



The Drink Tank Issue 198

garcia@computerhistory.org

Wood Shores | San Carlos | San Mateo County
SATURDAY, JUNE 28, 2008

A frantic, hyper and crowded cover from Genevieve. This was one of the pieces I scanned that made me go Wow and was certain to be a cover from the moment I saw it. I love the mixing of half-finished thoughts with complete ideas and the layering of imagery.

Letter-Graded Mail sent to garcia@computerhistory.org by my gentle readers

Let's start off in Canada with...R. Graeme Cameron!

Hi Chris!

Drink Tank #190: I really like Starkey's cover depicting a frantic alien fleeing a pack of wolves, though with those chompers I'm sure it could put up a good fight when they catch up.

Big teeth, little fight. That describes many varieties of fish, don-chaknow.

Re Taral's article: To sum up, just when America is pulling its act together and likely to wind up acting like the best of Canada, my country is falling apart and liable to end up acting like the worst of America. Sigh.

Well, I like to think we're acting more like Iceland. I don't understand Canadian government at all. The whole process you go through confuses me.



Drink Tank #191: Wonderful tribute to the Ackermmonster. He was going to be our fan GoH at VCON 15 back in 1987, and he'd even agreed to accept an Elron (bronzed lemon) award for creating the term 'sci-fi', but he had to cancel for health reasons. So I never got to meet him. Double sigh.

PS: Have my own tribute to the Ackermmonster in Space Cadet #12. Seems he was a formative influence on me, right down to moustache style!

And really, one's choice of facial hair is the most important choice one can make. I can't wait to read your tribute to him. All the ones

I've seen so far have been wonderful.

Drink Tank #196: On trying to figure out whom to send paperzines to. Takes me back. My first zine was ENTROPY BLUES in 1986. Made 18-25 copies as I recall. Gave away most to fellow BCSFA members because I didn't know what else to do, as I had no contact with zinedom. Very muted reaction, apart from "So what drug were you on when you did this?" (Every article a different style). So I gave up.

I gave out 10 of the issues at BASFA on Monday. I usually don't get much back from folks on issues whether I do them on-line or on paper, so I don't really mind. I'd like to see one of those issues. Every article a different style sounds like fun.

But when I unleashed SPACE CADET #1 in 1994, it contained 6 locs already from such as Lloyd Penney & Joseph T. Major! This because I had been editor of BCSFAzine for some years & had pushed my upcoming SC in its pages. Because of the zine trades BCSFAzine received, I had more than enough zine & fan addresses for SC mailings. At its peak I was sending off

more than 100 copies per issue. Them were the days. Couldn't afford it now.

I can barely afford to send the 15 issues I sent out. Of course, more than 1/2 of them were to places other than the US, which ain't cheap!

Best advice for a zinepubber wannabe? Steer them in the direction of efanzines. The perfect source for learning all about zinedom & for acquiring zine trades.

And I've been doing that for years! There are still some hold-outs, but soon, we'll all be up there!

Drink Tank #197: Bob Wilkins of Creature Features sounds like another Forry Ackerman, in that they both celebrated B movies, you knew they shared your passion, and if they made fun of B movies, they did so affectionately and with great familiarity. We need more like that in media today. So rare.

At Psychotronics last month, there was the great segment done with both Forry and Bob. It's sad to think that they're both gone. Two great ambassadors.

I knew Algis Budrys slightly. He was a good friend of local author Donna McMahan and on her invite frequently showed up at VCON. Once

we three were talking in the hallway and he invited us both to dinner, whereupon I shamefacedly admitted I couldn't afford to, so he insisted I come anyway and paid my bill. Seemed like a very nice guy to me! Then, one time I introduced my wife Alyxandra to him & they promptly plunged into an increasingly confused and incomprehensible conversation. Turned out he thought he was talking to the author Alexandra Dellimonica (not sure of sp) who had recently sold him a story. He found this quite amusing once all was explained. I observed no signs of curmudgeon-like tendencies. I repeat, a nice guy. Never could get into his writing though. Found THE AMSIRS AND THE IRON THORN a bit dry. Kinda liked ROGUE MOON.

I bought a copy of Rogue Moon recently, about a month and a half ago, it would seem, and it was signed. It hadn't been noted as such, and I figured it'll be a nice auction for TAFF if nothing else.

Seems we are in competition for articles by Taral! Hoping to publish one on that photo-montage room display for worldcon. He sent me several sample photos of the mock-up without telling me what they were, and when I examined the first one I thought it was a photo of him in his apartment. I thought: "How does he keep the room so neat? Everything crammed

against the walls, yet the floor is bare of furniture, cept for himself sitting in the corner. Why is he wearing a jacket? Why is he wearing a toque? Is it that cold in his apartment? Why does he look so stiff & glum?"



I was blown away once I realized I was looking at a small mockup & the 'Taral' was a painted model figure. Downright creepy revelation in fact. In all fairness I should mention the rez was low, my eyes are poor, and the angle was perfect to reflect correct perspective. I used to pride myself in distinguishing between stock footage and scale model shots in old B&W war movies. Losing the ability to spot the artificial it seems.

I used to be the best at spotting stuntmen over the real guys. It's amazing that in recent years, I've been wrong more than normal. Taral's mock-up is yet another reason I'm psyched for Montreal.

Keep up your proliferate pace! Cheers!
The Graeme (Faned of Space Cadet & WCSFAzine)

Thanks much!



And now...John Purcell!!!

Like you, I enjoy handing zines out at cons or meetings (if there were any club meetings in this neck of the woods, I would do so, and I don't mean the TAMU club, either), but I'm a bit selective on who gets one. The

decision is definitely subjective as to who I believe is most likely to write or draw something for me. After I talk to someone for awhile, that helps to narrow this process down a bit. Even so, the vast unwashed masses who read my zine do so online. At least the response to the 11th issue was much better. Now to see how the response to #12 goes.

Of late, I've been averaging .7 responses an issue, but that's not really fair since I put them out so often. As one of the few who seem unaffected by the lack of response to many issues, I always try to get them out to people who wouldn't normally read zines. I think that's how we get folks. Hook them by forcing ourselves on them!

I agree with the general sentiment that Taral Wayne is going to get a nomination for Best Fan Writer FAAn; he has been extremely productive in the last year, and you and I have benefited mightily from his output. He would be a good choice, that's for sure. Curt Phillips is another gent who has written some mighty fine work, mostly in Time & Again, but he's appearing elsewhere now. So is Warren Buff. Good choices coming up.

I'd love to see Taral on the list, and Warren and Curt have been doing great stuff. I expect one of them to replace me (let's be honest, my star has fallen considerably) on the

ballot. I'd say Taral has the best chance of getting on an winning it.
Onward to issue #197.

It is always sad to hear of the death of a childhood icon. Bob Wilkins obviously was one of yours, and I know you've spent time with John Stanley, too, so those two certainly made a big impression on you. When I was a wee lad growing up in Minneapolis, WTCN-TV Channel 11 had this midnight Saturday horror series called Horror, Incorporated which I always stayed up for. I know I've written about this before, but it was a lot of fun; always a double feature, so there were old horror and science fiction flicks on until 4 AM. It was great training for my eventual career as an SF fan and attending conventions. It didn't have a host like your Creature Feature show, but opened with a foggy cemetery shot where a cement coffin lid was slowly opening, bony hands prising it up from inside! Then there was a scream: AAAAHHHHHH!!!! At show's end - four hours later - there was a quick shot (with attendant screaming and baying of wolves) of a shrouded figure settling back into that coffin. Fun stuff.

The opening for Horror Incorporated is featured prominently in a documentary about Horror Hosts. It was actually a syndicated show, I think, as a lot of different areas seemed to have used it. Of course, there were many different Creature

Features too.

Lloyd Penney comments in his loc thish about how many of those suckers he wrote to you in 2008. I don't know how many I wrote to your assorted zines, but it was probably close to a couple dozen. My output last year dropped off significantly as my workload increased, but the zine kept coming out. Some things are more important, of course... I haven't tallied up the 2008 locs, but I think it was less than 80. Yeah, right; an off year.

Numbers may be going down because of the slowing of VFW and the fact that there were slightly fewer zines that I came across this year than last. Even I was down to 40 zines in 2008.

Steve Green talked about Dick Tracy and The Spirit, and I've only seen Dick Tracy, which was okay, but not a huge hit. It was suitably cartoonish in production, and Madonna did a good turn as Breathless Mahoney; as for Scarlet Johansson in a Nazi outfit... Yeah, she's hot in any outfit. Dominate me, bitch! (Where did that come from? Down, my other self; down!) And I still want to see The Golden Compass just because I do. Haven't read the book yet, so that might help me enjoy the movie. We shall see.

GC is better than I gave it credit for being. I almost walked out on it when I was flying across the Atlantic.

As for Mongol, I really, really, REALLY want to see it. My undergraduate minor in college was Russian History (studied the Russian language for three years), and when I heard about this movie coming out, the drool started dripping from the corners of my mouth. Disgusting, I know, but everything I saw and heard about Mongol looked really good. Steven Silver's review here whetted my appetite again; good to see I can get it on DVD. Thank you, Steven, for this. **I'm totally into reading about the Hunt of Ghengis' tomb. It's an amazing story and the folks doing the searching have some weird methods!**

And that's a wrap. Take it easy, roomie, and I hope to make it to Corflu Zed.

All the best,
John Purcell

Hope to see ya there, bro!



And what LetterCol would be complete without Lloyd Penney!

Dear Chris:

See, I can do this at work, too! Just gotta be careful and type casual, but I can get the job done. And what I'm doing right now is a quickie loc for The Drink Tank 196.

The key is to have many windows open at once.

Ah, Mo Starkey cares to send the hairy beast. I still think you should get a shave and a brush cut, just to see if anyone recognizes you. Yvonne loves her copy of the Mamma Mia! DVD. I don't think we've got The Golden Compass on DVD, but I did spend some dollars to get the rest of the series of books, and that was a good investment. One DVD was tough to find...an original version (black and white) of A Christmas Carol. Sorry, you couldn't pay me to watch The Love Guru, don't care if it's Mike Myers. Vern Troyer played the coach of the Toronto Maple Leafs, a miniature version of Punch Imlach, who coached the Leafs in the 60s. I hope Mike gets back to making good movies real soon...

Was he the coach of the famous Bill Barilko? If he was, that's awesome! The movie's so bad!

I'll getcha a loc on the newest Claims Department soon. What's my role in this experiment? Hoep you're right on the Hugo buzz. Let's hope that those who are doin' the buzzin' are also doin' the votin'.

Yours is a name that's come up more than once, so I wouldn't be surprised.

Hi, Steve...we just about got our niece Nicole into fandom...almost, but not quite. For a while, she was a big Ben Bova fan. Now, we've gone back to our traditional status of being the weird aunt and uncle. Most of the second- or even third-generation fans we've run into over the years were snotty brats. I hope they grew out of that. Or, seeing they're fans, they probably are still that way.

Second Generation fans can be tough, though the Third Generation fans I've met, the few of them are the kind that don't understand the real world.

1977 saw the premiere of Star Wars, and my own emergence into fandom, and I was one of the many late-teenagers who saw Star Wars an obscene number of times. But as we got to Episodes, V, VI, I and II and III, that number quickly spiralled to one. I have seen Episodes I, II and III exactly once. And, I guess, once was enough. Tom Wolfe was so right.

Never say that aloud. It gives Tom Wolfe power.

Short loc, short issue, so it goes. Off it flies into the ether, and eventually onto my LiveJournal, if it still exists! LJ's new Russian owners laid off half the US work force. Hope we won't have to get a Cyrillic keyboard in the future... Take it easy, have a great weekend!

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Thanks, Lloyd! LJ's gonna make it, it seems. They're just shoring up for the future toughness. Russian Engineers work cheaper than American. Luckily, I've never had much trouble with my LJ, so it doesn't bother me much.



And now, with a kinda LoC, as he called it, is Mr. Eric Mayer!

Chris,

So I've decided I'd better write some locs before I sink further into

gafiation but there's this huge backlog of Drink Tanks, which I have read but been too listless to comment on. I always think I ought to at least try to say something intelligent, or entertaining, or insightful....well, that's certain death isn't it?

I feel like I have a very uncomfortable relationship at this point with fandom. There are some fans whose work I enjoy and so I read their zines and comment on them. But it isn't so much that I am participating in fandom, which I don't feel a part of, but rather that I am reading Chris Garcia's zine and writing to him, and reading John Purcell's and writing to him, not as part of a hobby but each just separate relationships. In fact, to the extent that reading and responding to zines brings me into contact with fandom-at-large I am often simply annoyed or just at a loss for words.

Maybe fanzines should, in addition to a loccol, have a "Letters From Mundanes" section! Hey, I hate the winter and this one has been dreadful so far. You've lived in the northeast. I don't know how you found the cold and snow.

At any rate, I wanted to let you know I am still enjoying your efforts even if I have not been making an effort to acknowledge them. And if I should vanish you will know that my mundane entelechy has won out.

Oh, yeah...I've been trying to

read some philosophy too...

Best,

Eric

You've pointed out a minor problem: what's the transition? Do you go straight from being a fan to a mundane, is there a medium setting. I mean, one does not lose their fannishness all in one sitting, do they? Or is it by the time gafia is announced, there has been a thorough and complete break with the parent organism? But isn't it also these friendships that form fandom and even if you only remain in touch with a couple of zines that you are, in fact, still a fan, but operating on a lower orbit? Either way, it's always good to hear from you. Letters from Mundanes would make a good subtitle for a Claims Department issue.



School of Hard Knocks

FurAffinity Journal for October 2007

Taral Wayne

I never went to an art school myself -- it was more expensive than regular college and I couldn't afford *that*. My wallet felt smaller just looking at the Ontario College of Art prospectus, whose first year fees were more than the list price of a VW Beetle in 1970. Instead, I just drew. I submitted art to fanzines first, then magazines, sold my comics directly to publishers. I graduated from the school of hard knocks. On the whole I've no regrets. Nevertheless, sometimes I wonder "what if".

Whether art school would have done me any good is hard to say. A friend of mine from high school named Scott attended the OCA, and he improved as an artist no doubt. I saw the evidence with my own eyes. But the main effect of his education seemed to be to turn him from drawing Conan-esque comics about barbarian warriors, to drawing marketable little quill-pen sketches of old Victorian downtown buildings. Was this good? Was this bad? In other words, did what he learned at OCA represent a real qualitative change? Or merely a spurious gentrification? I don't know, but the last time I talked with Scott

he was working in a store framing prints. One suspects that this would have been true whatever he drew in his spare time. Few artists of any sort make a living from it.

The only real benefit of an art education, I suspect, might have been to come away from it with an earlier familiarity with media - - phototypesetters, cameras, print making, stuff like that. It might have been beneficial, and then again maybe not. Old mechanical technologies would all be pretty much obsolete in the computer era anyway.

Another possible benefit would have been a less tangible one. The old school tie, in other words. I would have made connections that might have led to job opportunities, could have started me on the road to exhibiting in galleries, and finally being awarded government grants to the arts. But like Scott, most likely the price I'd have to pay for "success" would have been to give up drawing the "unsophisticated" things I liked, and draw the things approved of by the arts community.



Odds are pretty good I would have ended up framing pictures for a living too. At best I might have found work in a studio designing those annoying “bugs” at the bottom of your TV screen.

Yet without art college I *am* a professional artist.

Were I younger, the contemporary choice would have been whether to attend Sheridan College’s famous animation course. As with the OCA, the tuition would be prohibitive. As well, I’m told that the entire three-year program is extremely competitive.

I know a small number of people who’ve graduated from two or three years at Sheridan, and afterward worked briefly in local animation studios. The work they did was mainly for TV commercials and tutorials for kids. None found jobs with a major studio or ever worked on a cartoon or feature film. After a couple of years had gone by, none were employed in the animation industry in any way.

Today one has a decent job with computers, another works in a home furnishings retail warehouse.

Maybe I’m just as well off without an art education, whether then or now.

Ok, that’s it for this issue. I’m happy to say that we’re right on schedule for the Fourth Annual Giant Sized Annual, though I’ve got very little in the way of content yet, there are still a couple of weeks. Expect 199 to be a shorter issue than usual.

And I got asked to be the Fan Guest of Honor at Windycon this year. I’m as shocked as you are. I’ve never spent any time with Chicago fandom, so I hope I get a chance to chat with everyone. I’m really looking forward to it and I’ve got a few plans for things for the con that’ll be a lot of fun.

Until next Wednesday!

