

# The WSFA Journal

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The first WSFA Journal, edited by the late Don Miller, appeared in March 1965, forty years ago this month. He produced at least 84 issues over the next decade, some of them over a hundred pages long. In 1974 or 1975 he stopped. The WSFA Journal was restarted as a four-page newsletter in 1978. There have been 313 "second series" issues (including this one) in the 27 years since then, with 15 different editors.

February was a bad month for WSFA. We lost Jack Chalker, who had been associated with the club for 44 years. We also lost Phyllisann Courtis, the last of WSFA's seven founders. We had lost track of her until recently, since she left long before Jack Chalker, or anyone in the club today, had joined. In January I found her email address, and emailed her. On February 7th, I got a reply from her daughter, saying that she had died the previous day. There will be a memorial service in late March or in April. I will tell more when I find out more.



As if that wasn't bad enough, F.M. Busby, one of my favorite authors, also died in February. And Andre Norton is seriously ill and not expected to survive much longer.

March is the hundredth anniversary of the first death of a major SF author, Jules Verne.

## John Clute's obituary of Jack Chalker

Reprinted by permission from The Independent, Obituaries, 18 February 2005

Jack Laurence Chalker, writer, born Baltimore, Maryland 17 December 1944; married 1978 Eva Whitley (two sons); died Baltimore 11 February 2005.

Until he became too ill to travel, Jack Chalker remained a figure of high visibility in the American science-fiction world. Manoeuvring his powered wheelchair into elevators with a grimace and a grin, he endured with good-humour and in public the exact slings and arrows of our mortal coil that his many heroes and heroines managed to escape, though never quite scot-free.

They always paid to get free, but the ordeals to which Chalker submitted them had their own romantic allure. In the end, it was almost always fun to imagine being a Chalker protagonist; he was perhaps the most successful (and sophisticated) author of escape fiction the science-fiction field had ever seen.

Jack Laurence Chalker was born and grew up in Baltimore, Maryland, and was educated there, taking a BS from Towson State College and a graduate degree from Johns Hopkins University. He spent the rest of his life in touch with these roots, working at first as a lecturer in history at high school and college level, with stints at the Smithsonian Institution in nearby Washington, DC.

He was early active as a science-fiction fan, and founded the Mirage Press (which still exists) in order to publish various non-fiction works on the genre, including *The Necronomicon* (1967) on H.P. Lovecraft; *An Informal Biography of Scrooge McDuck* (1974), for which he enlisted the help of the then unknown Carl Barks, who had anonymously created, and subsequently both scripted and drew, the Disney-owned McDuck; and most importantly the various editions of *The Science-Fantasy Publishers: a bibliographical and critical history* (1991 onwards).

This massive enterprise in hands-on scholarship gives an indispensable insight into the depth and complexity of the fan subculture which, only half-secretly, shaped the genre of science fiction between 1945 and 1960.

From 1976 on, however, Chalker worked primarily as a novelist, publishing some 65 books before illness stopped him in 2003. Many of these volumes were in fact parts of extremely long single novels broken into marketable portions by his publishers, and it is hard to say how many individual tales he told. In all, he published nine multi-volume series, of which the first and longest-lasting, the *Well of Souls* sequence published between 1977 and 2000, was the finest, and probably the most successful with his readers, with whom he maintained close ties through fanzines, convention appearances and websites; the sequence was published in mass paperback format. From the first, as *Well of Souls* demonstrates, Chalker focused his energies on the large non-“literary” readership base, which reciprocated his loyalty, for many of his books remain in print, despite quarrels with various publishers.

The heart of *Well of Souls*, and of his other sequences, is transformation. Typically a human being - possibly on the run, possibly quite badly overweight or socially inept - will find himself or herself cast into an otherworld, transformed into a new body, frequently naked. This world will be governed according to seemingly arbitrary rules by godlike figures, not necessarily seen. After many tribulations, some of them sexually arousing, the protagonist will work out the rules of the game, and escape - into the next volume, or some happy vale.

Later sequences may have repeated this pattern until it became formulaic; but Chalker series from the 1970s and 1980s convey their messages of release with an elated intensity.

Chalker's best novels are probably two or three singletons from his early years. The most sustained of these is *Dancers in the Afterglow* (1978), set on a colony planet where the enabling transformations are forms of torture, and death comes as the end. Sadly, this novel and two other fine singletons, *A Jungle of Stars* (1976) and *The Web of the Chosen* (1978), have been long out of print.

In person, in his prime, Chalker was a burly, gemütlich individual easily mistaken for a redneck by those insufficiently familiar with the complicated richness of mid-American life a few decades ago. He was a Kentucky Colonel, an Honorary Mayor of Baton Rouge, a life member of the Sierra Club, and a Democrat. Like the 1960s fan culture he served so well, he was deeply American.

John Clute

## Michael Walsh's memories of Jack Chalker

In the mid 60s through Lin Carter's "Our Man in Fandom" column in *Worlds of IF* magazine I discovered Mirage Press. I ordered some books and the owner, Jack Chalker, mentioned in a postcard WSFA. Thought I might want to check it out. Which I did, and I haven't left.

In the 1977 during Balticon, Jack asked me if I would be interested in running the Dealer Room. The 1977 Worldcon Dealer Room.

January 1979, a small convention in Pennsylvania, Jack and I are sitting in the empty con suite, what few folks attending having gone off to dinner. In walks Steve Miller (the future writer, not the musician) and asks. "What party is this?" Jack and I look at each other and one of us says "Baltimore in '83" Worldcon bid. Steve says. "Great!." Followed by "How much is a presupport?" The rest is history.

During the run up to ConStellation, during one of the meetings dealing with the two main halls to be used for the banquet/Hugos there was much discussion about smoking. In those days smoking had not been banned from the convention center. Jack, who was rarely seen without coffee in one hand and a cigarette in the other suggested we just ban smoking from the function. Which left everyone rather speechless.

Perhaps due to that first contact my interests have always been more book oriented, and to that end the books I have published owe a lot to Jack.

## Jack Chalker, the WSFA

## by Keith Lynch

Jack Chalker was associated with WSFA for most of his life, and for most of its life. His first meeting was Third Friday of October, 1961, at age 16. His last meeting was Third Friday of August 2003, at age 58. In between those two Third Fridays, he was trustee in 1971-72 and vice president in 1974-1975 (and possibly longer — WSFA has few records of the mid-70s). Together with his wife Eva Whitley, he was Datclown chair in 1981 and Disclave chair in 1982. He was Featured Writer at Disclave 1980. He was art auctioneer at many Disclaves, was in charge of the Guest of Honor book in 1990, and was a program participant at nearly every Disclave and Capclave. In the past decade, he has seldom attended regular meetings, but has often been at WSFA social events, such as picnics and parties. He was a fan long before he was a pro. He was always accessible to fans, chatting about anything and everything in con suites and room parties. He will be missed.

## First Friday Minutes

Note that there's a brief summary at the end.

The regular First Friday meeting of the Washington Science Fiction Association was called to order by President Samuel Lubell at 9:17 pm on February 4th, 2005 in the basement of the Gillilands' in Arlington, Virginia, the usual First Friday location.

In attendance were President Samuel Lubell, Vice President Cathy Green, Secretary Keith Lynch, Treasurer Bob MacIntosh, Trustees Barry Newton and Steven Smith, Capclave Present Michael Walsh, Capclave Future Elspeth Kovar, Drew Bittner, Alexis, Charles, and Lee Gilliland, Erica and Lydia Ginter, Paul Haggerty, Scott Hofmann, Eric Jablow, Bill Lawhorn, Ernest Lilley, Nicki and Richard Lynch, Walter Miles, Michael Nelson, Kathi Overton, John Pomeranz, Rebecca Prather, Sam Scheiner, George Shaner, Gayle Surrence, and Michael Taylor. 30 people. Ted White arrived after the meeting ended. Jim Kling and Ivy Yap were marked present, but weren't seen by the secretary.

The president asked the secretary what business had been done at the previous meeting. The secretary replied:

- Discussion of Sam Scheiner's CD idea remained tabled until he is present.
- A motion to send a message to BWSMOF that we support their mission failed for lack of a second. We await further information from BWSMOF.
- We voted to send a card to Jack Chalker, who is seriously ill. Ernest will buy it, and we will sign it at First Friday.
- The two year Capclave contract still hadn't been signed, as the last few details were being ironed out.

TREASURY: Bob said we have \$35,227.39.

### CAPCLAVE PRESENT:

Mike Walsh said we're still haggling with the Silver Spring Hilton over strange clauses in the boilerplate contract. For instance they want to immediately charge the credit card of anyone who reserves a room, and won't promise not to unlock our rooms in the middle of the night, since they insist on having access to their own hotel.

Mike Nelson was working on a flier.

Elspeth said she has a contract marked up with four colors.

Keith said the unlocking incident at last year's Capclave wasn't about access, as the hotel employee just unlocked the dealer room then walked away without entering. [A hotel guest looking for an unrelated event wandered in an hour later.]

Keith asked whether we get room night credit for room nights other than Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, since some people are likely to stay over Sunday night. Elspeth said yes. Rich asked whether our room night quota is cumulative, or whether we have to meet it separately each night. Elspeth said she would make sure it was explicit in the contract that it's cumulative.

John said the blog of one of our Guests of Honor, Teresa Nielsen Hayden (<http://nielsenhayden.com/makinglight/>), was the only non-political blog mentioned in a recent NPR feature on blogs. Someone said it wasn't non-political.

Sam Lubell said he'd like to have a WSFA/Capclave table at Boskone in two weeks. He asked how many people were going. Few if any people other than himself and the two Capclave chairs raised their hands. Elspeth suggested that we recruit WSFAans who seldom attend meetings, and said the Zipsers had volunteered to put in a couple hours. Sam then asked about Lunacon. Far more people raised their hands.

I AM A SOLIPSIIST WHO HAS  
OUTGROWN HIS PRIVATE UNIVERSE.



LOSING WEIGHT IS  
NOTHING COMPARED  
TO SHRINKING ONE'S  
EGO!

AD 03

Mike Walsh has been contacting authors. He has confirmations from Ellen Datlow, Jim Morrow, and Jeffrey Ford.

Keith had Capclave fliers left over from Philcon, and asked if they would be useful at Boskone. Mike Walsh said no. The fliers were filed in the room's (unlit) fireplace.

#### CAPCLAVE FUTURE:

Elsbeth asked if there was any preference between the second and third weekends of October. There wasn't. Mike Walsh said we should avoid scheduling opposite Albacon, which is always Columbus Day weekend. Elspeth asked whether we should peg it to the weekend after Columbus Day or to the third weekend of October, since those aren't always the same. Again, the club expressed no preference. Rich said we should stay further away from World Fantasy than from Albacon. So Elspeth ruled that it will be the weekend after Columbus Day. Sam Lubell pointed out that this doesn't obligate future Capclaves. Elspeth agreed, but recommended consistency.

Keith asked about the proposed Capclave meeting at Peggy Rae's. Mike Walsh said he hadn't scheduled it yet, but it would probably be some time in March. [It was later scheduled, via email, for 2 pm on Sunday February 27th.]

CAPCLAVE PAST: John asked if we had final accounting. Bob said no, as he's still waiting for information from Judy Kindell. He said the con is \$6,032.56 in the red so far, and artists still have to be paid.

WORLD FANTASY '03: Mike Walsh said we're still awaiting money. All bills have been sent.

SMOFCON '04: Bob said we're awaiting word from Peggy Rae, as all the bills are on her credit card.

ENTERTAINMENT: Alexis said he and Lee both have colds, so they aren't very entertaining.

PUBLICATIONS: Keith said we have November, December, January, and February WSFA Journals available. [1, 2, 5, and 10 were taken, respectively, by the end of the evening.] More submissions are needed. Elspeth said she liked the autobiographies. Keith said more people should submit them. Elspeth suggested making a web page containing just biographies. Keith said once we get them from most of the members, we might publish a *Field Guide to WSFAans*. Eric suggested getting photos of 52 members, to make a deck of playing cards. Ernest said we're welcome to recycle material from SFRevu.

#### INVESTMENT:

Sam Scheiner said that we're exempt from income taxes (which John confirmed), and recommended we invest in three sets of nine month CDs, staggered so that one set will mature every three months, as a compromise between liquidity and interest. Cathy suggested starting with \$6000. Sam said the minimum is \$5000 per set, or \$15,000 for all three sets. Keith asked how much of our \$35,000 is likely to be spent soon, as it's not clear to him whether the \$6,000 to Capclave '04 or the \$10,000 for the WSFA Press book have been spent yet. Bob replied that the \$6,000 has been spent, but the \$10,000 has not. Ernest said we won't need to spend that until May.

John said if we set aside \$20,000 we can invest \$15,000. He moved "that we invest \$15,000 as directed by our duly appointed finance committee suggesting the ladder that they presented to us as a possibility". The motion passed. [The investment committee met after the meeting.]

Rebecca suggested that our other money be moved to an interest-bearing account. Bob said it wasn't worth the hassle. John moved "that we insist that all money be moved to an interest-bearing account". The motion was defeated.

Barry asked if Sam Lubell has access to our bank account, in case something happens to Bob. Bob said not yet, but he'll set it up. Judy Kindell also has access.

#### OLD BUSINESS:

Elsbeth said that BWSMOF has withdrawn their request for local clubs to issue statements of support for them.

Ernest said he forgot to buy a card for Jack Chalker. He will do so by the next meeting. Lee pointed out there's a CVS store nearby. Sam Lubell suggested a sympathy card instead of a get well card, but this suggestion was greeted with general dismay and derision.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

Elsbeth asked about images on our website. Keith said the "pichist" directory had been marked "not really open to the public yet" by John, and would remain so until someone with a graphical browser volunteered to go over it with him to figure out what has to be done. He also said that Sam Lubell had a box of photos that could be scanned in. Elsbeth said she thought that there were broken picture links on our website. Keith replied that the only ones he knows of are for some missing Disclave '97 photos, and he's been waiting for Mike Nelson to dig up those photos so they can be scanned in again. [It turns out that there was a problem with uppercase vs. lowercase filenames in the pichist directory. Fixed.]

Elsbeth said that during Philcon Ernest and Lee had set up a slideshow of Capclave photos on a laptop PC, and suggested we do the same with Disclave and SMOFcon photos, and that we look at all our old photos and figure out who is who. Lee said she would pin photos to a bulletin board for people at meetings to identify, if people bring photos. Sam Lubell urged people to bring their old Disclave and WSFA photos.

Keith said that a new law [Virginia Code §58.1-609.11] implies that we can become exempt from Virginia sales tax if we fill out the appropriate paperwork. John said he'd research whether we're tax exempt in Maryland.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The secretary made the usual first announcement: Announcements should be submitted in writing, or via the email address on the cover of the WSFA Journal, or via the email address on the website. And there's a sign-in sheet circulating. He mentioned that he didn't see any new people here.

Our hostess, Lee, made the usual second announcement: Use toilet paper, not paper towels, in the toilet, and don't let the cats outside. She also said she has a cold, that there's a leak in the bathroom, and that *Battlestar Galactica* would be on TV at 10 pm.

Ernest said that his wife was told the Pentagon has issued instructions for sneezing: Do it into your arm, not your hand. John said this works well if they're wearing camouflage.

Sam Scheiner said his wife broke her leg yesterday.

Kathi thanked Ernest for the link from *SFRevu's* website to *Fast Forward's* website, and said that Patricia Wrede would be on the TV program this month. She said there had been problems with the *Fast Forward's* website, but that they had been resolved. She also said she was starting a short story discussion group to meet after each meeting, starting with this one.

Barry and Richard both have books for sale, no reasonable offer refused.



Bob said dues are due.

Mike Walsh also had books for sale, \$6 each or two for \$10. He also said that Peter Heck had a review of his reissue of Pangborn's *Davy* which would appear in June's *Asimov's*.

Lee made the usual final announcement: Chairs are to be moved to the edges of the room after adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:03 pm. 46 minutes.

After the meeting, there was a meeting of the investment committee, followed by a meeting about the Capclave website. Meanwhile, others watched a 10 pm showing of *Battlestar Galactica*, and others joined Kathi for a discussion of recent short stories.

The last people left at about 11:40 pm.

It was cold and partly cloudy, but remained above freezing until around midnight. Roads were completely clear, and sidewalks mostly clear, of snow and ice.

#### Summary of 2/4/05 meeting:

- The investment committee (Barry Newton, Rebecca Prather, Sam Scheiner, and Mike Taylor) is authorized to decide how \$15,000 of our money will be invested. The remainder of our money will remain in a non-interest-bearing checking account, to which Bob MacIntosh and Judy Kindell currently have access, and to which Sam Lubell will also be given access.
- Ernest said he would buy a card for Jack Chalker, who was seriously ill, for us to sign at Third Friday.
- The two year Capclave contract still hadn't been signed, as the last few details were being ironed out.
- Kathi Overton started a post-meeting short story discussion group.

## Review of Boskone 42

By Samuel Lubell

I went to Boskone with a certain amount of trepidation. After all, NESFA had put on this year's Worldcon just about half a year ago, an enterprise that doubtlessly involved many of the people who normally work on Boskone. When WSFA helped run Bucconeer in 1998, it contributed to the demise of Disclave, and we didn't get our convention running again until 2001. So naturally, I wondered how well organized Boskone could be with people still exhausted from the Worldcon.

I shouldn't have worried. Everyone did a fabulous job. There were more panels at any one time than I could possibly attend (especially as I spent time at the Capclave table as well). There were lots of interesting items that weren't quite panels such as the Storytelling Smackdown in which Bruce Coville would invent a story for a few minutes and then Barbara Chepaitis would continue it for a bit before turning it back to Bruce. Meanwhile, Barbara provided interesting sound effects. There was the trivia for chocolate game which taught me that some people's memories are much faster than mine; even in the few cases when I knew the answer, by the time I recovered it, someone else (usually the person next to me who turned out to be the winner by quite a lot) usually had already answered. There were also a bunch of half hour quick discussions. I also heard a nice concert from Urban Tapestry.

The highlight had to be the Mardi Gras celebration, similar in spirit though much smaller, to the midway at First Night at Noreascon. The adults mobbed the casino table while kids went for carnival style games. Meanwhile Michael A. Burstein campaigned for King of the Dead against Cthulhu and Elvis. Michael won and got a nifty hat and then everyone paraded around, blowing the kazoos that were handed out.

Orson Scott Card, much thinner than the last time I saw him a few years ago, was Guest of Honor. He gave a very interesting talk, about how tastes change. Literally in his case as he described how he gradually refused to eat more and

more different types of food until the Mormons sent him to Brazil where none of his familiar food items were available. He also spoke on a couple panels of writing YA and children as characters.

I had prepared a slide show on my computer with pics of Capclave and past Disclaves. We displayed it whenever battery power was available (I had to recharge it a few times up in my room as there was no outlet near our table.) We sold a few memberships but the main thing was that we were visible. And we had great fliers too (thanks Mr. Nelson!)

## This Month in History

### From the Secretary's Archives

#### March 1955:

No meeting on First Sunday due to scarlet fever at Dot Cole's. Seven people at Third Sunday. Treasury \$29.67. Ted White reported that *MAD* was now a slick magazine. He suggested that WSFA have an official publication.

#### March 1965:

Meetings at Elizabeth Cullen's on First and Third Friday. The club voted on its Hugo nominations. The first issue of *The WSFA Journal* was distributed on Third Friday. Treasury \$136.33. 20 & 22 people attended.

#### March 1975:

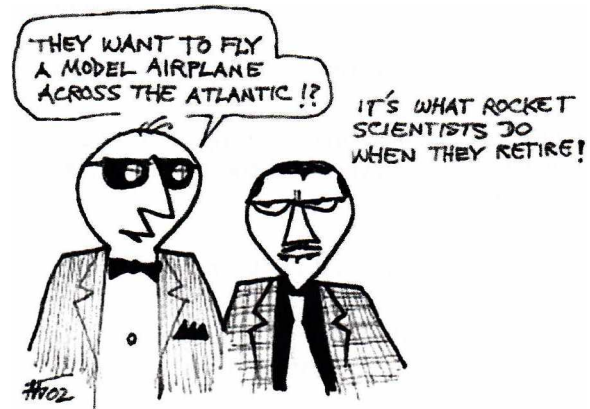
First Fridays were at the Gillilands, Third Fridays were at the Bergs'. The officers were President Alexis Gilliland, Vice President Jack Chalker, Secretary Betty Berg (Lockwood), Treasurer Bill Berg, Trustees Ron Bounds, Alan Huff, and Mark Owings. Please contact the secretary if you have any other non-Disclave information about WSFA in 1975.

#### March 1985:

First and Third Friday at the Gillilands' and Olivers'; Fifth Friday at Morman/Bloom's. Treasury \$5,767.36. Rebecca tried to sell a broken telephone answering machine for \$25. Chairwoman Lee Smoire was disappointed at the low turnout at the February relaxacon. That was the last of our annual February relaxacons, which started in 1980.

#### March 1995:

First and Third Friday at the Gillilands' and Ginters'; Fifth Friday at the Ginters'. No quorum on third Friday. Treasury \$6421.10. No business conducted all month. Dan Hoey did a walkthrough at the Renaissance Hotel Techworld, in Washington DC, the Disclave hotel.



## Upcoming Events

This is excerpted from our online calendar of upcoming events, at <http://www.wsfa.org/calendar.htm>. I recommend you check it frequently, in case of last minute additions or corrections. Also, it contains links to more information about the events. This is a regular feature of *The WSFA Journal*.

Thursday, March 3rd: **DC Transhumanist Dinner**  
7 pm at Hamburger Hamlet in Crystal City.

March 4 - 5: **Washington Antiquarian Book Fair**  
At the Holiday Inn Rosslyn at Key Bridge, Arlington VA.

Friday, March 4th: **WSFA First Friday Meeting**



Regular WSFA meeting (at the Gillilands' as usual). Newcomers welcome. Email me for directions.

**Friday, March 11th: Hugo award nominating deadline**

Nominations must be received, not just postmarked, by this date. You can nominate online. Anyone who is a member of Interaction or Noreascon can nominate.

**Sunday, March 13th: Winterfest**

Winterfest is an annual electronic flea market, concentrating on ham radio and computer hardware, mostly used. In Annandale. Show up before noon.

**Thursday, March 17th: John G. Hemry speaks at LoC**

John G. Hemry speaks about his story "Mightier Than the Sword" in the anthology *Turn the Other Chick - Chicks in Chainmail* at the Library of Congress at noon. No reservations are needed: open to staff and the public.

**March 18 - 20: Lunacon**

In East Rutherford, New Jersey.

**Friday, March 18th: WSFA Third Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Madigans, as usual. Newcomers welcome.

**April 1 - 3: Technicon 22**

A convention in Blacksburg, Virginia.

**Friday, April 1st: WSFA First Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting (at the Gillilands' as usual). Newcomers welcome. Email me for directions.

**Friday, April 15th: WSFA Third Friday Meeting**

Regular WSFA meeting. At the Madigans, as usual. Newcomers welcome.

**Friday, April 29th: Fifth Friday**

WSFA often has a party on months with a fifth Friday. Stay tuned for details.

**May 27 - 30: Balticon 39**

The Baltimore Science Fiction Society (BSFS) brings you another Balticon. At the Wyndham Baltimore one last time before it moves to Hunt Valley.

**August 4 - 8: 63rd World SF Convention: Interaction**

Glasgow, once more with ceiling.

**September 1 - 5: CascadiaCon**

The 2005 NASFiC, near Seattle.

**October 14 - 16: Capclave 2005**

WSFA is putting on a convention! In Silver Spring, MD.

## Third Friday Minutes

Note that there's a brief summary at the end.

The regular Third Friday meeting of the Washington Science Fiction Association was called to order by Vice President Cathy Green at 9:20 pm on February 18th, 2005 in the downstairs of the Madigans' in Greenbelt, Maryland, the new usual third Friday location. There was a fire in the room's fireplace.

In attendance were Vice President Cathy Green, Secretary Keith Lynch, Treasurer Bob MacIntosh, all three trustees (Adrienne Ertman, Barry Newton, and Steven Smith), Colleen Cahill, Carolyn Frank, Alexis and Lee Gilliland, Erica

Ginter, David Grimm, Paul Haggerty, Shirl Hayes, Cassandra Hetzel, Vincent Kan, Nicki and Richard Lynch, Candy and John Madigan, Dusty and Carol Miller, Judy Newton, Evan Phillips, Rebecca Prather, George Shaner, Gayle Surrence, and Michael Taylor. 28 people. William Squire and Houston Westfall arrived after the meeting. Jim Kling, George Nelson, and Ivy Yap were marked present, but weren't seen by the secretary.

The president asked the secretary what had happened last time. The secretary replied that our previous meeting was at the Gillilands' on the 4th, and:

- The investment committee (Barry Newton, Rebecca Prather, Sam Scheiner, and Mike Taylor) was authorized to decide how \$15,000 of our money will be invested. The remainder of our money will remain in a non-interest-bearing checking account, to which Bob MacIntosh and Judy Kindell currently have access, and to which Sam Lubell will also be given access.
- Ernest would buy a get well card for Jack Chalker, for us to sign at Third Friday. Since Jack Chalker died a week after that meeting, presumably he bought a condolence card instead.
- The two year Capclave contract still hadn't been signed. It was signed two days ago, and the secretary has updated the website, and asks that anyone report any errors or omissions.
- Kathi Overton started a post-meeting short story discussion group.

TREASURY: Bob said we have \$17,402.73 in the main account, plus \$20,600 in the World Fantasy account.

CAPCLAVE: Capclave 2005 Chair Michael Walsh and Capclave 2006 Chair Elspeth Kovar were both away at Boskone, so no report was given, other than what Keith said above. Also, Keith added that there will be a Capclave meeting at Peggy Rae's on the afternoon of Sunday the 27th. Everyone interested in working on Capclave is invited.

SMOFCON '04: Bob said we're awaiting word from Peggy Rae, as all the bills are on her credit card. He expects closure by the end of the month.

WORLD FANTASY '03: Bob said we're still awaiting money. All bills have been sent.

#### INVESTMENT:

Mike Taylor said the committee agreed on laddering, in one bank. Rebecca said she had talked to Sam Scheiner by phone, and he wanted Bob to recommend a bank. Barry suggested we stay with our current bank [Provident]. Mike Taylor moved that we authorize Bob to set up a CD ladder at a bank of his choice. Lee amended the motion such that he would try our current bank first. Mike accepted the amendment as friendly. The motion passed.

ENTERTAINMENT: Alexis got a letter, addressed to WSFA, from someone he never heard of, touting a self-published trilogy. Alexis said he had done us the valuable service of filtering it out, so the rest of us don't have to see it.

PUBLICATIONS: Keith said we have November, January, and February WSFA Journals available. [1, 2, and 5 were taken, respectively, by the end of the evening.] And one "slightly defective" December issue. When questioned he clarified that some of the pages came out single-sided, but everything was there. [It was not taken.] He has the past 26½ years of WSFA Journal online, and is working on getting the older, larger, issues online. He mentioned that issue #84, which he is currently working on, is larger than all the 1978, 1979, 1980, and 1981 issues put together, which is why it's taking a while. Alexis asked if it was put together with tape. Keith said no; with staples. Alexis said there was one Don Miller issue, put together with tape, dated one year's Disclave which was collated the following year's Disclave. Keith said he had noticed that #84, though dated December 1974, has sections on 1973 in review, and speaks of 1974 in the future tense, so he has some feel for why the WSFA Journal ground to a halt and died out not long after, and wasn't restarted until 1978. Keith also mentioned that there was a sign-in sheet circulating, and that everyone including the new people should sign in. Cathy said he should also mention how great the website looks. Keith responded that he hadn't bothered to mention the fact that he had changed the background color, because it was so trivial. Someone pointed out that it was several hundred pages. Keith said yes, but his setup is more powerful than those folks who are stuck with Windows, so he can change 500-odd files -- and they are pretty odd -- more easily than other people can change one. However, since his setup is text-only, with amber text on a black background, he can't tell what any of these colors actually look like, and has to rely on others for that. WSFA is a group activity.

ACTIVITIES: Lee had fliers for Technicon 22, which will be in Blacksburg the first weekend in April. [That event was

already listed in our calendar of upcoming events.] She asked if anyone was interested in seeing *Robots*, which will open on March 11th. Nobody was. She asked if anyone was interested in seeing *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, which will open on April 29th. Several people were. She'll see if she can get free tickets, or tickets to an advance screening on Thursday. Shirl said that Douglas Adams wrote the screenplay, so people shouldn't get upset that the movie is shorter or different. Paul said that all instances of HHGtG (radio play, book, BBC video, etc.) are different from each other. Lee asked if anyone was interested in the next WETA pledge drive, in mid-August. There was little interest.

OLD BUSINESS: Ernest did not show up, or tell anyone that he wasn't going to show up, so there was no card for Jack Chalker's family.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The secretary made the usual first announcement: Announcements should be submitted in writing, or via the email address on the cover of the WSFA Journal, or via the email address on the website. Jack Chalker's funeral was to be Monday evening in Baltimore, and Keith had hardcopies of the email announcing it. Also, F.M. Busby died. Ten years ago, Joe Mayhew wrote in the WSFA Journal that Chick Derry, the last surviving founder of WSFA, had died. As WSFA's unofficial historian Keith has been trying to get information on all seven of WSFA's founders. It appeared that one of them, Phyllisann Courtis, was still living and had an email address. Nobody now in the club has met her, since she left some time before 1954 when Ted White joined. Keith emailed her last month. On February 7th, he got a reply from her daughter saying she had died yesterday. There will be a memorial service in late March or in April. While some people have already pledged money for flowers, Keith thinks it should be a club thing, not a personal thing, since nobody now in the club ever met her. It's too early for a motion, since we don't yet have an address. Alexis suggested we mention her death on the front page of the WSFA Journal, and send her a copy. Judy asked if there were any references to her in WSFA's old papers. There are references to Phyllisann, but Keith hasn't found any references to her daughter. He found references to Phyllisann's husband, Reginald, or Ray, Courtis, who was also one of the seven founders. Ray lived from 1885 to 1971, though Keith didn't learn that from WSFA's records, but from an online Social Security death index. [And Ray was born on a First Friday, 1441 First Fridays ago.]

Cathy said "play nice, don't make a mess, flush the toilet, don't kill the pets".

Rebecca said the article in *The Washington Post* in which she was quoted about credit ratings, and about how you can't find out how they're calculated, and how they can increase your homeowners insurance rates, was reprinted in *Stars and Stripes*. She hasn't seen that publication yet, but she has copies of the Post article available which she can email. She also said she had slides of masquerades from Worldcons in Toronto, Boston, Atlanta, and Baltimore, and she wanted help identifying people, in time for a singles group slide show she will be putting on at Messiah Methodist Church on Rolling Road at 7:30 pm on March 23rd to which all WSFA's are invited. She will also show slides of Venice. Also, she needs help with her computer, which died.

Colleen said John Henry would be speaking at the Library of Congress on Thursday March 17th, about his story in the *Chicks in Chainmail* series.

Steve said there was a lawsuit in Israel over a parrot whose buyer alleges it was half-dead. People immediately started quoting lines from the Monty Python skit.

Erica took a glass fusing class.

Bob said dues are due.

Keith noticed several new people, and asked them to introduce themselves. Carol and Dusty Miller, Cassandra Hetzel, and Vincent Kan did so. Cassandra is a neighbor of Candy's. Vincent is a friend of Adrienne's.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm. 25 minutes.

The last people left at about 1:20 am.

It was cold and clear. Roads and sidewalks were completely clear of snow and ice.

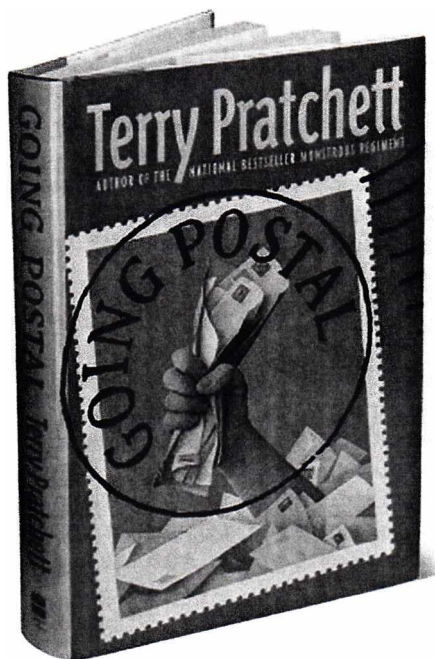
Summary of 2/18/05 meeting:

- Bob is authorized to set up a CD ladder at the bank of his choice, giving preference to our current bank, with \$5000 of three month, \$5000 of six month, and \$5000 of nine month CDs, each to be reinvested in nine month CDs when they mature.
- No card was purchased for Jack Chalker's family. [However, numerous past and present WSFAns attended his funeral three days after the meeting.]
- The two year Capclave contract has been signed. There will be a Capclave meeting at Peggy Rae's on the 27th.

## Review of *Going Postal* by Terry Pratchett

By Cathy Green

The views expressed herein are strictly my own and are not those of the United States Postal Service.



In *Going Postal*, Terry Pratchett recounts the revival of the Ankh-Morpork Post Office by Moist Van Lipwig at the behest of Lord Vetinari. The post office had fallen into disuse and disrepair due to the popularity of the clacks, the Discworld telegraph system. Given that his other option was death, conman Moist Van Lipwig a/k/a Alfred Spangler (and really, given his real name, you can hardly blame him for using an alias) decided that becoming postmaster was preferable. He rethinks his options and attempts to leave town, only to be literally picked up and brought back to Ankh-Morpork, along with his horse, by his parole officer, a golem named Mr. Pump. His first day on the job Moist discovers that the building's a wreck, he's only got two very eccentric employees, Junior Postman Groat and the peculiar Apprentice Postman Stanley, and there's decades worth of mail just lying around that just might be talking to him. To the admiration of his staff, Moist accidentally delivers a letter, thus getting the revival ball rolling. Being a conman in the P.T. Barnum mode, Moist knows how to give the people what they want. First winning over the staff through promotions and bribery, and later the populace, creating a stamp collecting craze along the way, Moist is well on his way to restoring the Post Office to full health. Of course, with the rise of the Post Office comes unwanted attention from the robber barons who seized control of the clacks through a very hostile takeover. As a result, in addition to coping with his eccentric staff and attempting to court Adora Belle Dearheart of the golem employment bureau, Moist must deal with sabotage and threats to his life. In the end, Moist finds the old ways are best,

and falls back on his strengths, using razzmatazz, subterfuge and sleight of hand to engage the clacks company in a delivery contest the mail cannot possibly win and emerge triumphant.

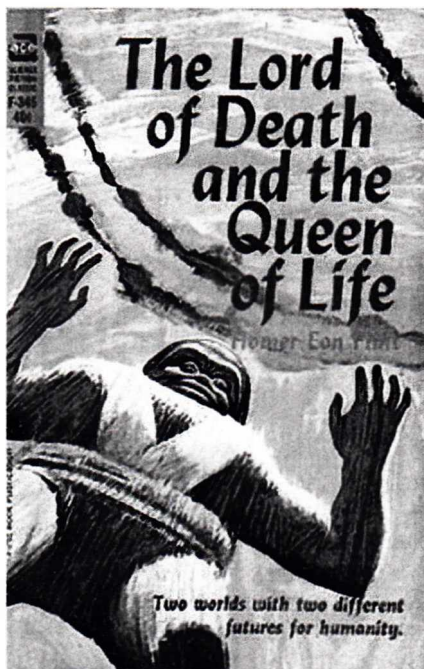
While this is a Discworld novel, most of the regulars do not make an appearance. Lord Vetinari plays a prominent Machiavellian role, but otherwise there are merely extremely brief cameos from the Watch and the faculty of Unseen University. A significant stylistic change is the use of chapters, including little plot headings at the beginning of each chapter, such as one might find in certain books of the 19th century. The book also has three opening chapters set in different time periods. I did not feel that the style changes had any great effect on my overall appreciation of the book. (The only style gripe I have is that, as usual, we Americans have been screwed when it comes to cover design. Mike Walsh was kind enough to show me the British edition at Capclave and it was all I could do not to drool on the gorgeous full colour endpapers featuring all the Ankh-Morpork stamps.) To me, *Going Postal* represents a welcome return to form after the somewhat unsuccessful *Monstrous Regiment*. In *Monstrous Regiment*, Pratchett was trying to Say Something, was not entirely successful, and the weight of the message crushed what could have been a fun story (unlike in *Small Gods*, where there is a serious message but it doesn't spoil the fun). *Going Postal*, on the other hand, is mainly an affectionate skewering of the postal service and all things associated with it (for instance, Apprentice Postman Stanley's pin obsession is clearly meant to poke fun at stamp collectors and other obsessive collectors and hobbyists). Along the

way, there are many nice touches. For instance, given the fairly unstoppable nature of golems (neither rain nor sleet nor gloom of night etc), they make ideal letter carriers. Indeed, Moist comes to this conclusion after being hunted down by his unstoppable parole officer and observing the near destruction of the old-time letter carriers by dogs and other obstacles when they first attempt to deliver the mail. He ends up hiring all the golems available, much to the initial consternation of the other postmen, since golems are very much second class citizens on Discworld. However, in the end a different form of snobbery wins out when it is explained that the golem Anghammarad is a messenger who essentially delivered mail for 19,000 years, and the postmen realize they and their Masonic society now have bragging rights as one of the oldest professions and professional societies on the disc. The postal Masonic society was a very amusing creation. The attendant rituals were a source of amusement as well - "Be you the Unfranked Man?" Also, while the multi-generational postal employees were used primarily for humor, in point of fact, I know quite a few postal employees who have at least one parent who was also a postal employee. For instance, John E. Potter, the current Postmaster General of the United States Postal Service (it hasn't been the Post Office Department since the passage of the Postal Reorganization Act), worked his way up through the ranks, as did his father, although not quite as far up the ranks obviously.

If you haven't read it already, it's definitely worth acquiring a copy.

## Two Reviews of Homer Eon Flint novels by Lee Strong

[ Editor's note: Lee Strong has resigned from WSFA, and prefers that no WSFA member except Sam Lubell contact him for any reason. However, he has not rescinded his permission to print the material he had previously submitted to the WSFA Journal. ]



### *The Lord of Death and the Queen of Life*

Written by Homer Eon Flint

Original Publication May and August 1919

Reviewed by Lee Strong

These two gee whiz stories of interplanetary exploration were not too bad for their time, but they certainly have not held up very well.

In two short novels, our intrepid explorers visit Mercury and Venus in their electrical antigravitational skycar and sample the strange civilizations thereon. In a rather blatant display of sexual stereotyping, Mercury's dead city supposedly typifies the masculine values that led its last emperor to murder his entire civilization so that an escaped girlfriend would have no choice but to wed him. In contrast and comparison, Venus' teeming multitudes supposedly typify the feminine virtues that cause its citizens to build a dome over the entire planet, liquify their foods, and make everything nice.

Fortunately for the reader, the Venusians haven't completely overcome human nature so the women riot when a man discovers longevity and the men riot when a woman discovers parthenogenesis. The main thing that I got out of this is that Mr. Flint is not that good a writer. He has some good ideas but his treatment of them robs them of their vitality and their appeal to the modern reader.

I rate the woefully outdated *The Lord of Death and the Queen of Life* as \*\* on the five star scale. -- LS

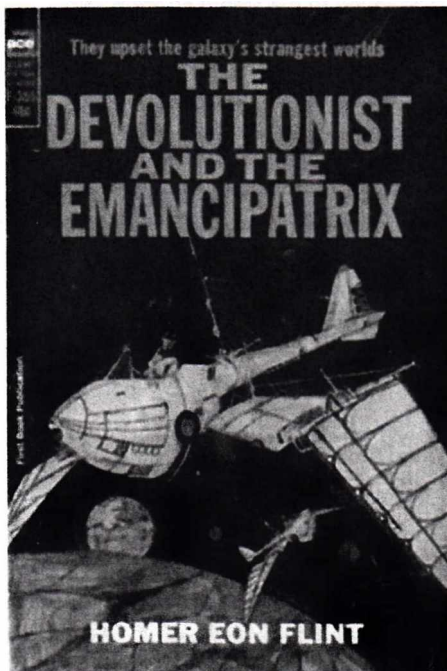
### *The Devolutionist and the Emancipatrix*

Written by Homer Eon Flint

Original Publication July and September 1921



### Reviewed by Lee Strong



Like Mr. Flint's other work, these short novels are outdated scientifically. However, their themes of courage and liberation hold up much better than his earlier gee whiz efforts. Mr. Flint's writing improved with practice, and the reader's patience is rewarded.

In these novels, our explorers of Mercury and Venus now explore the planets Hafen-Holl and Sanus via mental telepathy. Hafen and Holl prove to be 2 Earth sized planets in contact with each other (and never mind the fact that gravity would squeeze the two together into a single oversized sphere!). Clever robber barons live on Hafen while complacent worker ants live on Holl, all served by an interesting variant technology. The humanoid inhabitants are too complacent for effective revolution, but are eventually shocked into a new way of life by a guy trying to impress his girlfriend.

Sanus is a diskworld with intelligent bees controlling humanoids on one side (and never mind the fact that gravity would squeeze the disk into a single sphere!). The eponymous emancipatrix journeys to the other side and returns with the gift of fire and some allies with agendas of their own. Science takes another licking, but, again, the humanoid heart emerges triumphant.

When these stories were republished in the middle 1960s, I was fascinated by the odd technology, and actually tried to build a model Hafenite skyship.

Rereading them now, I find the stronger and more realistic characters more interesting, especially the females who are now real people rather than cliches. Even so, the modern reader should set buffers on high gain when tackling these stories from a bygone era.

I rate *The Devolutionist and the Emancipatrix* as \*\*½ on the five star scale. -- LS

## New home for WSFA's archives

by Keith Lynch

Late last month, I helped Larry Pfeffer load his truck for his move to Massachusetts. In return, he gave me three bookcases. I've dedicated one to holding WSFA's archives and other property. Here's a picture of it, taken with the help of assistant editor Wade Lynch. The sign identifies the contents as belonging to WSFA, and instructs that Sam and Cathy be phoned in the event of my death, disability, or disappearance. This should help to ensure that the archives aren't lost to WSFA should anything happen to me. Of course I'm also continuing to work on getting them all online, which should also help ensure that they survive into the indefinite future.

I wonder if, when Jack Chalker attended his first WSFA meeting in 1961, and saw his name being written down in pencil in a spiral notebook, he envisioned someone 44 years later, after his death, squinting at the handwriting and typing that information into a worldwide computer network. Who might look at those archives in another 44 years, and for what purpose?

These archives include not just old meeting minutes, but also a copy of Jack Chalker's *A Jungle of Stars*, dated 1976, dedicated to WSFA, inscribed "This copy is for WSFA, in spite of whom I finished it, so they can donate it to the WSFA library where no human beings will ever see it again."

Jack, some human beings saw it again.



rasff



## by Keith Lynch

The rec.arts.sf.fandom newsgroup (rasff for short) is a high volume worldwide online discussion group for SF fans. It's been around since 1991, when it branched off from the defunct rec.arts.sf newsgroup. Since then, there have been over 800,000 messages -- an average of about 200 per day. This is still the current average message volume. It isn't owned by anyone, unlike blogs, livejournals, and email lists. In other words it's part of the net's "public space". Nobody has the power to kick troublemakers off, or to block their messages. However if you're using decent software, it's easy to "killfile" anyone whose postings you don't want to see. This doesn't block their postings from being seen by anyone else.

Newsgroups have been around since 1979, long before web pages. They're best read using dedicated newsreader software, not via a web interface. However, plenty of people read them via Google Groups' web interface. Google has the advantage that they keep posts around dating back to 1981 (thanks in large part to fan Henry Spencer, who made his magtape archives available to Google), and that posts can be searched for by author, subject, message-id, free text, date, or any combination. Most standard newsfeeds are more flexible as far as killfiling and threading, but only retain posts for a few days or weeks, and are less flexible for searching. Personally, I use Google to look things up, but Panix's own newsgroup server for daily reading and posting.

Most ISPs offer newsgroups (though sometimes poorly maintained, with lots of posts missing). This may be changing, since AOL and some other major ISPs have ceased offering newsgroups recently. However, people can still use Google's interface, or can pay for a third-party newsgroup server such as individual.net.

Rasff is often contentious, with lengthy arguments about politics and other subjects. The connection with fandom is often obscure. Fandom is not so much the topic of discussion as the shared context. Everyone there can be assumed to know what the Worldcon is, and where it is this year, what the Hugo awards are, what WSFA, NESFA, and LASFS are and what conventions they host, etc.

Nothing is off topic on rasff, except for discussions that would fit better in the other rec.arts.sf newsgroups: rec.arts.sf.written for written sf, rec.arts.sf.composition for authors and aspiring authors to discuss their craft, rec.arts.sf.marketplace for ads, rec.arts.sf.movies, and several others. Subject lines should be ignored, since topic drift is the norm, and almost nobody bothers to change the subject line.

There's very little outright spam posted to the newsgroup. However, spammers do harvest all email addresses that appear in the newsgroup, and spam them by email. To avoid this some posters use a fake email address, and explain their true address via circumlocutions. Others use disposable addresses, or simply rely on aggressive filtering.

My currently being between jobs has given me the temporary luxury of being able to read *all* of rasff. Most people will have to read selectively, however. Some read everything by one or a few favorite posters, and then follow any interesting thread they run into. Some simply scan for their own name, or some particular phrase. I started attending WSFA eight years ago after Sam Lubell responded to a rasff posting of mine that he found by searching for any mention of Disclave.

I'm the most active WSFA on rasff, but not the only WSFA. Richard Lynch often posts. Sam Lubell, Elspeth Kovar, Ernest Lilley, and Wade Lynch occasionally do so. Former WSFA Dick Eney is a frequent poster. And there may be others who read but not post. Or who scan for mentions of their name, of Capclave, or of WSFA.

There are plenty of other fannish newsgroups, and not just in the rec.arts.sf hierarchy. There's alt.fandom.dragoncon for fans of that enormous annual convention in Atlanta. There's alt.books.jack-chalker.

Marilee Layman has hosted rasff parties at Capclaves and other cons.

I find it a lot of fun. It's sometimes frustrating, since you can't reasonably assume participants have read *all* the recent messages, as you can on a low volume email list such as WSFA's. It's definitely not for those who are easily offended.

## SMOFcon Time Travel

Here are more of the time travel itineraries from SMOFcon 22, continued from the previous two issues. They were all

handwritten, so please forgive any errors of the secretary's in transcription.

## Forward into the Past

### Time Travel Itinerary

Time Traveler's Name: *Tom Veal*

Destination:

When: *November 17, 1973*

Where: *Yale Bowl, New Haven, Connecticut*

Purpose of visit: *To observe Yale's smiting of the football team of an inferior men's college in the Boston area, 35-0*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *Finding space for small panels in the Yale Bowl*

I'd meet that challenge by: *Taking over the Harvard dressing rooms (they had no reason to show up anyway)*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *Erecting quonset huts on the gridiron*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon?

· *The football with which Yale scored its fifth touchdown (invaluable as a gopher raffle prize)*

· *Third down conversion techniques (readily adaptable to dealing with unions and decorators)*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## Forward into the Past

### Time Travel Itinerary

Time Traveler's Name: *Perianne Lurie*

Destination:

When: *1985*

Where: *Australia*

Purpose of visit: *Re-visiting Aussiecon 2*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *Being asked to volunteer*

I'd meet that challenge by: *Saying "No!"*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *Getting back into the time machine*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *Opals to finance next year's Smofcon.*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## Forward into the Past

### Time Travel Itinerary

Time Traveler's Name: *Ben Yalow*

Destination:

When: *1985*

Where: *Oakland, CA*

Purpose of visit: *Increase attendance at SMOFcon 2*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *getting enough copies of me at SMOFcon 2 so the con can be held*

I'd meet that challenge by: *Repeated instances*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *again*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *Whatever I learned at SMOFcon 2*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## **Forward into the Past**

### **Time Travel Itinerary**

Time Traveler's Name: *Elspeth Kovar*

Destination:

When: *1988 Disclave*

Where: *New Carrollton, MD*

Purpose of visit: *Revisit post college, pre SMOF time of irresponsibility*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *For me, not thinking that working on this sort of thing could be fun.*

I'd meet that challenge by: *Laughing*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *see above*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *Learn as broadly as you can, as deeply as you can - and start early if you can.*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## **Backward into the Future**

### **Time Travel Itinerary**

Time Traveler's Name: *Count De Money*

Destination:

When: *Disclave 1988*

Where: *New Carrollton, MD*

Purpose of visit: *Revisit the Money*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *Keeping the chair in line*

I'd meet that challenge by: *Hiding the chair in a room*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *Run away screaming*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *Disclave 1988 Badge*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## **Forward into the Past**

### **Time Travel Itinerary**

Time Traveler's Name: *Kent Bloom*

Destination:

When: *1988 Memorial Day*

Where: *New Carrollton, Md*

Purpose of visit: *Disclave 1988*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *staying sober*

I'd meet that challenge by: *not drinking too much*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *sleeping it off*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *bidding hints*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## **Forward into the Past**

### **Time Travel Itinerary**

Time Traveler's Name: *Deb Geisler*

Destination:

When: *February 1989*

Where: *Beacon Hill*

Purpose of visit: *Reconsider (although not necessarily change) a conversation with Jim Hudson about a student internship. (Secondary purpose: buying many shares in Microsoft Corp.)*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *Deciding whether "yes" or "no" was the right answer.*

(Figuring out who to stash the shares of Microsoft with)

I'd meet that challenge by: *Careful contemplation*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *Flipping a coin*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *An answer to the old chestnut: "If you could go back, knowing what you know now..."*

*(Funding for future Worldcons...)*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

## **Backward into the Future**

### **Time Travel Itinerary**

Time Traveler's Name: *Barb Vantilburg*

Destination:

When: *Scotland '95*

Where:

Purpose of visit: *Attend Worldcon to remember layout & good restaurants for 2005 use.*

The greatest sf convention-running challenge at my chosen destination would most likely be: *Getting Stuff Shipped in.*

I'd meet that challenge by: *Planning ahead*

If that approach didn't work, I'd try: *punt*

What information, lesson, or artifact could you carry back from your travels that would be of benefit to your fellow convention runners here at SMOFcon? *Enjoy yourself! Life is short.*

**Please complete all parts of this itinerary to assure your safe return to SMOFcon 22**

*SMOFcon Time Travel will be continued next month.*

The deadline for April's issue is Friday, March 25th. Earlier if possible. My annual attendance report will be in the April issue. As always, I eagerly solicit material. Fannish autobiographies, reviews of books and movies, reports on cons, reports on scientific discoveries, letters of comment, thoughts about the future of Capclave and WSFA, and pretty much anything else that you think WSFA members would enjoy reading.