

TIGHTBEAM

31

MAY 1965



TIGHTBEAM

TIGHTBEAM #31 is the official letterzine of the National Fantasy Fan Federation. This is the May 1965 issue, published by Duncan McFarland, 1242 Grace Ave, Cincinnati, Ohio 45208.

Many Neffers, and count me 'in, expressed disapproval at the rather backhanded slightings of Janie Lamb in the last Tightbeam in their letters. Editor Norm Metcalf was grotching a bit because he hadn't been advanced the payment for publication of the issue and hadn't received any typed address labels as soon as he wanted them.

It was pointed out that prepayment for Tightbeams by Janie is certainly not her job -- though she has done it entirely at her own risk. If an editor desires the money to be advanced he has to notify the executive with enough time to get results.

Ralph Holland typed the TNFF address labels when he was president. Ralph often made a duplicate set and passed it on to the next Tightbeam editor. The editor of Tightbeam is responsible for getting the letterzine to the N3F membership; it is not the duty of the Secretary/Treasurer to type the labels, though Janie out of her typical niceness has done it before.

A letter by Seth Johnson got squeezed out of the letter portion of this zine. Seth wants fanzines for his Fanzine Clearing House. He is selling the zines faster than he is getting them, and simple arithmetic or common sense will indicate that Seth'll run out of bundles to sell if he doesn't get zines at a steadier rate. I'm sending Seth a bundle, as the Fanzine Clearing House recruits a large number of fans to the N3F. How do you think I got into it all? The Vaux Hall letterhack hopes to keep the Clearing House operating at least into 1967, since that is how long his ads in AMAZING and FANTASTIC will be good for, now that the two prozines are going bi-monthly. So send those zines!

CONGRATULATIONS to STAN WOOLSTON winner of this year's KAYMAR AWARD for service to the N3F far above and beyond the call of duty. Stan got an award of \$10, plus a list of books from which he is to select two.

Editor of Tightbeam #32 is Art Hayes, P.O. Box 189, Matachewan, Ontario, Canada. Deadline for letters is June 15th. Deluge Art with letters, so that when you are swimming in the blazing summer sun you can think of Art slaving away indoors on Tightbeam, sweating profusely and ~~causing~~ ^{enjoying} the day he became a fan.

ATTEND the 1965 Midwestcon, held in Cincinnati June 25th, 26th, and 27th. There is a new location this year, the Holiday Inn North, 2235 Sharon Road, Cin'ti, Ohio. Reservations should be made with the motel -- which is situated on Interstate 75. It looks like a really good turn out this year. See you there!

tones as set on certain tracks of the aforementioned tape. In laymen's terms, a round robin for tape recording buffs.

Any sf fan who has a tape recorder, and wants to correspond by tape, is eligible to send me his name, address, and a short rundown on himself (i.e. interests, age, favorite author, pet peeve, etc.). Upon receipt of three names, I'll record on the first thirty minutes of a 1200' tape at 3 3/4 speed i.p.s. Then I'll send it on to one of the other three fans, who will tape his contrib on the last 600' of side one, send it on to the third fan, who will tape his contrib and send it to the fourth, who will tape his contrib and send the tape back to me. I'll erase my first contrib and tape an answer to the other three in its place, and send it to the second fan, etc.

Send me your name, address, summary on yourself, and most important, your tape recorder's speeds, stereo or monural, track capabilities, and maximum tape size. My specs are a monural two-track recorder with speeds of 3 3/4 i.p.s. and 7 1/2 i.p.s. with a maximum tape size of 7". If someone is afraid his recorder is too restrictive, (i.e. 1 7/8 i.p.s. speed only or 3 1/2 tape maximum, etc.) don't worry. If I cannot participate in the robin due to differences in recorders, I'll match you up with three fans who can.

Your tape recorder can be a valuable part of your fanac. Here's your chance to use it to its capabilities.

JAMES MCELROY

Remember the International Publisher's Speculative Organization? To quote Fred Patten in IPSO's last mailing, IPSO "...was founded early in 1961 as a serious discussion group: among science fiction fans, to talk over sfnal topics. It was planned as a reaction away from the 'mailing comment syndrome' prevalent in most sf amateur publishing groups. Material in the IPSO mailings was supposed to be sober and well-thought-out, to maintain a high literary level for those people really interested in a serious discussion of the fantasy field. As originally designed, in fact, membership into IPSO was limited to those who were fairly well established as fannish authors and publishers, or who had sold professionally."

IPSO is now dead —officially since Sept. 1963, when the last mailing came out. But we think it's about time for it to take a dip in Spenser's Well of Life; we want to revive it. We have established a new policy and a new name which we think might accomplish what IPSO's original founding fathers failed to do. The name is IPSOFACTO:

the

International Publisher's Speculative Organization for All Cavaliers to Oscillate.

The new policy is:

No fan may enter the realm of IPSOFACTO without first paying \$2 to the official editor (OE), who will also act as treasurer; along with sending a copy of the fanzine which he wishes to institute into IPSOFACTO. This fanzine must first get the approval of an official council before it can be run through the tryst. A yearly fee of \$2 must be paid by every member. Along with every new mag which a member wishes to place in IPSOFACTO must come a fee of 50¢. If Joe Fan has a mag called Fanzine currently in IPSOFACTO, then he must pay an additional fee to be allowed to run another called Fanmag through at the same time. If, however, Joe Fan wishes to discontinue Fanzine, and in its place run Fanmag, then he may do so without additional cost. Again, this must get the approval of the official council. A member missing more than two mailings in a row will be expelled. If a member does miss two mailings, then he can salvage his membership only by paying \$5 to the OE. If a member has less than five pages in a mailing, or more than twenty, he must pay a fine of 25¢ for every page under or over. To become a member of IPSOFACTO, a fan must have at least one year of experience in fandom. There will be three mailings a year, deadlines being Jan. 1, May 1, and Sept. 1; no postmailings will be allowed. No reprinted material or material that has seen prior distribution will be accredited to the editor of the mag in which

Fans are interested in things other than stf, but there are other places to discuss such interests than a stf club zine. David, your dad, Walter Breen, doesn't discuss coin collecting in Tightbeam. Last evening I attended a lodge dinner — what the group would have thought had I started discussing stf I'll let you guess. But I'm sure we'll both agree that it would have been out of place. So is a mundane subject in a club zine when said club plainly states its sole purpose is furthering interest in stf.

Discussion of stf matters will/should not become boresome; stf is not a stagnant thing. Stf moves along, changing as the world changes, always something new, never stale. New books, new authors, etc. New ideas of how things should be done in dear old Neff. Buck Coulson can always find ways of being controversial on something pertaining to stf. Roy Tackett can spring new ideas stfish wise. And if all else fails we can always pick a fuss with GMcCarr on why Heinlein's latest is the greatest.

G.M. CARR

Ed Wood has a very knowledgeable article on fantasy checklists in Tightbeam #30, though it masquerades as a letter. There is one important thing missing: does anybody have a checklist of where you can locate the mags listed in these checklists? The only purpose of having a checklist handy is to enable one to locate an item in a hurry. What good does it do to know in which issue to find the story, if you don't have that mag?

I find the whole concept of picking Hugos confusing: I don't know which items of current fiction are eligible. Second, I probably wouldn't have read 'em anyway. Third, there is so much published, that I don't see how anybody could read everything. Perhaps the checklist we really need would be a list of all the fiction published during the year (and by whom) and where, so that we'd know all the eligibles, then we could pick out the ones we had read and make our nominations of the ones we liked best.

Phooey on the idea that we are "supposed" to discuss stf... I'd rather read a good feud any day.

JOHN BOSTON

Transatlantic book swapping would be a fine project for the N3F. There are two ways in which it could be accomplished. First, collect the names of interested parties on both sides of the Atlantic, assign swap partners, and leave it at that. More complicated, but tremendously useful if feasible, would be a centralized bureau through which any member could order a book published on the other side of the Atlantic. Money sent by Americans to the American branch would be used by that branch to buy American books to send to England. Money sent by Anglofans to the English branch would be used to buy English books to be sent to America. Any imbalance could be corrected easily. Suppose the American branch received \$50 a month while the English branch only received \$30. The American branch would send the difference to the English branch, which would spend it on the English titles ordered by the people who had provided the extra money. An international money order shouldn't be too expensive.

All this would involve a tremendous amount of paperwork, and perhaps an initial stake from the N3F treasury. Maybe it could be set up as a joint venture of the N3F and the BSFA. (There would also have to be some way of calculating postage charges to be added to the price of the books ordered.)

SYDNEY SILVERSTEIN

Tapers of the sf world arise! Here's your big chance to talk to three fans at one time from all over the U.S. This amazing feat is to be accomplished by putting round robins on an acetate and mylar base, magnetic tape on a plastic wheel, and sending it on its rounds to be played on special playback equipment which produces

and then implies Ayn Rand to hold practically the same position, and Ed, in Niekas, does it outright!

The only proper segregation is the one JWC proposes: by strictly personal ability!

Then there was General Power who (according to TIME, March 26, p17a in our edition) expects to see Soviet nuclear missiles "floating in stationary orbits over every part of the U.S..." I am writing TIME to congratulate the U.S. on its new geographical position, since of course such orbits are possible only over the equator!

And the Cal gynecologist who has discovered that anesthetized patients may still hear, and who is (NEW SCIENTIST, Dec. 24, 1964) fighting a lonely crusade. In California, one of the strongholds of Dianetics, this is a "controversial discovery "!

DWAIN KAISER

Ed Wood: Perhaps the lack of science fiction fanzines in the field might be due to a lack of fans writing that kind of material. I for one would be glad to print almost anything slanted to sf, but I can't do so unless someone writes it for me, so I print what I get, fan fiction. I've written a few articles on sf for different fanzines and had not trouble getting them placed. Generally sf slanted material isn't hard to get published in our "science fiction fandom". The lack of material about sf is due to the lack of it being written.

There is only one thing I can see that you can do about that Ed, and that is to sit down and turn out some good science fiction articles. Send them out to the "fan magazines" — you could think about putting out your sf fanzine again. I would welcome its return, and so would many fans.

For the sercon (in the true sense, serious and constructive) fanzine, you would normally turn to England. They have more than their share of them, and most of them make very interesting reading.

DAVID BRADLEY

Coulson: Who is Austin Hall? Also, I note that you say ERB doesn't "stack up so well against Heinlein, Sturgeon, or Anderson". Naturally not — he didn't write the kind of stuff they do, and vice versa. You don't stack them against each other because of difference in writing style, and so on.

(Comments on Tightbeam #29 follow.)

Lamb: Even for fans, a steady diet of nothing but talk about science fiction will sicken you after a while! Tightbeam was established as a place where fans could talk when they wanted to say things that were addressed to all rather than to just a few. Soon you'll be getting more and more short letters until there's nothing left at all.

Singleton: What do you think is so super-special about the N3F? We're another group of fans. Don't get the idea that we're the only thing that's worth the trouble in fandom, because we aren't.

Dupree: What gives people the idea that Twilight Zone is better than Outer Limits? I have watched both, and I'd rather have even a cruddy thing like The Munsters than Twilight Zone. The day they remove Outer Limits I shall probably weep and wail as you are doing.

JANIE LAMB

Aha, I get a chance to answer David this Tightbeam; kinda sneaky, huh?

differently. One thing about the ANALOG business amazes me. JWC said that he couldn't get enough advertising, but he'd been averaging over eight pages of it an issue! Isn't that enough? Methinks there was something more than poor advertising in the demise of the large sized ANALOG.

If Lowndes is a better editor than Ferman, Lalli, or Pohl, howcum MAG OF HORROR has such a pitiful circulation (and also rather pitiful contents)? My wrath is really riled when you -- I think it was you -- say "Hasten the day" when talking about the folding of some of the sf prozines. From a would be pro writer, yet! I have always felt that, no matter how poor they may be at times, the sf promags are an irrevocable and unreplaceable part of sf-dom. We all know that FANTASTIC and a few others are poor-- but we'd be in a worse spot without them.

Robert Coulson: In the IF/FANTASTIC question two factors are working simultaneously. One is that IF runs certain things that almost everybody reads -- in particular Farnham's Freehold. That novel more than anything else is responsible for IF's large gains in circulation. FANTASTIC on the other hand consistently features those "pseudo-Conan" Brak tales -- which most people have learned to Keep Away from. And I don't think John Brunner helped at all. Some of his Ace novels have not helped to associate "Brunner" with "quality". Another help was IF's lower price tag in '64, 40¢ as compared to FANTASTIC's 50¢.

Ed Wood: You attack the fanzines for being filled with things other than sf. I recall (from the Aug. '64 TNFF) an informative article by Don Franson pointing out the dozens of fanzines associated with sf.

John Boston: Do you like Schoenherr any better in the small size? I do.

ANN CHAMBERLAIN

I received the March 29th issue of Ted Paul's Kipple. I am positively enthused about the progress he has made, since the first hecto'd copy I received in 1958. He has certainly made the grade, and 20¢ per issue is certainly well spent.

A note to WC members - please write to Art Hayes. He is beginning to publish his zines again, and with WC cooperation (so he has something to work with) he will publish something for us.

Elaine Wojciechowski says "Art Hayes made me a big batch of birthday cards - I'll have no problem for months yet. Then too, Elinor Poland sent me a couple of boxes of professional cards that I haven't had to open yet. The (birthday card) project is in good shape. Three times running, each time I run low on stamps, someone sends me some. Everyone has been just wonderful in trying to help. Do you really need help with Welcommittee?" (I'm trying to replace out-going members, Elaine.)

Wonder if it wouldn't be a good idea to have some sort of correspondence just between members over fifty years of age. Seeing the youngsters doing things is fine, but I'm alone unless I'm with an "over fifty" crowd. I'd even settle for an annual robin, with enough members that it would take a year to make one round. Gosh, it'd have to be mailed in a box, instead of an envelope.

PHIL KOHN

COA: Havat Miriam/ Ashkelon/ Israel

Ceterum censeo, lets have the names of Tightbeam eds a few months in advance. I know it's not always possible, but today I got one exhortation to please get my letters to the ed by Feb. 15. / Phil's letter is written on April 7th. 7

I want to complain about Ed Meskys and SaM practically accusing Ayn Rand of being against science and technology, which is rather like calling Senator Eastland a member of the NAACP! SaM, in the Feb. AMAZING, explains Fowler Wright's position,

a widow with a small son to fend for. I got a job in the Boston Public Library and took their course in library and reference methods. Then I finished out my degree with the Lowell Extension courses then available at Harvard and took their extension degree, the Adjunct in Arts (same professors and examinations as the Harvard A.B. but no football -- one extra course to make sure of plenty) in June of 1945. I left the BPL and went to teaching, and as I'd always been good with words, my major subject has always been English.

I soon discovered that common sense and English are often treated as if they were opposites. Words have to make sense, or what are they? I already knew too much to fall for the "teaching errors" approach to an English course. I've always worked on more vocabulary power, and as soon as the kids saw that I meant it, and knew how, we got some results. But never enough, so I've put in lots and lots of graduate study on the how-to-do-it part -- details on record and available to anyone who wants them.

I find myself too far ahead of current thinking on this and other subjects, though I'll be sixty next year. The fact is that advanced study takes you ahead of your times. As this is the common lot in fandom, fandom has always been congenial to me. Can't say that I'm always equally congenial to fandom; I've put in too much time learning how to express messages to set about trying to please everyone with everything I have to say, and so cut back to the least common denominators. But there are so many good readers and listeners in fandom that it's really great in its own weird way.

My interest in sfiction should speak for itself that I am one who likes new ideas. I have nothing to gain from the Writer's Exchange but information and the pleasure of increasing information for all. I am not teaching nowadays, just writing freelance and taking care of family duties, so it's a pleasure to keep my hand in this way. It helps with my writing since it's always easier to see how the other fellow does. I've always been overly prone to complex sentences when dealing with complex ideas. The Pro and Exchange people have been very severe with me about this. My writing has become easier to read in recent years as a consequence.

Special expertise is not needed for effective commentary on other people's writing. Anyone who reads sf is already a good reader worth hearing from if you want to know how you're doing before you send a manuscript to market.

I'm not setting myself up as any more of an expert than anyone else here. The sf reader who is also a sf writer should hear from many viewpoints -- my viewpoint is only one among others. My background is also both short and antiquated in math and some aspects of science that particularly belong in modern writing.

We need Exchangers of all sorts of tastes and backgrounds, so as to get a good cross-section of the readership we aim at. Also we can use exchange readers who are qualified in science, especially the gadgeteers and the mathematicians, even if their interest is in articles rather than fiction. I'd like to see the Writer's Exchange circulating more straight-fact material to get it improved as to readability and accuracy. It's certainly true that the best writing in this field has been moving into the mainstream. No doubt there are forces in current literature that have affected sf, sometimes beneficially; but my idea is that most of the benefit has been the other way around. In these days, a well written fact article can be more entertaining than fiction -- and fiction can be better for being aligned with the truths of its times.

GREG WOLFORD

Don Franson: ANALOG didn't go back to cheap paper when they switched sizes -- they're still using the same, age resistant, "antique" stock, only colored

ALMA HILL

I want to explain about the Writer's Exchange. People keep supposing that some elaborate setup is involved to handle planned logistics for a Marching Tribe. Nothing like that could possibly work in fandom. We are few and scattered; even big cities don't have large attendance. For example, MIT has two auditoriums in the Kresge building; when von Braun spoke on science, the big one was overflowing; but when Gernsback spoke on stf, there was plenty of room in the little one below. It should have been the other way around, if anyone should ask me, but that is how it is -- fans are few and far between, and this reduces our means as well as coordination.

The fannish project that works well is always a part-time project by one or at most a very few. The MIT kids agree that the supplementary index to prozines (1950-1964) is almost wholly Richard Strauss's card punching. Of course, he also had the MITIBM equipment to play with.

So what has the Writer's Exchange to maintain itself? Me, what else? All the others are completely free to write when and if they have the spare time and the ideas perking. Spare-time writing is up against many attention distracters; worse than stop-and-go driving for slowness of progress. This tribe doesn't march, it forages around and gets in touch via this cave. The exchange of information is workable because: 1.) We are all very literate people. 2.) We feel a good deal of mutual interest in mutual problems. 3.) All members are volunteers, so nobody feels timid about sending any half-baked ms. to any other on the roster. 4.) It really doesn't take much time to read a ms. and either comment briefly on a few salient matters or return it without comment. In short, what we have is informal availability, not a commercial service with guarantees. Advice is worth whatever you make of it yourself; it's all a matter of personal judgment. Who can guarantee or even predict that?

I take things as they come; it's the only way that can possibly work at all. The roster is up to sixteen, which is pretty good as fannish projects go since these are all volunteers willing for action. It's about ideal; if it gets too small they'll feel too feeble -- but if it gets too big, I'll be in trouble to handle the rush. My work is kept simple -- a handful of address cards filled out by the exchangers themselves, and some of the reading and commenting on mss. The only real time-burner is answering the foolish questions, as "What are your rules?" We not only don't have any rules, but we had better not tangle our time with any.

Rules are bologna; this is and must be a rule-of-no-rules project. I know that sounds primitive, but so are most of the creative faculties -- running this department would be a sinecure that could be entrusted to anyone willing to take it on! --I'd still want to make sure that said volunteer knew what he volunteered for. You know, some folks tear in all enthusiasm for putting up party decorations, but try to find a cleanup squad afterwards, eh? So my little pack of address cards and the exchange bulletin; there are chores there, but not big ones and they are interesting to me. Wally Wonderful Weber has been doing much of them, at that -- but any service has to have somebody who knows what the chores are and feels enough interest to enjoy standing by and getting them accomplished. But this club can be assured that it takes neither much time nor any intellectual brilliance nor special education to maintain this function.

Something probably needs to be said about my own background. It is quite strong for work of this kind. Any who wants to verify my background can get a transcript of my record of graduate study at Boston University by writing directly to the Office of the Registrar, B.U. School of Education. My undergraduate study was at Radcliffe and Harvard. I went to Radcliffe for three years on a scholarship, but then had to go to work to help my family. During World War II, as I was by then

If any of you readers correspond with foreign fan, please send me any stamps you get and don't want, as I'm a stamp collector. Phil Kohn: can you get me any Israel stamps? I collect Israel as a specialization area now.

I think ERB should have been on a U.S. stamp. For all his faults as a writer, he did spin a good yarn. I thoroughly enjoyed The Giant of Mars in the latest Ballantine edition. A word of warning - Tarzan 23 (and the Madman) stinks to high hannah.

I'm starting to write science fiction. I find that my problem is thinking up ideas, not the actual writing. If anyone can send me ideas, I'll be grateful.

It seems to me Doc Smith is trying to capitalize on the sex writing trends and also on his Skylark fame to sell books, as in The Galaxy Primes. The book starts out badly and ends badly, though in between it is fairly good, but could have been developed more.

It's Riddle time:

- 1.) What's a specimen? -- an Italian astronaut
- 2.) What do you call Santa's helpers? -- subordinate clauses
- 3.) What's a bigamist? -- an Italian fog

STAN WOOLSTON

Fandom is constituted so that editors and other active groups in it, including those in charge of worldcons, are set up with individuals in charge and with addresses of individuals. This means that some fan individual is most probably in charge of a regional conference, or other activity. This means that if for any reason someone loses touch with fandom for a while it is fairly hard to locate his addresses again; sometimes there are a few "steady addresses" and permanent fnas who seem to be around forever, and I imagine they may get cards and letters from time to time asking for the name and address of the "current editor" or "president" of some fan club. This occurred to me this week, and I've been able to send along the needed address. The reason such aid is needed is easy to understand in such a loosely-affiliated group as fandom. It's a good thing fans are usually willing to answer such requests -- but then that is the "other side" of fandom -- of cooperation based on common interest, enthusiasm, and a friendly attitude.

In fandom there is usually as little organization as possible to do a job. The same is true with that branch of fandom known as N3F, so that each activity is in effect primarily a volunteer job for those in the various areas.

Needless complication of over-organization must be balanced with needed organization. There is a need for workers in various areas of club activities, and this includes publicity work and editors of future Tightbeams. The simple thing for any volunteer to do is to write to the president of N3f who is currently me. Besides jobs at the top there are other essential jobs-- in the various correspondence groups, for example. This is no closed group: if you haven't had experience yet, that can be remedied. I would suggest more of you become active in correspondence; from that other areas of needed club work will be opened. Perhaps in six months or a year you would want to volunteer for one of the leadership jobs.

Paul G. Herkart is seeking names of authors -- and pseudonyms -- in GALAXY. Personally I'm interested in names of all pseudonyms. This is a continuing interest, and I know from correspondence that others have a similar curiosity. Perhaps we can cooperate to ferret out this information, and publish it for our own use.

Others probably have other primary interests in fandom. I would like more of you to share your particular interests, probably by writing letters to Tightbeam about them.

material each year in addition to being forced to publish once in a great while. In Tightbeam a person can contribute as much or as little as he desires, and he will not have to publish. It is easier to develop an interesting discussion in Tightbeam because of the diversity of readers; while in TAPS, for instance, there is only a limited supply of talent to draw from in making up discussions. If a fan decides that he is going to use TB to its full advantage and contributes some decent material, it is very possible that he will get more out of TB than he will out of almost any apa.

Franson: I fear that science fiction may gradually evolve into a "little magazine" field in which pseudo-literary types write incomprehensible stories and beatnic poetry. With the slow failure of today's sf magazines such a nightmare is indeed possible. Under Avram Davidson F&SF had embarked upon the road to ruin, and other mags may be following F&SF soon.

NED BROOKS

The Collector's Bureau is not doing too badly. We now have some 80-odd members. The next issue of the Collector's Bulletin will announce seven checklists and ask for volunteers for them to be circulated to for completion. These are not just ideas, all of them are about half done, and in fact one is finished. Five of them are due to Ron Eberle, one to George Fergus, and one to me. Other members have sent in corrections to #2, and helped with the checklists. And I now have plenty of material on hand in the way of articles. Enough for CB #4. But don't let that deter you if you feel moved to write.

Fritz Leiber says in Nickas / Ed Meskys's fanzine 7 he would like to see some comment on his recent The Wanderer. I enjoyed it very much, myself. Like all of Leiber's work, it is beautifully written. The mood and picture built up are marvelous, and the plot is very well handled. I thought it was too loose in form to ever qualify as a "great novel", but I liked it better than what I've read of Davy by Pangborn. It would make a lovely movie, if one would take the trouble to do an sf movie right. The scenes on the planet Wanderer will seem familiar to anyone who has seen Forbidden Planet.

I've also recently read Janifer's You Sane Men. I found it turgid, though it does present an interesting picture of a society which I hope is not possible. I found both the plot and characterization leaving a lot to be desired. In an article in Paul Krassner's REALIST (#56), Janifer explains that he wrote the novel because he believes that sadism is a basic drive in modern society. He goes on at some length about this, and says he hopes the books is a flop commercially, to prove him wrong. I'll bet!

For fellow Mervyn Peake fans, I just finished his Mr. Pye, which starts slowly but soon gets going. I wouldn't attempt to describe a Peake novel, but I liked it. It's not connected in any way with the "Titus Groan" trilogy. I can't resist hinting that Peake may have been under the influence of C.S. Lewis when he wrote it.

IRA LEE RIDDLE

COA: After June fifth (5): 617 Shue Drive,
Newark, Del., 19711.

Many people complain about the lack of communication in fandom. Add my name to the list. A short while ago I learned that two (or was it three?) new apa's have been started in the past six weeks. I hope all of these apa's keep going -- I may try to join in a few years. Couldn't more be said about them?

Ray Bradbury, showing that the conquest of space was a worthy dream; Frodo Baggins and Lothlorien, making you wish this was reality rather than fantasy; the ultimate development of an art form, Fred Brown and the one page vignette; Doc Smith, making bigness small enough for comprehension; The Dying Earth, yes, magic too could be; and that post graduate course in the terrifyingly possible, 1984.

Raymond Palmer was there, with Richard Shaver asking that unanswerable question of "What is Sanity?"; Eric Frank Russell insisting that faith in humanity is part of the answer; Jack Williamson (With Folded Hands) and John Campbell (Twilight) demonstrating futility, while Arthur Clarke did City and the Stars to show incredible potential yet to be. It was partly tragedy; both Stanley Weinbaum and Cyril Kornbluth being lost at the peak of their ability, but there was certainly comedy, too, Pratt and de Camp with Incomplete Enchanter, and Henry Kuttner giving us the Hogbens.

The unnoticed day by day good writing of many, Malcolm Jameson, Ross Rocklyn, Wallace West; hard working competence, Murray Leinster of course; yet still a place for sheer genius, Hannes Bok. The overnight stars too, Alfred Bester and The Demolished Man. Where else would one find a Sargeant Saturn in the letter columns, and a Ted Sturgeon in the feature story? A master dreamer like Abraham Merritt, and a Clark Ashton Smith showing -- differentness. Here also was H.P. Lovecraft, with beauty and ugliness struggling side by side; John Taine doing Before the Dawn to show that before man there was the earth, greater than any of its previous or future creations. Complexity of motive had its van Vogt, while simplicity of motive could claim its Burroughs.

Henry Kuttner had his nineteen pen names; T.L. Sherrard had only one remembered story. It was that "Crazy Buck Rogers stuff", and it was Philip Nowlan writing the Buck Rogers stories, and writing them well. Philip Wylie served capably as an irritant to everyone; Grag and Otho of Captain Furture argued about who was the more human, and Tweel of A Martian Odyssey showed what a true alien might be.

Rhysling, the blind poet of the spaceways, made it all respectable to the outsiders, but Frank Owen with his quiet and gentle oriental fantasies also played his part and played it well.

Hugo, who started it all, could not manage to come back with a new magazine, yet is still accepted as the elder statesman. Edgar Rice Burroughs came back stronger for each new generation. Fantasy Press, Shasta, and Prime Press fell by the wayside, but Arkham House is still with us. There was the decline and fall of Virgil Finlay, some of us remember more than the beauty of simplicity of line of today; there was once the fascinatingly grotesque, clearly the equal of Edd Cartier, as well. But there was also development of talent, Gordon Dickson and Roger Zelazny.

It was UNKNOWN, FFM, and also MARVEL TALES, and who can say that each did not have his part and do it well? Or that Conan did not have his reason for existence?

Yes, it has been ridiculous, irritating, and expensive to enjoy it, but always and forever it has been fun. Isn't that enough?

JOHN KUSSKE

I was doing some thinking (rare, yeah...) about Tightbeam. It struck me that, if used right, Tightbeam could easily serve as ones umpteenth apa. What is the difference between The Cult or TAPS and Tightbeam? All the advantages lie in Tightbeam's favor.

In the Cult or TAPS each member is required to submit a certain amount of

PAUL G. HERKART

At the last Philcon I had a brief discussion with John Boardman and Lester del Rey on the possibility of the actual existence of psi powers. Boardman's position was that if psi exists, it would necessarily have to interact with the other forces that we recognize, such as the electric, magnetic, gravitational, and intra-nuclear attractions and repulsions. This may seem far fetched at first thought, but it is not, for to have any effect on real objects the psi force needs a handle, and what better one than the forces that usually control atoms and electrons? Even telepathy must somehow be converted into an action of the molecules of the brain. But now Boardman also wants to know just how the reaction is accomplished, that is, anyone proposing psi should also propose how it works. Has psi a strong interaction with electric force? Or a weak interaction? This is physicists's jargon, and aside from being asked too early in the game, can also be dismissed on the grounds that the physicists do not as yet have their own house in order. They have neither a complete theory of elementary particles, nor a satisfactory theory of gravitation.

Del Rey's position was that every account of psi that has been investigated competently has failed to demonstrate psi as a fact. There is always another explanation for a supposed telepathy. Somebody else moved the jar that teleported. But on the other hand there has been little scientific investigation starting from scratch, except Rhine's and Rhine got positive results. Too, there have been people whose personal experiences have compelled them to believe in psi. Take ESP: a personal memoir by Rosalind Heywood as an example. Despite del Rey, then, the evidence in the record still leaves the existence of psi a moot point.

But del Rey brought up during the course of the discussion a point that merits repeating. There is one out in the meshing of force with force to determine the course of the material world, and that is in the application of Heiseberg's principle of indeterminacy. In any particular physical example of forces acting on bodies there is always a measure of uncertainty in the result. This is because the quantum laws of nature are only laws of probability and not hard and fast laws of cause and result. This del Rey brought up in answer to a question irrelevant here. But now suppose that the psi laws act through shifting the probability of what the quantum laws predict. This does not violate the quantum picture at all, in fact, it is superposed on top of it. And in anything as big as the brain, or a jar, the probabilities of what can happen are infinite, although the range of what should happen is small. Suppose, then, that psi operates simply by making the improbable happen instead of the probable. You've all heard of the stone that suddenly flies away because all its molecules suddenly are going in one direction, and you've all heard of the fifty million monkeys that type all the books in the British Museum. Each of these is a possibility, all psi has to do is to make it happen first instead of probably.

If I've represented incorrectly the views of either Boardman or del Rey, my apologies; this is by memory and some time later. But if I've misrepresented you won't you graciously lend your name to a straw man for the sake of the argument?

At the Pacificon I met an author who challenged me to find out his pen name. I can't disclose the date he gave me except that he published in GALAXY. I think it is fair though to ask anyone who knows the pen names of authors published in GALAXY to write me. Help, those who will, then.

JAMES TOREN

Has anyone any information as to if there ever was an N3F decal? I'm kind of interested, because I thought I saw one on a car in this neck of the woods. It would be kind of interesting to know if there is such a thing, as it would mean there's another fan around here.

it appears. At least five pages of a zine must be original -- that is, not reprinted or distributed outside of IPSOFACTO prior to the deadline. If, however, reprinted material causes a zine to run over the page limit, the editor will still be fined. At least two pages of a zine must be completely composed of sf and/or fantasy. No mailing comments will be allowed; if it is desirable to comment on a particular part of a fanzine, then a letter must be sent to the editor of that mag, in which all opinions shall be expressed. The editor to whom these are sent must then print them in his own mag, if he so desires. Subscriptions to IPSOFACTO will not be allowed.

All comment should be sent to James McElroy, 14¹/₂ East Union Street, Penns Grove, New Jersey 08069.

DICK ENEY

COA: 6500 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, Va.

This is a short set of notes on travelling to England this summer, for the benefit of N3F members who have been thinking over the idea of combining a vacation abroad with a trip to the World SF Convention in London.

You'll need to get a passport, an immunization, and, no doubt, some information. (Money will be handy, too, but that's something for Private Enterprise to provide.) Let me fill you in on How To.

The passport, to begin with. You'll need a \$10 bill and a couple of passport photos before you apply. (Snapshots and Polaroid photos won't do; the pics have to be on a special base that will withstand the heat of permanent mounting.

The necessary application blank is available at your city hall or county courthouse, or, in large cities, at special offices. (For that matter, you can send me a stamped self addressed legal-length envelope and I'll send you the papers you need; the passport office is practically next door. Does this count as an N3F service, Stan?) Fill this out -- a simple job unless you happen to be a naturalized citizen -- prove your citizenship with something like a birth certificate, prove that you're you with some kind of current identification, certify that you aren't some kind of Wicked Subversive, and take an oath registering your allegiance to the U.S.-- that is all there is to it. If you have a state or local official process your application, he's entitled to collect a fee for doing so in addition to the cost of the passport itself.

How long will it take? Five days is a minimum. You can be sure that things will slow down as the travel season crush increases, so don't put it off until the last minute.

Visa? You won't need one to go to Great Britain as a tourist. The "visa" is a note, made on your passport by the diplomatic service of the country you're visiting, which indicates that you're acceptable; many countries now waive this sort of checkup for holders of U.S. passports. (Just as well, too, or you'd have to visit the nearest British consul.) That's one of the reasons for the certification and oath I mentioned above; if others are willing to accept the mere possession of a U.S. passport as evidence that the holder is OK -- that the U.S. government is vouching for him -- the least we can do is make sure that we really can vouch (to some extent) for anybody who gets one of our passports.

Immunizations? Well, it's like this. You don't need an immunization to go to England, but you should have one to get back into the U.S. The required immunization is a smallpox vaccination -- and not just any ol' vaccination, but one given by a registered physician and entered on an International Certificate of Vaccination. Your local health department can give you the information about proper procedure; it varies from place to place so much I couldn't summarize it here. The International Certificate of Vaccination is a standard form which you can get from local or state health departments or the U.S. Public Health Service -- and, for that matter, most travel agencies and ticket offices.

Without such an immunization the Health Service is authorized to keep you in

quarantine up to fourteen days. They may not think it's necessary to do so, but then again they may. One good thing: a vaccination doesn't hurt much. (This opinion rendered by a Certified Cward, namely me.)

OK, now you're all set to go and come back. Now, what to do while you're there? Well, if you're not in the income bracket that can afford to go to a travel agent and get him to program all the interesting sights for you, check with the British Travel Association, 660 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. They love to send people information on touring Britain, and have brochures on everything from a series of half-day and full-day tours of the London area at \$2-\$5 up to 15-20 day tours that cover practically the whole British Isles for \$150-\$210 (including food and lodging). The BTA doesn't operate these tours itself; they're managed by British transportation companies. BTA will, however, send you the necessary information so you can plan your vacationing ahead of time.

Ah, yes, I knew there was something else I wanted to mention -- the LonCon II, being held in England this summer -- weekend of August 28. If you want some dope on that, write Bill Evans, Box 86, Mt. Rainier, Md. If you send him a \$2 bill (or even a couple of dirty 'ol' singles) he'll give you a membership.

STEVE BARR

In F&SF I have noticed with interest how Judith Merrill has handled her book reviews. Mrs. Merrill groups all of the books into one general section and then compares them against one another. This I find bad. She compares the books well, and yet this means nothing because authors never should be compared against one another, just against their own works, and sometimes not even that. Her thoughts lead off into one another and make for confused reading since one must keep in mind which novel she is talking about, and not get it confused with another. I find that Mr. Miller in ANALOG does a far better job with his opening remarks and then the reviews.

I have read the Ninth Annual of the Year's Best SF edited by Merrill and throughout the volume she mentions the Double Bill and Playboy surveys of sf authors. I have no idea what issues these appeared in, and wonder if some ghod Neffer has the issues and wouldn't mind selling or loaning them to me. / The D:B survey appeared in issues 7-9 of Double:Bill, edited by Bill Bowers and Bill Mallardi. I seem to recall reading in D:B that all copies of issues of 7-9 have been distributed, though, so I doubt if you could get any from the editors, Steve. I can't recall what issue the Playboy survey appeared in, though Aug. '63 seems to jump into mind. /

Terry Carr and Don Wollheim have a collection out entitled World's Best Science Fiction: 1965. I have always enjoyed the Merrill items since they are two years behind time and she provides interesting commentary with the fiction. Here we have stories from 1964 still fresh in this reader's mind. If you don't read the zines, then this will be a good collection for you since it contains the best (and they are the best) from '64, while if you do read the zines, this collection is 50¢ down the drain. It provides a good reference source for some stories; saves dragging out the collection. / Or was it April '63 -- 64? 'Aug. '64? /

A company is coming out with old classics like Uncle Tom's Cabin, Understood Betsy, etc. Here are some of the blurbs that I have found on their volumes:

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs -- "The story of a ravishing blonde virgin who was held-captive by seven deformed men, all with different lusts."

Cin ei lla -- "A beautiful passionate woman bares her naked foot to the man she loves while her stepmother and stepsisters plot to cheat her out of the one memorable night of her life."

Treasure Island -- "The crew of a ship bent on rape and plunder lands on an island inhabited by sex-crazed cannibals. An innocent boy finds the secret of growing up."

Little Red Riding Hood -- A girl goes to visit her grandmother only to discover a wolf in her bed. Read what happened when the girl refuses to get into bed with the wolf."

It seems that Tricon (Cleveland, Detroit, and Cincinnati) has really gone off the deep end for the Worldcon bid in 1966. They are running a number of BNF's through as councilmen and chairmen, and ex-con chairmen, and list people as long as your arm. They have selected the Sheraton Cleveland Hotel for the con, but may confuse everyone by changing at a later date. They also report that the guest of honor has accepted, and a full write up will appear in their first progress report. Sounds like they've already won, doesn't it? It seems that Syracuse is still in there.

/ Steve then goes on to describe the various preparations Syracon has made -- he pretty well repeats what Jay Kay Klein says in his letter, so I'm cutting them out. 7

The Syracuse committee seems to have the Tricon group beat by a mile, and yet fans haven't decided yet.

/ Ben Jason wanted men that had convention and fannish experience to advise him as to how to throw the best convention possible. Ben felt that he could use help from experienced fans as to how to avoid the little mistakes that can crop into cons unless one is on the lookout for them. That these aides to the Tricon committee, Larry and Moreen Shaw, F.M. and Elinor Busby, Earl Kemp, Ed Wood, Stanleigh B. Vinson, Frank Dietz, Charlie and Marsha Brown, Sam and Christine Moskowitz, Bill Donaho, Dr. C.L. Barrett, James Taurasi, Sr., and Frank Prieto, Jr., are to a large extent BNF's is incidental.

If the Tricon committee decides to change the hotel in order to situate the convention in a brand new hotel right downtown it will announce the decision in ample time so that confusion will not reign. Such a decision would be well publicized by the committee.

If "Syracuse committee seems to have the Tricon beat by a mile", why? You don't give any reasons. As I mentioned, you did list some of the characteristics of the Syracon bid which I thought repetitious and hence cut out. But you did not list comparable attributes of the Tricon bid, make comparisons, and attempt to draw a conclusion that was logically arrived at. Your position regarding the Rotation Plan is not even given.

Your statement that Tricon has "really gone off the deep end for the worldcon bid in 1966" is certainly a change from the usual Syracuse refrain that Ben Jason heads a lathargic bid. 7

JAY KAY KLEIN

Duncan McFarland in Tightbeam 29 has quite a bit to say about the Syracuse bid for a worldcon in '66.

Supporters of a Syracon bid are called "A limited faction" and our opposition "the Cleveland group". The Syracon bid has very many supporters, spanning North America and the Atlantic Ocean. Our committee has been in its final form since Oct. 1964 -- six months ahead of the newly formed Tricon committee.

The Syracon Committee: Co-Chairmen, Jay Kay Klein and Dave Kyle. Secretary, Ruth Kyle. Treasurer, George Heap. Asst. Treasurer, Cindy Heap. Publications, James Ashe, Anne Ashe, Jack Smith. Non-committee member in charge of press relations, Richard Wilson.

After the original Cleveland committee announced that Cleveland was withdrawing from the bidding, Syracuse was the only announced bidder. We still have the earliest announced convention committee. At the time Duncan wrote to Tightbeam, he might more appropriately have referred to Syracuse as the only convention "group" then in existence.

/ Ben Jason attended the CFG meeting at Roy Dickson's house in early Dec. of 1964. Cleveland was solidly in the running. Ben's convention talk activated me into writing Tightbeam -- I've been personally involved in the Tricon campaign to a slight extent ever since. I can attest that Cleveland has been continuously and enthusiastically bidding for the convention since early Dec. 1964. I won't comment on the degree

f Cleveland continuity before then, because in those days I was Out Of It.

The Cleveland bid had always been wholeheartedly supported by the rest of the Midwest (with usual couple of exceptions). This support was formalized when the Tricon committee was formed in early Jan. 1965 -- not the late March or April that Jay Kay implies. But the point is that the Tricon committee was not a new committee at all; it was an expanded form of the Clevention II committee, with Ben Jason still at the head and all the plans and preparations of the Clevention II committee still in use.7

We can indeed put on a superior convention. We have a first class hotel, fully air conditioned, committed for the '66 con. Guaranteed are 350 rooms for conventioners, plus 250 more rooms available so everyone can be in the hotel. We will be the only convention! An entire floor will be at our exclusive use for four days, including an 1100 capacity auditorium and suites of public rooms. Free parking, excellent self-service elevators, a jet airport twenty minutes away, a bus terminal five minutes away, and super highways linking Syracuse with the entire network of national super highways. For vacationers and non-fan families, the New York State Exposition at Syracuse coincides with the worldcon. Advance programming has already been thought out and new and interesting ideas have been developed.

There is no question of "suspending" the rotation plan. We're simply requesting under the rotation plan rules that Syracuse be permitted to bid also, along with the geographical area favor for special consideration in '66. To achieve this Syracuse requires 75% of the vote at London, which should give Tricon enough of an edge to keep Syracuse from walking off with the bid by virtue of our earlier start and firmer position.

At the Pacificon Syracuse was prepared to bid for '65, and had a hotel guaranteed. We would have done so had London not placed a bid. With the consent of the London delegate, Syracuse at the Pacificon offered to serve as an alternative for '65 in case the international situation should prevent travel.

The innuendo that Syracuse has "drawn swords" and has chosen a "battlefield" that is "remote and nearly inaccessible" is both highly garnished and provincial. People have been going to England for years. The airplane has cut the time of travel considerably.

It's hard being characterized as "impatient" to hold a con before the "designated time". The place for a con is designated by the fans at a business session in accordance with legally adopted rules. Duncan writes that fans cannot be trusted to vote in a rational manner. This type of argument against democratic procedure dates back at least to Alexander Hamilton. / Or to the awarding of the '53 bid to Philly at Chicon II.7

/ I'm too short of space to say much -- but I believe the above by Jay Kay skirts the true issues involved in the con fight. Who can throw the best con? Should the rotation plan be shelved or continue? The Syracuse group are proponents of free competition in worldcon bidding. The Tricon committee favors the plan; it feels that most fans attend cons to have fun, not to wheel-and-deal in the smoke filled room -- if the fan is lucky enough to gain admittance. The Tricon committee is experienced, able, and proven. To concur with Jay Kay, "discuss the issues and support the convention site and committee that you feel has the most to offer fandom."7

Be sure to ~~WRITE~~ to your TtBm editor for issue #32: Art Hayes, P.O. Box 189, Metachewan, Ontario, Canada. Deadline for letters is June 15th. ~~WRITE~~!

From: Janie Lamb
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