

stellar 15

combined with GAFIA and DIMENSIONS-----

is written and published as a continuation of GAFIA, by Ted E. White who is still receiving his mail at 1014 N. Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Va., even though he no longer lives there.

This issue is the result of yet another Policy Change. It is the linear descendant of GAFIA, nee GAFIA NEWSHEET, which lasted ten issues. Like G, STELLAR is now being mailed to forty or fifty select individuals on John Magnus' RUMBLE mailing list. The numbering continues that of STELLAR proper, which was born into fandom as ZIP. Okay, so now you're confused.

My first fanzine was published on a postcard mimeo, and on paper which measured 4" x 6". It averaged 50-60 pages, and 'sold' for 5¢. The logical title, and the one I used, was ZIP, "Fandom's Quick". With its fifth issue, ZIP had gained some slight prominence and it went full-size. It struggled through its seventh issue before I entered FAPA not too many years ago, and there it died a quiet death.

In that seventh issue, I had been talking about a new idea in fanzines, and I still thought about it: a fanzine devoted entirely to fannish fiction. A couple of years later--in 1956--Larry Stark spent the summer in Falls Church, and between the two of us, we resurrected ZIP, this time in a new guise, as STELLAR, a zine devoted entirely to fanfiction. The eighth and ninth issues were published with Larry as editor, and then he returned to college in the fall. I continued the zine, now swelled to 15¢ a copy and forty to sixty pages an issue, with Richard Eney's help, through the twelfth issue. After that issue, I decided on a Policy Change. I combined it with Harlan Ellison's long-defunct DIMENSIONS, which I had the somewhat picked-over backlog of, and set out to produce a 20-plus page monthly. Two issues were published under this policy, which was successful in that it--combined with a rather insistent demand for reader response--brought in more letters than had all the fanfiction issues.

The 14th issue of STELLAR has never been mailed, and is hopelessly out of date. I gave my mailing lists to Magnus to be typed up for the FANAC UNLTD. lists, and have not yet gotten them back. (I'll give you your dollar back at the Solacon, Dave Rike.) I shall mail it to all on the RUMBLE/GAFIA list shortly.

When STELLAR gafiated, I started up GAFIA in order to keep in touch with fandom. And GAFIA brought in a much higher letter-response than did STELLAR at any time in its 13-14 issue career. Thus, the old order dieth. The new STELLAR may indeed be a pale shadow of its old self, but it seems to be a more interesting one. Future issues will make use of material already run off or on hand for the old #15 and following issues. These will probably be used one to an issue, until disposed of.

Anyway, that's how it looks right now. I may change my mind again, but we'll try this bit for a while and see how it swings.

RON PARKER IS IN THE ARMY, according to my New York spies, von Bernewitz and Ivie. As Larry Ivie put it, "He just decided to join the Army." "At the age of 17?" I asked. "With his parents' permission," said Ivie. "When did this happen?" I asked over STELLAR's open wire to New York City. "About a month or so ago--maybe two months ago, two and a half; around there." Our spies are accurate. I speculated

that perhaps the disappointment of being thrown out of the Cult (for missing a couple of deadlines) had decided Ron to end it all by signing up. "How about that?" I said, and Ivie said, "Yeah, how about that."

THE BNF OF IZ is still coming along. You remember THE BNF OF IZ: that's the parody which Carl Brandon wrote which first appeared in the Cult, and which he expanded and polished for publication by the QWERTYUICPress. The stencils were to be typed by QWERTYUICPress's right-hand man, John Hitchcock, who vowed week upon week of steady fanac upon graduation in June. Well, John just recently returned from a ten-day stay in Cambridge with Stark and the Youngs, and a few days ago he presented me with a list of chapter headings and illuminated letters for me to design, so I know that he hasn't really gaffiated, and that deep in that hyper-active mind of his, he is getting ready to cut the stencils for THE BNF OF IZ. We may have this ready for the Solacon, though I don't know. Ron Ellick said at the Midwestcon that Brandon feared the "Compliments of the Author" sheets he had sent to be bound in had scared us off. Not so, Carl; it doesn't take that much to scare us off.

All kidding aside, THE BNF OF IZ is really great, well worth the 25¢ we're asking for it. (A sizable portion of the purchase price will find itself in the coffers of TAFF, I might add, but we're not setting this up as a charity-for-TAFF thing.) If you've dug Carl's MY FAIR FEMMEFAN and his other satirical pieces, you'll have a rough idea of how good THE BNF OF IZ is when I say that it's better. It runs over twenty pages in the single-spaced manuscript, which will give you a rough idea of its length.

"Not since THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR..."

RON BENNETT WINS! Oh, you've heard? Or maybe you hadn't...that Ron has won the TAFF election this year. He is due to land in New York, and come down to stay in DC with Bob Pavlat before the convention. We're all looking forward to meeting Ron, and I am quite pleased that he won...naturally, since I voted for him...

YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT THERE WAS NO GAFIA #8. There was, but it was not distributed. Upon hearing of Vernon L. McCain's death, I wrote a page about him. But on re-reading it, I decided that it might be better just to dedicate an unmailed issue to him. Anything I might have written would have seemed sticky in retrospect. I considered him a close friend, and was stunned by his death. Now, from Redd Boggs, comes word of the death of Francis Towner Laney, another fan of incredible stature, whose impact is still being felt in fandom. I never knew him as a person, but I regret his passing just as much. 1958 seems to be The Year of the Jackpot.

THE LATEST CRY OF THE NAMELESS, while thinner, includes a letter from Bob Bloch in which he discloses that IMAGINATION is revamping and that FANDORA'S BOX is getting the gate. I don't know how many other fans bought Madge only for Bloch's column as I did, but I hope Bill Hamling's circulation suffers.

In FANDORA'S BOX, Bloch made some of his greatest contributions to fandom in general. Each issue carried an editorial--sometimes witty, sometimes serious as well--which any fanzine editor would have been proud to feature as a lead article, and Bloch's fanzine reviews were among the fairest and the best in the field. I wish another editor would snap up the column if the chance exists; I hate to see it vanish into a fannish limbo.

WE'VE GOT MORE LETTERS, as I said in GAFIA 10. That's one of the nice things about a weekly (?) fanzine: it seems to generate a much greater response than would the same number of pages released on a monthly schedule. You may remember that as we left GAFIA 10 to sink into the marshy west, we were embroiled in a discourse on the Post Office, and Subtle Ways of Cheating the P.O. and Insuring Decent Service. At the lecturn was Professor

REDD BOGGS: [who continues] You may have heard, or discovered for yourself, that the post office now collects a service fee on postage-due letters in addition to whatever postage is due. A short-paid airmail letter that needed 12¢ in stamps and had only 6¢ paid will arrive with 11¢ due! If you are feuding with somebody whom you know is insatiably curious, and can be counted on to pay 11¢ just to find out what's in a letter, you could easily make him pay 11¢ for an airmail letter that, when opened, is found to contain blank paper. On the other hand, you might get a friend peeved at you if you sent him a short-paid letter. One nice thing about the new regulation is that a letter without any postage at all is delivered "promptly" to the addressee and given to him upon payment of the postage plus a 5¢ service fee. Previously, of course, a letter without postage was held at the mailing office till postage was paid. (2209 Highland Place, N.E., Minneapolis 21, Minn.)

HARRY WARNER, JR.: I have been feeling guilty for some time, receiving GAFIA without thanking you for it. This is the first break that I've had in a hectic summer either at home or at the office to turn my attention to fanzines, for the past month or more. You'll just have to accept this as proof that I've been enjoying your emissions and that any of them could have inspired this letter.

I too wonder that the big city groups try to put so much stress on sightseeing and such when making convention bids. Presumably they have been brainwashed by the hotel that will be the headquarters or the local chamber of commerce and told that this is the way the Lions and the VFW get their members to attend the national convention. As I've said before, I see no particular reason why conventions should be held in big cities, anyway. There's a lot to be said for conventions in medium-sized places: those with population from 75,000 to 250,000, for instance. Prices are a bit lower, there aren't apt to be enough fans in the area to split up into feuding cliques before the convention even starts, and the conventioners may get a little better treatment because the cities of that size need conventions of science fiction fandom size more than the metropolitan cities do. [The same argument favors situating the convention proper in a medium-sized hotel, no matter what the size of the city. This worked out well in Cleveland.]

It is a little late to say so, but I think that you (both singular and plural for Washington fandom as a whole) have reacted too bitterly and stunned-like to Clayfeet Country. Maybe it's because fandom has been fairly free of this sort of writing that it struck you as hard as it did. It's hard to remember any fan group that hasn't been the target of much nastier vituperation than the Graham treatment; this came back to me afresh just last week, when I was digging through a lot of old fan publications in connection with an article that I was preparing about Francis T. Laney for Terry Carr. You can understand that I can be perfectly impartial about this thing, because I know personally only one member of the Washington area's fandom, Chick Derry. But I'd hate to think what Pete could have written about me, if he'd dropped in on me unexpectedly and found me in the state of mind that I've possessed during a couple of recent invasions of Hagerstown by other fans. [The initial shock grew out of the fact that Pete had betrayed no overt hostility toward us during his stay. There seemed no basis other than maliciousness in his article. Since then he has distributed in the Cult and to a few others a three-page rationalization in which he more or less says that he meant nothing personal, and was merely trying to point out a few of our faults for correction. It still strikes me that if he bears us no enmity, as he claims, that he chose an odd method of constructive criticism. One needs only the proper state of mind to write such material of anyone, as you implied.]

You can find anything about the postal rates that the post office clerks have access to in the Postal Guide, which should be in every library. Whether it's been revised for the August 1 changes yet, I know not. Of course, you run into all kinds of semantic blocks among post office clerks, like the one whom Mrs. Carr knows and apparently believes that the little paper strip up the spine of GEM-ZINE constitutes a binding of a book, and the others who think that nothing is a book unless it has hard covers. In any event, I imagine that the next effect of the postal rate increases will be new delays in the speed with which mail travels. They'll get the Saturday Evening Post into homes on Tuesday even if it takes three days for a four-cent letter to go a hundred miles.

Once again, I'm sorry that I maintained such a long silence after each item from you, and I'll try not to be so taciturn if you continue this rate of gafiated activity in the future. (423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland.)

KENT MOOMAW: As you can see from the address, I'm operating from the same old stand. Yes, I made the Dallas scene, but I left just a couple of days after the convention groaned to a close; my money was running low, and I found the job situation in that area even more putrid than it is here, which is saying quite a bit. Besides, the only fans there I really gave a damn about are the Benfords, and they plan to go into hibernation or somesuch once school opens again in an all-out quest for Grades and, ultimately, Scholarships. Even in the short time I was there, the fuggheaded Futurians disbanded and reorganized: Orville Mosher is now the sole member of the DFS, which will enable him to run things in the club pretty much to suit himself, I imagine. Reamy, Randy Brown, and the rest of them are planning to form a whole new club, and Greg Benford is wildly suggesting that they call it "The Outsiders". Hoog.

Regarding my crifanac, you may be pleased/disgusted/annoyed [overjoyed] to know that I intend to begin ABERRATION again, and that blame for same rests greatly on your own shoulders. I mean, your encouragement at the Midwestcon put the thought of reviving the mag into my mind originally...and talking to Benford, pawing thru his fanzine collection and Randy Brown's while in Dallas, did a lot to fan the flame, as it were. Greg and I had a couple of long talks about what we both wanted out of fandom, what kinds of fanac would give us the most pleasure, and suchlike, and the one thing we both admitted we would like to do would be to edit a monthly fanzine, a fanzine with relatively simple format and layout, perhaps twenty pages or so, something on the order of PSYCHOTIC, ABSTRACT (excluding Vorzy's editorial personality, of course), or Mike May's EPITOME. Soooo...I'm gonna give it a whirl.

[Kent goes on to describe some of his ideas for the revived ABby, & mentions not having much material on hand. If I may, I'd like to plug ABERRATION as a fanzine worthy of the best material, and urge a flood of submissions to Kent. You can be sure of excellent representation in Kent's presentation and the QWERTYUIOPress's mimeoing.]

I'm temporarily dropping any plans I may have had to do a weekly fmz...temporarily, hell, I'm dropping them for good. I'm also ready to drop out of SAPS, unless the upcoming mailing is unusually fine. [Just as I applied for membership after over a year of ersatz membership...] I want to devote considerable time to making ABby a good fanzine, one of the type that hasn't been seen in fandom for two or three years. I'm in the Cult now, of course, and I want to remain a member, but publishing an FR once every thirteen weeks [you mean thirty-nine weeks] shouldn't interfere with ABby.

Dallas has absolutely no chance to capture the WorldCon bid, assuming for the moment that it had a chance before the Southwestercon, which is at best doubtful. (I'm commenting on GAFIA #6 now, in case you hadn't noticed.) No kidding, tho: anyone who attended that fiasco and was even thinking about supporting Dallas in 59 couldn't have possibly come away with that same inclination. Hart was frantically having the convention publicized in all the local papers, and completely neglected the staging of a good fannish convention. The worst possible ad of all. [Detroit in 59!]

Of course I agree in re con campaign literature. Thus far all I've seen from Chicago has been Demuth's stuff, which discussed almost nothing outside of the jazz available in Chi. Gad, man, half the people coming to the WorldCon probably don't know Art Blakey from Claude Degler! Rickhardt has done the same thing once or twice, but at least there's been other Detroit material, discussing the con proper instead of outside attractions. [Detroit in 59!] [Seriously, I suggested to Rickhardt that they get Lateef, Griffin, or some of the other modern men to play at the Ball, instead of a traditional group, such as has been used before, and he seemed interested in the idea.]

Also, I heartily approve of your stand in the Graham matter. Your ignoring him has been a devil of a lot more effective than a wild-eyed reply could ever have been. As you remarked at the Midwestcon, "Clayfeet Country" is doing considerably more to injure the reputation of Peter Graham than those of the WSFAns. [I don't seem to be ignoring him as much as I might, but I think the whole thing has died down a bit...he didn't even swear at me in his last Cult letter...] (6705 Bramble Avenue, Cincinnati 27, Ohio.)

WASHINGTON IN '60! Yep, D.C. has decided to bid for the 1960 Convention.

The entire Wash-Balto area is behind this bid, and a committee has been formed which includes Chick Derry, as Chairman, plus Bob Pavlat, Richard Eney, Bill Evans, John Magnus, Don Studebaker, Joanne Russell, myself, and the rest of local fandom. Our motto is "Not the biggest, but the best!" We are the first east coast group to announce a bid for 1960, and I hope that when you're voting on the 1960 consite in Detroit, you'll go D.C. More on this, and our reasons and supporters next issue. -tew

-QWERTYUIOPress

