages from my mother and they were always very kind to me. Aunt Martha fed me seed cake and engaged me in tripartite discussions with her canary ("He knows you strange," they would always begin) and my great uncle would let me watch him repairing shoes with little brass nails he produced mysteriously from his mouth.

He never said very much, no doubt on account of the brass nails, but his meticulous craftsmanship spoke for him, as did the fact that when he had finished soling and heeling a pair of shoes he would invariably polish the uppers. For the rest of my life his seemed to me to be the only way to do a job right.

But apart from those two I thought

very little of my relatives until a few years ago when my mother died. Then I found among her papers the fly-leaf from the family Bible. Well, to be strictly accurate it wasn't the fly-leaf, it was the title page; and it wasn't even a Bible, it was "A Guide to Family Devotions for the Morning and Evening of Every Day in the Year", apparently a Wesleyan Methodist publication. However on the blank side of this title page were duly recorded the births and deaths of all the children of Robert Davidson and Margaret Alexander of Ballymacree, Killinchy, Co. Down, from 1856 to 1873. Deciphering with mild interest the terse entries in faded handwriting, I was brought up short by the following:

Matthew Hall Davidson. Born 1st of February 1870, year of our Lord. Baptised by the Rev. Mr. Cowdy, Wesleyan Minister.

Matthew Hall Davidson. Departed this life Wednesday morning May 3rd 1871 at about 8 o'clock a sweet child and affectionate with Dimples.

The last unexpected phrase impressed me deeply. Here were no dead dull relatives, but a woman whose love had transcended propriety and a child of such exceptional charm as to evoke this unique entry in the family records.

I began a search for my ancestors among the little green hills and winding

road of mid-Down, a countryside of deep tranquillity which has to my knowledge not changed an iota in 50 years. Eventually in an overgrown graveyard I found a comprehensive headstone indicating that the entire Davidson family had migrated to Belfast, and I even found my grandfather's original house there, on the eve of obliteration by a motorway. But by that time I had begun to realize I had fallen victim to one of the perils that tend to beset science fiction fans.

Why did I feel so let down, I ask myself. What had I really been looking for? The answer was that I had been subconsciously hoping for some sort of time travel experience, an actual encounter of some sort with Margaret Davidson; who with no good reason I believed to be the one who had written the words which so affected me; who I imagined to look a little like Greer Garson, and whom I was already a little in love with.

It was, I realized, exactly the sort of mental quirk which was responsible for the fact that I had no less than 11 radios on my premises, all working. That, I had come recently to realize, was because I was subconsciously convinced that one day I would come across a radio on which I could get Aldebaran, or at least the Jack Benny Show. I had to accept that this was unlikely to be the case, and that I was equally unlikely ever to meet Margaret Alexander Davidson and sympathise with her on the loss of Matthew Hall.

So I folded the old page and put it away carefully. But not before I had read it again and noticed something I had forgotten.



FAMILY PLOT

This was that another Matthew Hall Davidson had been born, on July 25, 1871. In those days of high infant mortality you didn't waste a perfectly good name: and also I like to think that Margaret was secretly hoping that the sweet child and affectionate with dimples would somehow reappear. Alas he died three days later. But there was yet another attempt, apparently successful. Matthew Hall Davidson Mark III was born on July 13th, 1873, and his was the last entry.

Thinking it all over I made what was to me an important connection. The third Matthew Hall Davidson was of course my great-uncle Matt, the craftsman. Suddenly I felt much happier about the short life of the original Matthew Hall. To have been born three times; to have inspired a love that could leap a century from a line on a page; and to have shown a little boy how to do a job right....that's enough for any Matthew Hall Davidson.***

Pride Goeth...

I'd hesitate to express great pride in any of my multitude of accomplishments. It's a risky thing to be overly prideful, even for a person with as many reasons as I have.

But my mama was quick to impress on me the virtues of modesty, which are also the virtues of not tempting fate. Better my various talents should remain unsung, than to strike the discordant note of over-pridefulness.

I got my lesson early, in how false pride can lead you wrong.

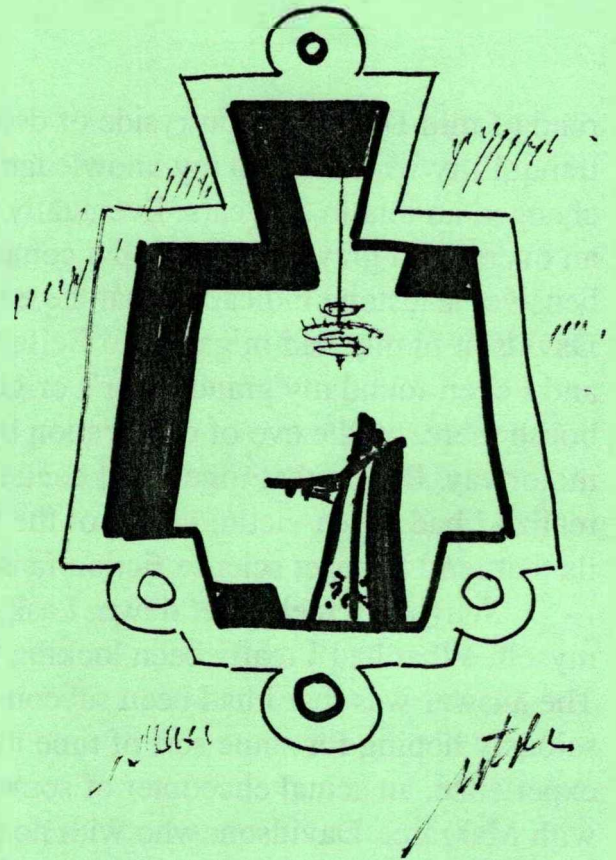
I was sick that Sunday morning, so skipped going to church with the rest of the family. I lay around all day, reading the Sunday funnies and lounging on the sofa in my pajamas.

Toward evening, I got a little restless with my self-imposed confinement and told my mother I was going to take a stroll to the neighborhood candy store.

"You skipped church, and now you're going to buy candy? You're heading for a fall, missy."

But I tossed my pretty curls and slipped on my coat. My pjs showed plainly beneath the hem of the bulky wrap, so I pulled up the trousers, and tucked the legs up. I ran a comb through my hair, and looked respectable.

The two block walk led me past the big new Methodist Church on the corner. I scurried past, trying to look proper on the way to the store. On the way back, my luck ran out. Just as I walked past the door of the church, caramels in my mouth and both fists full of penny candies, my pajama bottoms dropped. As the bemused parishoners looked on, the legs came rolling down around my



ankles, and the whole garment fell around my feet. While pious Methodists snickered, I had to stop in front of the church, lay down my candy, bend over and hike up my panties, to my utter pre-teen humiliation.

It was a clear case of pride going before a fall.

I was Mrs. Johnson's pride and joy; her star pupil. She'd been teaching me to tickle the ivories for years, and now I was the top student.

The music room of the Poplar Bluff Public Library was full for the recital. Along with the parents of every student, there were also friends. In my case, that meant Mary and Bill, Karen and Cecil. Even my boyfriend Jim had put on a tie for the occasion, and brought me flowers.

Finally, all the younger students finished their pieces, and it was my turn. I was ready; I had it solid. I was playing The Hungarian Rhapsody, and I knew I was good.

The first stirring section past, I slipped into the adagio. It was grand; I had it whipped. It was going so well, I decided to stretch myself a bit and use the reverb pedal, to give Franz Lisdt a bit more oomph.

Unfortunately, I was short...as I stretched myself to reach the pedal, I came up a few inches shy, and kicked my foot through the soundboard on the face of the piano, adding a wooden crunch where ole Franz never expected it.

That's how my piano career died, showing off in front of the hall.

People have often asked me how it is that Arnie and I put up a Christmas tree each year. It hasn't always been the case. When Arnie and I were first paired, Yuletide was definitely not circled in red on his calendar, and the idea of a Christmas tree in the house was completely foreign.

I didn't mind the rest of it, but I really missed the decorations, so I developed my own little routines of celebration, to soak up a bit of the season that we were skipping at home. During lunch hours, I'd hike down to the nearest Korvette store (that's Target ala 1970) where I'd hang around in the tree-trim department.

Finally the year came when Arnie said, 'I don't think it would hurt to have a small tree,' and we started our own decorating tradition.

When I asked him why the change of heart, he said, "I heard you cried going before the mall."

My doctor told me to cut down on fats. He said, "Fried goes before the pall."

There was this family of lions that lived on the riverbank, just above the rapids. (Do I have to finish this one?)

Some of these stories aren't completely true. You might say I lied just to have a ball.***

The 100 Mile Circus

Mailing Comments by Joyce

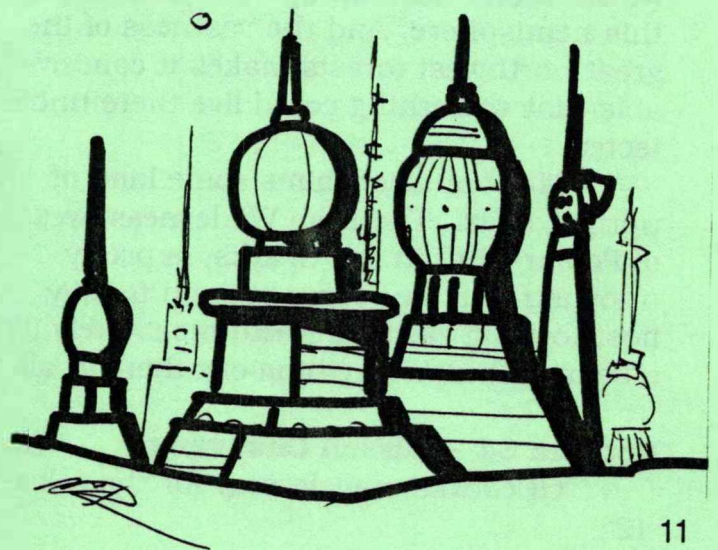
Synapse 242 - Jack Speer

My philosophy, here revealed by you to be "If it isn't mentioned in print, it's as if it never happened", deletes a lot of errors in life. It occurs to me that, if I am completely silent about my own mistakes and flaws, it will be as if I am completely perfect. Think I can sell it?

The Rambling Fap #114 - Gregg Calkins

Your point about the foolishness of building on a flood plain is well made. Seems like everyone should know not to build their house on sand; the advice is so very well documented.

Actually, our tenancy of earth is so tenuous just because there aren't an adequate number of shielded rocks to go around. In the long run, I'm sure we won't survive.



I've read, over the past months, your Costa Rican ambitions with great interest. It's exciting that it seems to be growing closer and more real.

I once moved to Mexico, but with little planning and no knowledge. The group I was with had some abstract notion of living off the fruits of the jungle and the fish from the sea. Needless to say, this scheme had some lumps in it; we were lucky not to starve, and to eventually limp home...it could have ended so much worse.

I read your careful planning, and it makes me all the more aware of how silly we all were. But hell, I was 21, and On The Road. How different things look now.

Prang #8 - Andy Hooper

I had no idea that you were a Wild Man student. I enjoyed your careful work on the Yeti, and look forward to the next two chapters. I assume they will concern Sasquatch and miscellaneous other hairy creatures.

I'm pretty skeptical about all of these sitings. As to the Yeti, well you said it yourself: the altitude where he's most generally seen is inhospitable.

The Sasquatch almost tempts me to believe. There seems no particular reason we shouldn't have an ape-like creature in this hemisphere. And the vastness of the great northwest forests makes it conceivable that something could live there undetected.

Missoui also claims some kind of upright beast. The Irish Wilderness, west of Poplar Bluff in the Ozarks, is pretty unpenetrable, and large enough to play host to a big carnivore. But most likely it's a bear, if there's anything out there at all.

Detours 64 - Russell Chauvenet

Of course, angels pray for the salva-

tion of Lucifer. How could it be otherwise? You don't get \$64,000, but you may try again.

And the Medusa gets to go to Heaven, for being the best monster she could possibly be. (But is she allowed to frighten anyone there? Ah, yes...for what would heaven be to her, without the snakes?)

Even dogs go to heaven, you know. If you want them there.

I felt pretty good about the number of books I've read from your recommended reading list. But pretty bad when I recognized how little I remember of each.

The Road Warrior - Tom Feller

Although I am pretty ambivalent about contemporary Country & Western music, I am quite fond of pre-60s Hillbilly. (Actually, my big interest in Hillbilly died with Hank.) I recently surrendered to *Country Classics*, a compilation of older country music offered through a t.v. ad by the Heartland Music Company.

It took almost three months for the cassettes to reach me; I had long since given up waiting. And, once received, the trilogy of tapes was a mixed bag, full of drivel with occasional sparks from the real masters of C&W. (How subjective are our musical tastes!)

My end analysis was that most of it was unlistenable, except for the questionable nostalgic value of hearing songs I considered too lame to listen to in the 50s and 60s. C&W was in terrible doldrums after Hank died, before rock-a-billy took over.

And yet, here Roy Acuff, and there Ernest Tubbs; by suffering through Tammy Wynette, I got to hear Patsy Montana. A pale version of "Cold Cold Heart" was followed by the delightful "Battle of New Orleans".

So I'm glad I bought the three tapes, and will drag through the dross, for even a little gold.

Lofgeornost - Fred Lerner

As you say, we must all find a place for ourselves in the 21st Century. Perhaps this one will be more atuned to our philosophies; we can but hope.

I admire the 18th and, especially, the 19th Centuries, as romantic eras, full of ambition and adventure. For me, it works fine to keep them at arm's length, without studying too closely the status of, for example, dentistry and surgery.

Sweet Jane 19 - Gordon Eklund

In your comments to **Ben Indick**, you express a thought I've echoed. No matter if the performance is spectacular, it's not pleasant to watch unattractive behavior. I don't like to watch (for example) pre-teen gauchery and awkwardness. Therefore, I don't enjoy the performance of Peewee Herman; his act may be great, but what he's doing doesn't bear watching.

Sorry I can't buy the concept of WWII being the last really big one forever. Our blood lust each time things get hairy in the Mideast proves, to me at least, that the public can always be whipped into a frenzy for war.

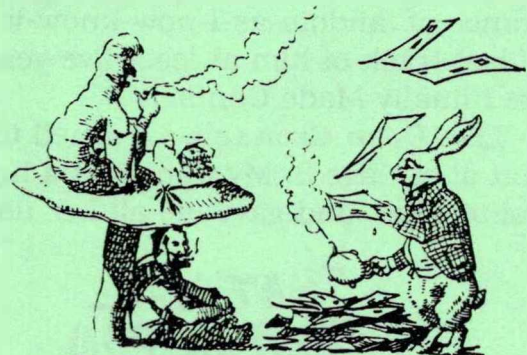
I suppose that's another of the reasons wars are fought by the young; the old might have too much sense and experience (to say nothing of political clout) to bow down to the necessity of going into battle.

Not that I am one hundred percent anti-war. I think WWII was necessary, as was the Civil War. Some of the upheavals of the past were probably equally needed, to overturn the evil of the moment. (A statement like this is almost certain to draw bombs!)

A Propos de Rien - Jim Caughran

You make a good point, when you say that not only prices have changed, but the things we buy are much different. Only recently I was surveying the Katz budget, trying to find the slack. In the kitchen, I now squander money buying things I wouldn't have considered 20 years ago. I buy plastic food storage bags --before, I might have reused a bread bag. I buy Rubbermaid storage dishes, where I used to use empty jars. I buy paper towels, where I would have used hand towels. I buy laundry additives, and air fresheners and furniture polishes...all things that I used to live happily without.

I'm not saying that improved standards make up all the difference. But it is remarkable how much money goes under the sink and into the medicine cabinet (where formerly a tin of aspirin and a bottle of iodine served all my needs.)



A Zine for Fapa - Boyd Raeburn

Coffee became a rite of passage for many of us. I wasn't allowed to drink it until in my teens. It's a rite that also measures our passage into age, since doctors like to forbid it to older people.

I'm reminded of an old s.f. story about a kitten who thought drinking coffee would make him become a human. He sneaked around until he managed to get a sip. Actually, all it did was taste nasty, so he had to remain a cat for the rest of his life.***

THE SCIENTIFIC PEOPLE

**Grouchin 'Bout Your Dues, Wearin' Hurtin' Shoes,
Got The Lonesome Blues, Heard Some Real Bad News?
Don't Tell It To Me. But If You Write A Letter...**

**George Flynn, P. O. Box 1069,
Kendall Sq. Stn., Cambridge, MA 02142
(7-17-97)**

The most provocative bit was no doubt the date of "May 1998" on Joyce's zine (QUANT Suff #4). I was excited at this evidence of time travel, but disappointed that you included no description of the next year's events.

I was once half of a two-person fandom: The two of us met in graduate school, found that we both liked SF, and talked about it all the time, in complete ignorance of fandom-as-I-now-know-it. But I lost track of him at least five years before I finally Made Contact.

Like **Dean Grennell**, I learned to read at about age 3. My aunt was a high school teacher, and gave me all her used

history and geography books, so I had a very strange fund of knowledge. As a result, they didn't know what to do with me in the first grade, so I was promoted after three days. This probably turned me into a permanent outsider...

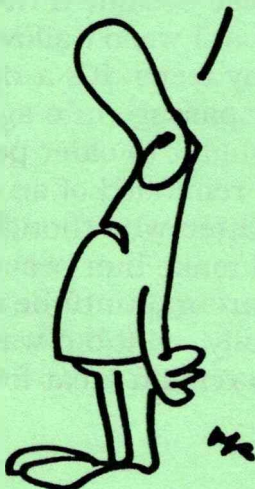
In fact, I've been doing all together too much time traveling lately. Most recently, I signed and dated a ceramic piece, as I do them all. After it was fired, I found I had traveled back to February 1997 when I signed it. I am certain that future archaeologists will be confounded by this, as they are reconstructing my life (as surely they must do!) to learn that I completed a piece of ceramics before I was introduced to the hobby in October.

I have always believed that letters are timeless, and it doesn't matter when they are written or when they are published; they are yet windows into the writers' lives. But, knowing that I sometimes print communications tucked away for years, I've decided to reproduce the date they were written (if I know, and if I get it right...this is another area for creative mistakes.) Thus those future anthologists will be able to reconstruct the important stages of my life, such as when I actually received your letter, with greater accuracy.

**Chuch Harris (Charrisma@cix.com-
pulink.co.uk) (8-8-97)**

Prismacolors: When I was in Mpls

THAT LOC
IS A RE-RUN
FROM 1988



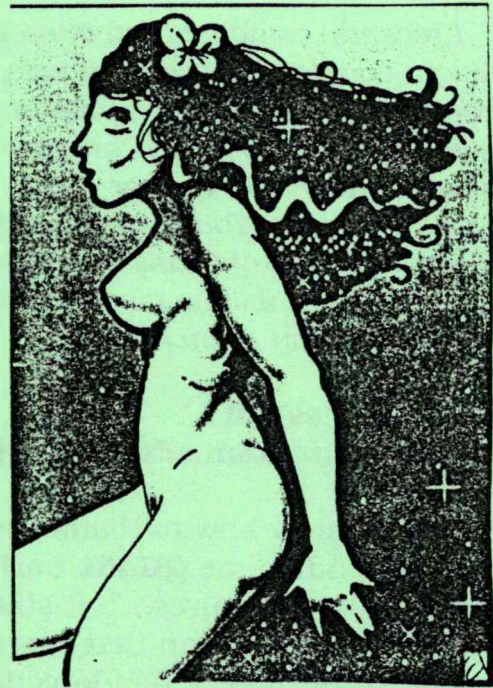
Geri took me to a sort of Shottle Bop place except there were no bottles. I bought tennis balls that lit up from the electricity in your hand (altho there was a hidden battery inside the ball,) "Eternal spinning tops" —which were marvelously mystifying...until **Dave Langford**, super skeptic, said "Is there a little watch battery in the base?"— and best of all, some magic crayons. These had a sort of "King" crayon that when used on top of a previously applied color changed it to a completely different color. I forget the name of them and I expect they were mainly for kids, but I got them as a present for **Arfer Thomson** who turned out some marvelous colored cartoons with them.

And, whilst we were there, **Geri** bought me a sort of luck piece. Sneer if you must, but it really works. I'm not really into rocks but I think it might be obsidian — the stuff Aztec priests made their nasty little sacrificial knives from. It's a sort of glassy black pebble. For years I carried it around in my pants pocket along with all the loose change and it has never once been scratched or marked. It's still perfectly bright and shiny just as it was when she gave it to me.

And what does it do? I don't know quite how to put it, but it's a sort of libido enhancer. I have only to show it to any woman and she becomes — well, not only complaisant but eager. It's a very remarkable thing. Sadly, ever since I took it out along with a handful of change in Sainsburys Supermarket, and the check-out lady stripped off and threw me down on the moving belt amidst our unpaid-for groceries, Susan decided she had better look after it to avoid anymore accidents.

I'm familiar with the obsidian pebbles you describe. We call them 'Apache

Tears'; the legend is that they were shed after the massacre of a village, when the men returned from war to find their families dead. Their chief use now is for jewelry, but your story could lend them an entire new popularity, as sex-enhancer. Beats their previous roles, as arrowhead and sacrificial knife. See, we all improve with age.



**Lloyd Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd.,
Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada M9C 2B6
(7-1-97)**

I've always enjoyed **Alan White's** artwork, especially some of the sexier stuff he produced and published in back issues of **Delineator**. I do miss that fanzine...

QUANT Suff 3 - The glass you saw is wonderful to see, but expensive. Come up to Toronto sometime; there's a museum of ceramics and cut glass downtown. The Harborfront Antique Fair happens every weekend here. Ever been to Corning, NY? I'm sure they've got some nifty stuff to show you.

QUANT Suff 4 - High Teas are becoming the fannish things these days. Conventions have them to substitute for the tired old banquet or brunch. I've been to several of them, and enjoyed each one. I belie my own British/Scottish heritage when I say I'd rather have a tea than a coffee.

I recently combined my interests by painting a couple of ceramic teapots, so I'll be prepared for our next tea with one fairly mundane flowered pot, and another in the shape of a snowman. I never got to Corning in my New York years, but I've heard the Museum of Glass has been sold. Now I'm hoping it will be moved to Vegas (unlikely as it may seem.)

Fred A Levy Haskell
(falh@maroon.tc.umn.edu) (mid-1997)

I don't know how to thank you enough for sending me **QUANT Suff #4** with your "Lost Treasures..." It started to fill a need for information that I hadn't quite realized (or maybe had forgotten) that I'd had. Of course, I still want to know more, more, more, but if that somehow never happens, this gem will still glow in my heart and memory. I loved Ray. I love you.

These are kind words. I believe (as I think many of us do) that, as long as we remember them, they are always with us. — I feel very much a part of old Poplar Bluff fandom. Although I arrived too late for the party, that lost treasure is, of course, the reason I am in fandom today.

Gary Deindorfer, 447 Bellevue Ave., #9B, Trenton, NJ 08618 (6-14-97)

Thanks for another issue (already!)

of **QUANT Suff**. It has quickly become one of my favorite ensmallled fanzines. As for the cover, **Alan White** is a real find. He has an original drawing conception. He should be a pro.

It is gratifying to learn about a fandom I didn't know anything about; namely, Poplar Bluff's fandom. An area of my fannish ignorance which was terra incognita has now been filled in.

Damn, **Arnie** writes good faanfiction. This is very well done, this apercu named "Lost Treasures of the Fan historian". But is "**Lichtman**" really a German-Jewish name? I had never thought of that. I'd always thought Robert was German. Now I find that perhaps he is of the same heritage as **Arnie**, to which I say bravo!

Dean Grennell is a verifiable Legend to me. When I was a neofan in the late 50s, his **Grue** amazed me and crogged my mind. One of the greatest zines ever. I disagree with Dean, however, that **Harry Warner** is a dour spoilsport. Myself, I regard him as something of a Master.

Sorry to hear that **Buck Coulson** has arthritis. Apparently there is little or no cure for it. I saw on TV a while ago that they're working on an arthritis vaccine that would be given to infants — thus they would never get it.



I was always more of a beatnik than a hippie too. Somebody once told me I was too intellectual to be a hippie and I guess that is true.

Someone offered me a convenient definition of the difference between beats and hippies. Beats are involved more with intellectualism, and hippies are involved more with emotionalism. I was rather too late for one, and too early for the other, and ended being a little of both.

**John B. Speer, 2416 Cutler N.E.,
Albuquerque, NM 87106 (12-1-97)**

I too tolerate warmth better than chill. Maybe because I'm of Southern descent, or because I grew up in the Dust Bowl days.

To us people on the outside, the distinction between Vegrants' meetings and Socials isn't clear.

I doubt that the Muscovites who are now sffen feared during the 50s and made bizarre plans of how to survive the holocaust. Their government probably told them they were safe.

Incidentally, I don't think plans to survive atomigeddon were bizarre.

The fillo on page 6 is signed **DEA** but credited to **Margaret Dominick** on

page 2. Are they the same?

Vegrants meetings are the informal club meetings for the Vegrants, the fanzine fans of Vegas. The monthly Socials were open house parties to which all science fiction fans were invited, featuring a large buffet. — a more costly and burdensome gathering to host.

Yes, Margaret Dominick and DEA are the same, but I've never been told how one name evolved into the other.

Gary Deindorfer, 447 Bellevue Ave., #9-B, Trenton, NJ 08618 (12-7-97)

Today is the day which FDR said would live in infamy. As well it should. Pearl Harbor's disaster was a low, sneaky thing for the Japanese to do. O well, on to QUANT Suff, which I thank you for sending me.

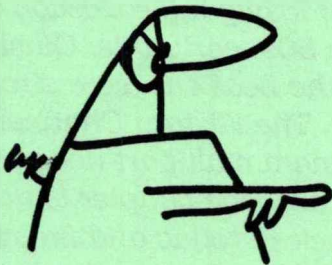
"A Visit With the Formans" is nice, atmospheric, sensory writing. You do this sort of thing so very well, Joyce.

Jonathan Worley Diefenbach shows great talent for such a young man. I expect Great Things from this budding writer in the years to come.

"Kentucky Home" is wonderful home-made history. Your ancestors were real redblooded Amurrican pioneer stock, weren't they? Not like all the wogs, geechees and gooks who have come to this country since. (Just kidding. I'm not really prejudiced.)

I have always admired **Dean Grennel's** writing, but his appearance physically in the photo on your pages leaves me atavistically prejudiced against him. Holding that gun with that baleful squint, he looks like my idea of an elderly, xenophobic, far-Right old white cracker. Fuck his gun! And fuck **Coulson's** guns,

YOU! YOUR
LOC IS NOT
EVEN-EDGED!



too. This country has too many guns in it. I know the city I live in does.

I thought of a rather derivative song lyric. Here it is for yr predilection: "I'm a macho, macho, macho man/I live at the YMCA with 200 other macho men."

Robert Lichtman, P. O. Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442 (6-21-97)

Loved your Poplar Bluff memoirs. The mention of "**Moby Whale**" rang a dim bell. I don't remember ever hearing **Don Jacobs** speak under this name, but I believe I saw him mentioned in various publications of the time. What article did **Burbee** send to **Duggie**?

Enjoyed **Arnie's** faan fiction, especially its ending. And not just because it's sort of about me, either! So far I only have one grandchild, a daughter, but one of these days one of my boys will probably have a son...



The part in it about Meyer finding a bunch of **Rotsler** plates implies to me that sometime in the future I'm going to get a lot more of them. Right now I have but one. This is one of the original batch of them that Bill did at the first Silvercon he attended.

Gary Deindorfer seems to like **Allen Ginsberg's** poetry almost in spite of

himself. "Some vivid word images," yes! Of the Pocket Poet series in which many of his most important poems originally appeared, I have only a copy of *Howl* - and not the first edition I used to have that I sold for \$100 when I was clearing of my "material plane" before moving to The Farm back in 1971, but a later one. However, I've got several volumes of collected poems, a couple collections of his journals, and **Barry Miles'** excellent biography. But I wonder if you've ever seen Ginsberg's book, *Snapshot Poetics*, a collection of his photographs that came out in 1993. Ginsberg's hand-written captions for the shots are also provided. A fascinating book. (Chronicle Books, 1993.)

Regarding "the high cost of working" in your comments to **Brian Earl Brown**, it's quite true that some will use this as an excuse to maintain sloth, but there is an element of truth to it. This has been discussed extensively in the mainstream media of late in the context of Ending Welfare As We Know It. Assuming that one will be reasonable in one's expenditures—brownbag it instead of eating out, wear your clothes until they're too disreputable to use in a work context, etc.—there is a minimum, which varies depending on one's individual situation, below which one's standard of living is higher on welfare than going to work for less than a wage sufficient to at least maintain one's welfare standard of living. Having been there back in the early '80s, I know.

I regret losing my collection of books from the late 50s, early 60s. Ginsberg and others from the beat era were strong influences on me. The History Channel is currently showing a multipart documentary, The Sixties, and one chapter is devoted to Ginsberg, Jack Kerouac and (in interesting counterpoint) Elvis Presley. It reminded me

so strongly of the urge for social change that dominated those years.

The Burbee piece was about his visit to a used book store, at which the proprietor refused to sell any of the books he liked.

**FM Busby (FMbusby001@aol.com)
(4-13-98)**

In the argument between FIAWOL and FIJAGH I seem to wind up somewhere around FIJAGHWCBAWOLIYDWI (Fandom Is Just A Goddam Hobby Which Can Become A Way Of Life If You Don't Watch It).

Obviously this mugwump position will never be popular; it takes too long to type. (And Macro me no Macros, bud. Not in WPWIN, which hates me.)

Our family has another odd story, this one involving one of the religious communities that flourished last century (just like present time, only now we call them cults.) First we find my great-great-uncle Jesse Sargent, home from the Civil War and in lousy shape due to having been wounded, captured by the Rebs, and thrown into the notorious Andersonville POW camp with little or no medical attention. Home from the war, Jesse spent his days sitting in a chair, his legs paralyzed.

This state of affairs continued for some years. Then, suddenly one day Jesse stood up and walked. Likely his legs were weak from disuse, but his paralysis was gone.

Now here I forget whether it was a shirttail relation or a family friend who looked up the religious community established by John Alexander Dowie (1847-1907). I think this town was somewhere in Iowa, if that matters.

At any rate, some weeks after great-great-uncle Jesse had resumed the active

life, the family heard from the relative (or friend), stating that she had gone to the Dowie-ite community, and requested that one of its days of prayer for the afflicted might specifically include Jesse Sargent. And that was the same day the man, several hundred miles distant and quite unknowing of any connection to the Dowie-ites, got up and walked.

So there you have it. We can take our choice between the story as related by his niece, my grandmother, or we can opt for glaring coincidence. Either way, Jesse walked.

My only UFOish sightings mundaned out on me. One, a brilliant spot of light that made mad dashes both vertically and horizontally, turned out to be reflection of sunlight from a great tall TV antenna, visible for miles across flat central Wash. The other was obviously a weak flickering form of ball lightning on a dripping day of pea soup fog. I didn't even vasten the mentyal waves from any little green men.

WPWIN hates all mortals, and answers only to one master, Bill Gates.

Uncle Jesse's miracle is certainly a more appealing story to accept than to attribute to embroidered happenstance. Some Mystery is more fun to believe, rather than assigning all trust to micro circuitry or voodoo.

I believe a significant number of sightings, especially those with the crazy jigs and jags in locomotion, could be attributed to reflection.

*I sometimes play with my cat, reflecting sunbeams off my wristwatch onto the carpet for him to chase, and imagine that we are the pets of a cloud-borne giant, doing the same for our amusement. — Or, we could just accept that it's TV antennae, weather balloons, and military craft. ****



Slugger
1986 - 1998