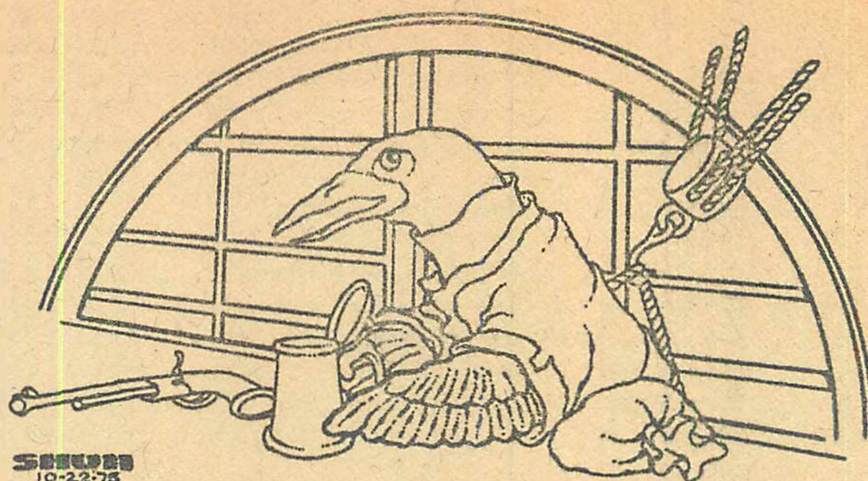


It's Halloween and the night for ghosties and goblins to roam. But instead of being out trick-or-treating, I'm sitting here pecking away at THE ROGUE RAVEN 17 while Anna Jo answers the door and gives away the goodies. It doesn't seem as though we have nearly as many kids stopping by as we used to in the old days. I think that the neighborhood must have been made up of children who were contemporaries of our own children and that they have all grown up at the same time. So we're lucky if we get a dozen knocks at the door during



the evening. Or maybe I should say we're lucky that we get only a dozen knocks. Anyway I'm trying out the Fleers Double Bubble Gum that I used to chew when I was a kid. You know something? It tastes like hell. Wait a sec. I have to see whether I can still blow a bubble with the darn stuff. Nope. Fourteen miserable failures in a row. They don't make it like they used to. It doesn't seem to have the right consistency. Ah, well. One of life's little tribulations; nothing is as good as it used to be. Including me, probably.

So all of this blah is by way of introduction to THE ROGUE RAVEN 17 and comes from Frank Denton, 14654 - 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166. The Rogue and I are still semi-monthly and he still costs \$1 for 10 issues. Me? I can be bought, but not that cheaply. The Bran & Skolawn Press is responsible and this issue is for Nov. 1, 1975.

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Continuing on briefly about Halloween, it seems that in recent years it is becoming less of a holiday for kids to go around and soap windows, tip garbage cans and out-houses (who has an outhouse anymore, anyway?) and perform other mischievous acts. The grownup kids seem to be getting into the act more and more. Banks are especially good at getting their staffs to dress up, at least here in the Seattle area. A lot of fun had by all. This year is the first year that I can remember at the college where some of the students dressed up. Not many, but it gave everybody a lift. I was working away at my desk this afternoon, had my head down reading something or other and noticed that someone was standing in my doorway. You know, just a peripheral vision awareness. I glanced up and damn near leaped out of my chair. It was a gorilla. Later I saw a couple of clowns, an Indian and a Dracula. I understand that there were others around. Fun! I do believe that nobody soaps windows anymore. We haven't had any soaped windows for probably five or six years.

JIM SHULL STRIKES AGAIN

Before I leave this front page I want you to take notice of the illo at the top of the page. Jim sent it along for use here and it really tickled me. That's the old Rogue right in character with his pewter mug filled with a tasty libation and his flintlock pistol out on the table so nobody gets any wise ideas. After he's slaked his thirst he's going to run his feather fingers through the ill-gotten gain in that chamois bag on his left. That's really a neat illustration. Thank you, Jim.

Jim also writes: "In the Rogue Raven you've blown away the image that others have had of me for the last years. I've told all persons that I don't read sf. History, yes. Home Improvement books, yes. SF - NO. I searched all over Westercon seeking a hard bound copy of THE DISPOSSESSED of which I've read up to page 169 and stopped. You published the facts concerning one of the half-dozen sf books I've read. Now I expect people will come to me and ask questions concerning a fine point in a novel. I'll be included in discussions. I'll have to stay close to Susan Wood so that I can point to here when I don't have the answer."

There it is folks. Another cover blown. Jim Shull, fake fan unmasked. When you see Jim at a con you can ask him for comparisons of characters in the works of Heinlein and F.M. Busby, plot outlines of Eric Frank Russell stories you read 15 years ago and can't quite remember and who James Tiptree, Jr. really is. That ought to keep him busy, interested in the con, and generally be gratifying. On second thought, don't. He may take it seriously and begin to spend his drawing time at reading instead. And we can't have that.

THE EXPOSITORY LUMP HAS A VISITOR

A while back someone asked me what the Expository Lump was, so now is as good a time to answer as any. Essentially it's a group of alums of the Clarion Workshops in the writing of science fiction which were held for two summers at the University of Washington. The people from Seattle and environs who attended one or both of those workshops continued to meet twice monthly to critique their stories and works in progress using the same method as they had used at the workshop. Over a period of time certain members moved away, lost interest, gave up in disgust or otherwise crawled back into the woodwork. The Lump was fading away to a mere nothing. Some new people were invited to join sometime last spring. Somehow I found myself on the end of one such invitation. I was quick to accept as I can use all the help I can get.

There hasn't been a lot of activity lately. People were working on things, but there wasn't anything to read. A couple of meetings were merely gab sessions. F.M. Busby had just finished a novel and was working on corrections to it. Vonda McIntyre has been living most recently in Oregon. Others of us don't write as fast or in as great a quantity so the meetings were arrid for a bit.

This last week we were visited by Suzy McKee Charnas from Albuquerque. Since we knew that she would be in attendance we decided to have a potluck. Excellent food and wine appeared magically and we ate like kings and queens. Ten persons showed up and there was enough to read for three meetings. We read solidly for two hours and then began the critique session. It was still going at midnight when I had to leave since I had to be on the road the following morning early to attend a meeting downstate. I think it buoyed everyone up a bit to have so many stories there and to have such good criticism. I know that it did for me. I found Suzy to be a very perceptive critic and I'm only sorry that I didn't have anything to contribute to the group that night. I have been working on a story that's somewhere near 5000 words now in first draft, but not nearly finished. I wish I were able to see more clearly what I was doing and where I was going, but I don't, so I just keep plugging away. I'm just grateful to The Lump for putting up with me.

QUOTATION TIME

I just finished Alfred Bester's THE COMPUTER CONNECTION and was equally enthralled and dismayed with it. Sometimes I found it terribly tough going, sometimes bogged down and other times just moving along rather nicely. Anyway there was one paragraph which I liked very much and wanted to quote here. :: "You add human worship of computers to an electronic revolt and you have a rough scene. There's nothing the damned machines can't do when the humans bob their heads and take infallibility for granted.

At least the Druids worshiped trees, which are sensible and trustable. You can't corrupt a tree."

MILEHICON 1975

I don't really want to write a long convention report here because I'd like to try to do a fairly decent job later on for Ash-Wing. But it's certainly something I can just pass by and pretend that I didn't go. Anna Jo and I flew down to Denver last Friday afternoon on the 2:30 flight. What may have been the highlight of the con took place shortly after we had taken off. At about 1000 feet we entered the clouds and didn't break out of them until about 7000 feet. The top of the clouds was like a white, flat blanket stretching forever. As we looked out in awe we were approaching Mount Rainier from the northwest. The top 7400 feet of the cone were sticking up through the blanket of cloud. Then further to the south doing the same thing were Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens and across the Columbia in the state of Oregon was Mount Hood. It was one of the most remarkable sights I have ever seen from the air. A great way to begin a con weekend.

Since I'm writing this directly on stencil and haven't had the time yet to sort out all of the events of the con, the rest will be rather sporadic. There was an excellent huckster room. You notice that I mention that first. It must be the collector in me. I'm afraid that Lois Newman got a good chunk of my money, but I must admit that she has an exceptional stock. Things like the new SCIENCE FICTION HANDBOOK by Sprague deCamp, the new biography of Edgar Rice Burroughs by Irwin Forges entitled THE MAN WHO CREATED TARZAN, a biography of Lord Dunsany by Mark Amory, Derleth's A PRAED STREET DOSSIER, Michael Harrison's THE EXPLOITS OF THE CHEVALIER DUPIN and a copy of THE SHUDDER PULPS which I had somehow not picked up before. Bob Alvis had a couple of nice Talbot Mundy's which I did not have, THE LION OF PETRA and THE GUNGA SAHIB. Both very clean copies with dust jackets. That reminds me; I still owe him for them. And he also turned me on to two paperbacks by Gerald Kersh, whom he described as very strange and different. The two titles were MEN WITHOUT BONES and ON AN ODD NOTE. Sometime later I'll report about them. Finally I was happy to find a copy of Midnight Sun #41, a very professionally done fanzine devoted to Karl Edward Wagner and story which Wagner has done called SIGN OF THE SALAMANDER. Both of these items were especially welcome since I had recently had a letter from Karl in which he wanted to rebut some of my arguments about what I consider anachronisms.

There were some lovely artwork folios in the huckster room as well and I was delighted to find them displayed in what is called a Spel-binder and which I was told was generally available at art supply stores. It seemed an excellent way to display the folios at the con and certainly would be a very good way to have access to one's art at home when there is no room to hang it and it ends up getting packed away.

People, of course, people. Guests of Honor were Joanna Russ and Bob Vardeman, both of whom gave excellent speeches at the brunch. The con attracted people from farther away than usual. Bruce and Elayne Pelz and Milt Stevens from Los Angeles, Laurine White and Jim McLeod from Sacramento. El Paso, Albuquerque, Phoenix, Kansas City were all represented. We had some excellent room parties and I was particularly happy to spend one evening with Bob Vardeman, Al Ellis and Dick Patten talking about writing, both sf and mystery-suspense.

Attendance was around 250 and the Denver crowd did a bang-up job. I got to see lots of old friends from Denver, the two Doris Beetems, Elder Goddess and Younger, and sister Rose, Don Thompson, Fred Goldstein, Paul Angel, Gordon Carb and especially Judith Brownlee and Ted Peak who did a fine job on the con. Even baby David was there in all of his radiant three-month old glory. Good costume show, much improved art show, pretty fine auction at which I picked up a couple of paintings and the page proofs to Joanna Russ' THE FEMALE MAN.

There was only one disappointment in the convention for me personally. Ed Bryant has been housesitting Harlan's house and flew in at noon on Sunday to be toastmaster. I never did get a chance to talk to him but I guess there'll be another year. The other disappointment came on Monday when we wandered around downtown Denver. We didn't get a very early start since the room party from the night before continued on until five in the morning. Up around 11, check out by 12, van to the airport to dump luggage, breakfast and then a bus ride downtown. I was sure I would run into a couple of western shops where I might find some western boots. Never did see one, although surely there must be some there. In Larimer Square, a tourist area where old buildings have been restored, I did find one leather shop with a magnificent pair of hand made boots. \$145 wasn't quite what I had in mind, however. One of the last purchases in Denver was at Dalton's Bookstore where I found the new book of Tolkien translation of SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT, PEARL AND SIR ORFEO. It's published by Houghton Mifflin at \$8.95 if you're interested.

LETTERS DO ARRIVE ONCE IN A WHILE

I must acknowledge letters once in a while or quit bitching about the non-responders to The Rogue. Ben Indick comes along with a letter in which he sounds a little old and tired and admits it. C'mon, Ben, things will get better: ::: "Since I shall be in Providence this weekend I ought to hear plenty from Bloch, Frank Belknap Long and others. I'm not a Con-goer, but this sounded like it should be a good one. Gerry de la Ree is going with me and I am hoping that the average attendee's age will be about 60, thereby keeping down the decibel count. I am, of course, doomed to disappointment." Ben was talking about the First Fantasy Con and I hope that I can convince him to a con report for Ash-Wing. That must have been a very special con and I'm sorry that I couldn't have been there. Friend Roy Squires was also going to be there.

Tom Fuja comes in with comments on Monty Python, Jethro Tull and Carlos Castaneda. Now how's that for a line-up. He wants to know what my thoughts are on Jethro Tull's new album, Minstrel in the Gallery. I'll leave that for next time after I've given it a closer listen; so far the listening has been casual while I've been working on something else and not giving it my fullest attention. Carlos Castaneda gets about the same treatment as all the other authors sitting around my house. I read the first one a long time ago, have all the others and mean to get to them Real Soon Now. It's hell to have so many book that I want to read and never enough time. Well that just about wraps it up for another time. Hope you all had a good Halloween and what about that World Series?

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

"There is nothing soft or bunny-rabbitish about Ed Bryant or his writing. He has the soul of a shark." --
Judith Brownlee about Ed Bryant in MileHiCon Program.