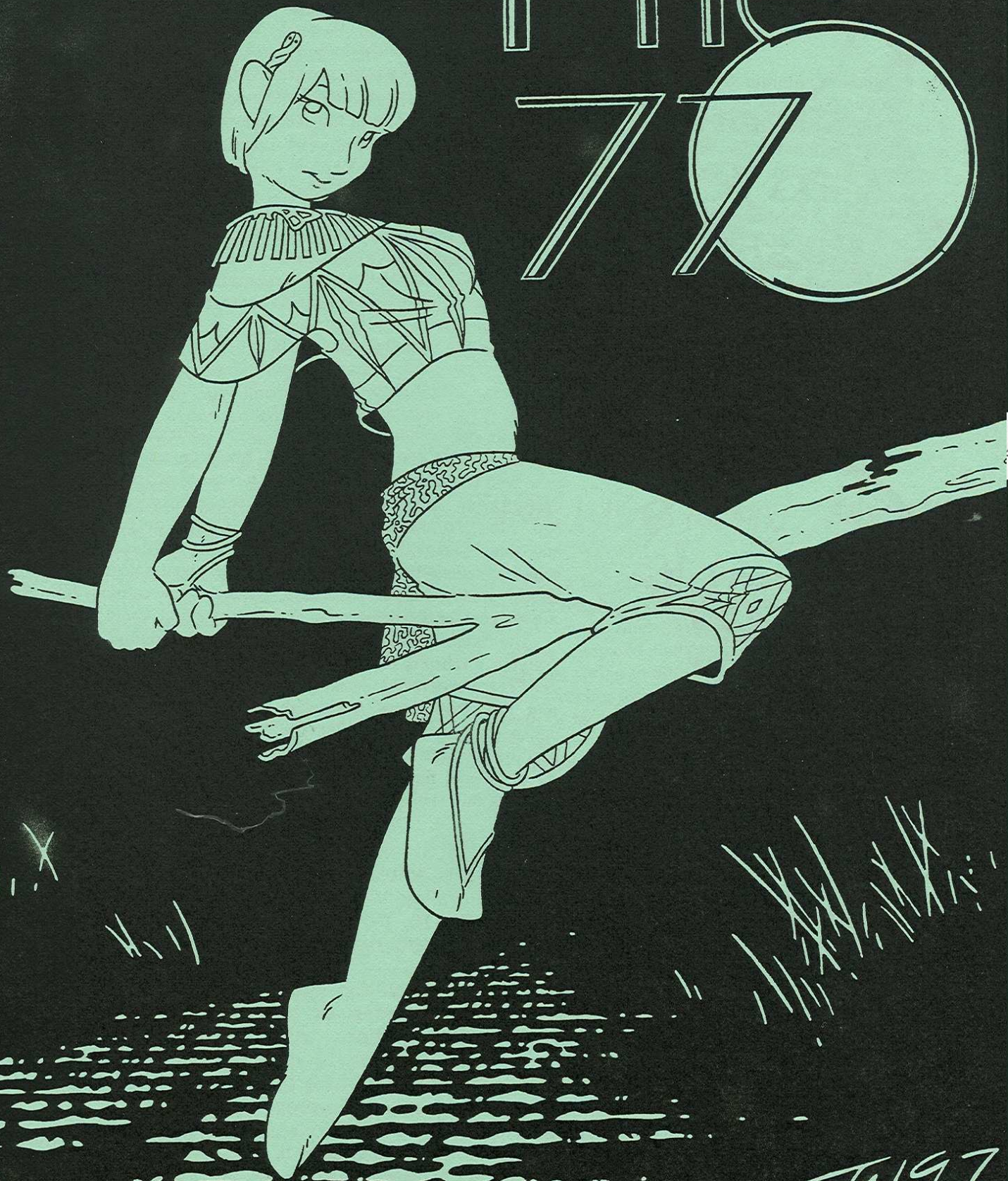


File 77



W97

1999 Rotsler Award Winner Grant Canfield

The Southern California Institute for Fan Interests (SCIFI) is pleased to announce that Grant Canfield is the winner of the Second Rotsler Memorial Fanzine Artist Award. The award was presented at Loscon 26.

The Rotsler Award honors the lifetime work of outstanding fanartists and the memory of esteemed fanartist William Rotsler. Grant was selected as a Rotsler Award recipient in recognition of his lifelong generosity and the unique talent reflected in his work.

Grant's graphic cartoon style graced the covers and interiors of dozens of the best fanzines of the 1970s. He was nominated several times for the Best Fanartist Hugo (and someone Bill Rotsler himself said should have won it.) His art first appeared in Al Snider's *Crossroads*, Richard Geis's *Science Fiction Review* and Frank Lunney's *Beabohema*. About the same time he started selling professional gag cartoons to national magazines.

Grant says, "I was published in the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Boys Life*, *Parade*,

The National Enquirer and just about every men's magazine you can name...."

The annual award consists of \$300 cash and an award plaque. Mike Glycer, Richard Lynch, and Geri Sullivan served as this year's award judges. Mike Glycer coordinated the Loscon exhibit of Grant's art.

"I am honored, flattered and surprised," writes Grant. "The honor of having my fan art linked to the name of Bill Rotsler is especially touching, as I considered him one of the finest people I ever met in fandom. His art was an inspiration to all us fan artists of the '70s and '80s, and he was truly my friend."



**Editorial Notes
by Mike Glycer**

I had to stop and remind myself that this is *File 770*, not *Mythologies*, Don D'Amassa's superb but ever-growing letterzine of years ago. *File 770:133* ran 36 pages, and this issue will run 32 *after* some judicious pruning. Shorter issues, produced more frequently, are my goal for the new year.

The issue boasts three extra features – reprints of the Aussiecon Three reports by Jack Speer and Roy Pettis, and Sourdough Jackson's editorial about the impact the late Marion Zimmer Bradley had on sf and fandom. They

give good insights into subjects that interest *File 770* readers, and in the case of the Worldcon reports, supply the coverage I would ordinarily write myself had I gone to Aussiecon.

Carried over to the next issue, then, are such treasures as Marie Rengstorff's letter about moving to Hawaii, selections of new cartoons from Marc Schirmeister and Grant Canfield, an article by Francis Hamit, and Steve and Sue Francis' report about their travels Down Under (a "simultaneous submission" to *NASFA Shuttle*, judging by its appearance there.)

File 770 133

File 770:133 is edited by Mike Glycer at 705 Valley View Ave., Monrovia CA 91016. No animals were harmed in the making of this fanzine.

File 770 is available for news, artwork, arranged trades, or by subscription. Subscriptions cost \$8 for 5 issues, \$15 for 10 issues, mailed first class in North America or surface mail rates overseas.

Air printed matter rate is available for \$2.50 per issue.

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Art Credits

Taral: Cover

Alan White: 2, 17

Bill Rotsler: 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15, 19, 23, 24

Joe Mayhew: 21

News of Fandom

Treasure in Your Computer

Imagine opening your mailbox and finding that Ted White has written you a five-part series on Louis Armstrong. In the next envelope is Stu Shiffman's article on Victorian magic lanterns. And don't forget the lead article you've already got from Joyce Worley Katz. Sound like you're dreaming? Well, Arnie Katz is living your dream every day as Editor-in-Chief of Collectingchannel.

Collectingchannel is an affinity portal on the Internet. Barry Friedman and Steve Sanford had the idea of doing for collectibles what Yahoo does for sales generally. The site went online in 1998 and every day adds new feature articles designed to appeal to collectors and anyone else fascinated by the artifacts of popular culture.

Joyce Worley Katz was hired in 1998 as the site's first content-writing employee, and as editor. She writes the daily "front page" articles. Another early hire was Las Vegas fan Marcy Waldie, as a content writer. Arnie Katz joined the company's Editor-in-Chief of site content last December. He knew he needed "talented writers who could get a lot of facts into a story and preserve a personal touch - - in other words, fanwriters." He was also sensitive to being involved with a startup company and didn't want to pull people out of secure positions. He still found talented fans ready to take a risk.

He hired Andy Hooper to handle Toys, including action figures and die-cast models. Tami Springer deals with Antiques, including glassware and collectible pottery. Ted White has double-barrelled responsibility for Music and Comics. Bill Kunkel handles TV and Movie collectibles.

Victor Gonzalez quickly advanced from being an assistant channel manager writing about music to handling the high-



profile Treasures in Your Home site which supports the daily show aired on PAX cable. (It's also viewable on the Internet.)

Working for the site is like joining a virtual family reunion. They brought in Steve Stiles to write about comics every day. Stu Shiffman, A.P. McQuiddy and Bill Bodden work for Andy Hooper on Toys. Tom Springer covers Sports and Outdoors. Aileen Forman is writing about antiques, pottery and glassware. Craig Steed is a researcher. rich brown has become Managing Editor. And Ted White wrote in November, "My old buddy -- my oldest friend in fandom -- Bbob Stewart, has joined the Movies/TV Channel. You may or may not know that in the 60s TV Guide had him spending his days in a little room watching a ton of old movies; Bbob is the author of all the brief descrip-



THREE WISSES WITHIN. ROZBOR'S

tions of old movies which TV Guide has been running ever since. Bbob is a movie database all by himself."

Arnie compared the Content department meeting in Las Vegas last spring to ditto and Corflu, though not all of the 21 people working for Arnie are fans. Arnie says thanks to the growth of his staff he has been able to cut back from 16-17 hour days to 10-hour days.

Ted White is proud not only because "it is a fan-dominated site -- kind of like the prozines of the future -- but because it is fast becoming a major non-portal site. Through 'content partnerships' we either are or will be supplying content for eBay and Looksmart, among other sites." Sites that rate other sites call Collectingchannel the #1 site. It's the largest of its kind.

Content originated on Collectingchannel is also provided to other e-commerce sites. They are exclusive content provider for Broadcast.com and a leading provider to eBay of content about written works. Arnie says the company is moving toward a public stock offering next spring.

Ted explains the way material is generated: "We Channel Managers are responsible for daily content, five days a week, which boils down to a feature article, three 'spotlite' articles and three-to-five short 'news clicks' a day... It's like producing daily newspapers for each channel. I hope to move away from writing so much and get into editing more as we bring various content partners (like *The Comics Journal* and *The Comics Buyer's Guide*) on board."

Arnie ironically points out that the site is "An American version of contemporary British fanzines -- a lot of stuff about

furniture, nothing about fandom.”

Ted White would say, “Robert Lichtman says he reads us all every day and calls The Collecting Channel the best genzine coming out today. Fans who are into collecting should find a lot there....”

Watch Your Snail Mail Box

Tom Springer and Arnie Katz have decided that with all the web page writing they’re having to do, why not just do a few more articles to put in a new fanzine while they’re at it?

It won’t be called Tom Arnold: “But we thought about it,” said Arnie. Look for it, hopefully sooner than real soon now.

Sub Text

Fans who need to get around New York quicker than than they can run should order a new book by Toronto fan Peter Dougherty. He has issued the second edition of his book on the New York City Subway. (Printed by Lloyd Penney’s employer, by the way.) Called *Tracks of the New York City Subway*, the book depicts in great detail every track, switch and station in the entire New York City subway system.

Dougherty says, “The book is for those who love to look out the front of a subway train and try to decipher that seemingly incomprehensible maze of track, switches and signals that keep New York’s trains moving through 468 stations on over 722 miles of track, 24 hours a day.” There are also copious notes about abandoned tunnels, stations and even whole lines.

For further information, contact Peter Dougherty by e-mail at pjd@ilap.com or brakeman@nycsubway.org or at the Website <http://www.quuxuum.org/pjd/trk-book.html>.

Newshound Lloyd Penney adds a social note to this report: “Peter’s always been a NYCphile, and is engaged to former New York City fan Arwen Rosenbaum.”

Dave Weingart Is Unbelievable

The “Dave Weingart” hoax that fooled fans for years is now been exposed. On November 8 he posted to SMOFS claiming have finished the New York City Marathon. His exact claim was to have finished it in under five hours, placing 24,157th overall. The details matter little and are eclipsed by the very notion that a science fiction fan would engage in anything more strenuous than throwing *File 770* at a wall. For a fan to be present at so much physical exertion, much less exemplify it, is beyond belief.

“Dave Weingart” adds that his marathon run raised hundreds of dollars for cancer research. That part I believe.

Not Cheap Seats

The **Baltimore SF Society** is one of the few clubs that owns its own meeting place, a former movie theater. A building improvement program kicked off in September that began with new flooring in the furnace room. The existing floor was taken up and among the artifacts discovered was a 17-cent movie ticket. Were those rates in effect today, the club treasury could have paid for over 120,000 people to see *Phantom Menace*, if that many could be compelled to go.



Fundraising for Jim Bearcloud

“We just found out that Jim Bearcloud, long-time friend and companion of Hugo-winning science fiction artist George Barr, is very seriously ill and is in a hospital in California,” Jon Gustafson and Vicki Mitchell announced in October. By then, Bearcloud had been hospitalized for three weeks with an illness never diagnosed with certainty, although first suspected to be congestive heart failure, then pneumonia.

Now it looks as if Bearcloud eventually will be all right, after months of rehabilitation. He’s off the anesthetics and paralytics, but terribly weak. He can’t even pull to a sitting position, having lost almost all arm and leg muscle and muscle tone in the weeks he was unconscious. He’s becoming more aware of his surroundings and recognizes people, but loses thoughts in midstream.

Jim Bearcloud has been an artist in his own right for many years, has been active in California fandom, and is a fine photographer. A few of his photographs were published in *Amazing* a decade or so ago.

Gustafson and Mitchell make this appeal: “Jim’s medical insurance is taking care of most of the medical bills, but George is now trying to live on less than half the income they had when Jim was working, as well as trying to pay the medical bills that Jim’s insurance won’t cover. George and Jim need your help.... Please make a donation to ‘George Barr’ and mail it to us at 621 East ‘F’ Street, Moscow, ID 83843. Any amount, no matter how small, will help. If you can’t send a donation, a get-well card would be greatly appreciated. And, of course, send them your good thoughts.”

Gustafson and Mitchell raised over \$750 the first month in checks and sales from a charity auction at InCon (Spokane). They held another auction at OryCon.

Bjo Trimble pitched and arranged a series of fundraisers at Loscon. Donated art was displayed for sale in the Art Show on panels given by the committee. She and Elizabeth Klein-Lebbink gave a percentage of their own Loscon art sales proceeds. Kathryn Trimble distributed badge stickers to raise funds. And Loscon’s annual David Gerrold If-You-Have-Money-In-Your-Pocket-I’m-Coming-After-It Charity Auction designated all funds to George and Jim. Auction items included lunch for two with Harlan Ellison at home. Almost \$4,500 was raised for Barr and Bearcloud.

John, Vickie or Bjo are willing to give volunteers all the information they will need to run a charity auction at a convention. Contact them at:

Jon Gustafson: jmgustafson@turbonet.com

Vicki Mitchell: vmitchel@uidaho.edu

Bjo Trimble: bjot@usa.net

SF Canada Funds Taken

SF Canada (the Canadian counterpart of SFFWA) has revealed to the membership that its secretary-treasurer during 1996-1998 gave himself personal access to the organization's funds because of various personal crises, and by August 1998 had essentially cleaned out the organization's checking account.

He confessed in a February 1999 e-mail soon after the new secretary-treasurer took over. Partial records given to the SF Canada executive show C\$2,149.93 cannot be accounted for. Some uncashed membership checks were also recovered, by then staledated and unprocessable.

President Jean-Louis Trudel said the economic loss to SF Canada might be considered as only C\$867.96 if he cannot be reimbursed for funds he personally advanced to pay for two issues of *Communique*.

Restitution was offered by the former secretary-treasurer, \$20 every two weeks to be drawn from his un-

employment insurance payments. Only one check was ever received.

The president was told by the organization's lawyer in October that it had the option of pressing criminal charges or suing the former officer in the Small Claims Division of provincial court. The chances of getting a small claims judgment were good but collection would be difficult: provincial law does not allow a levy on unemployment insurance payments and social assistance.

At its December 5 annual general meeting, the membership of SF Canada will be given the chance to choose between the available options: pressing criminal charges, filing a civil suit, pursuing restitution out of court, holding its claim in abeyance or simply writing off the loss.

The case has made it impossible for SF Canada to find people willing candidates for its executive posts. Because no one offered to replace them, the executive decided to stand for one more year: Jean-Louis Trudel, president, Dave G. Laderoute, vice-president, and Ursula Pflug, secretary-treasurer.

E Profitus Fandom

Now the Internet is fermenting something even more disgusting than WSFS Inc. -- it's an e-commerce website called Fandom.com, led by a former Vice-President of Sales and Trading of Morgan Stanley, Mark Young.

Young's idea is to offer a superior alternative to poorly stocked general merchandise stores lacking reliable customer service. The Fandom.com site will offer more than 7,000 genre products and be staffed by customer service representatives who are very familiar with the merchandise.

That's a pretty inoffensive plan, by itself, but the rest of the press release reveals a truly orcish vision:

"Fandom's core audience is comprised mainly of well-educated, affluent, early adapters who demonstrate a passion and loyalty for science fiction, horror and fantasy entertainment similar to that of sports fans," said Chip Meyers, president of Fandom. "They are fervent consumers and represent a lucrative e-commerce opportunity since they have the willingness and discretionary income to indulge their passions."

It's not the description that offended me, after all, I've been in a huckster room before. It's that "Chip Meyers, president of Fandom" part that got to me. Has anyone broken the news to Ben Ya-

The Answer Is: Greed

"Greed or safety?" muses Bruce Pelz just before he takes tricks he doesn't need to sink the other bidders at the card table. Now contestants in a new TV game show called "Greed" are asking themselves a similar question -- and Tom Galloway was among the first to cash in.

It was more than victory, it was vindication. Tom passed the written tryout for "Jeopardy!" nine times without a call-back. But the producers or "Greed" thought he was perfect.

"I correctly answered the \$100,000 question (and was later humbled by my eight year old niece also being able to answer it. It was 'Which of these gases gives the Goodyear blimp its lift?' with choices of oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, helium, or ozone), but our team captain then decided to stop and not go any further. Talking to him later, I found that he had forgotten some of the rules and not considered strategies anywhere near as much as I had, and didn't realize why we should've gone for the 200K level and then stopped.

"Just for the heck of it, in a bit filmed but not shown, they asked each of the rest of us if we would've gone on. We all said we would, then they asked us the 200K question and we nailed it (category of Arnold Schwarzenegger movies, with the question 'Which of these movies was

Schwarzenegger in?' and choices of *The Running Man*, *Cobra*, *Kindergarten Cop*, *Twins*, *Jingle All The Way*, and *The Fifth Element*). One reason they may not have shown this is when I was asked about going on, I said 'I'd be back' in my best Ahhhnold imitation.

"So, I ended up winning \$20K. Had the following conversation with my three year old niece; 'I won twenty thousand dollars.' 'Is that more than fifty cents?' 'Yes' 'Then you won a lot of money!'"

Greg Bear's Dinosaur Summer Wins First Endeavour Award

Dinosaur Summer by Seattle-area writer Greg Bear has won the first Endeavour Award. Bear received the award November 12 at OryCon, Oregon's annual science fiction and fantasy convention. The Award is accompanied by a \$700 honorarium.

The Endeavour Award honors a distinguished science fiction or fantasy book, either a novel or a single-author collection, created by a writer from the Pacific Northwest. Other finalists for the Award were *Golden Globe* by John Varley; *The Good Children* by Kate Wilhelm; *Iron Shadows* by Steve Barnes; and *Ship of Magic* by Robin Hobb. Judges for the 1999 Award were John Barnes, Edward Bryant, and Esther M. Friesner.



The Award is sponsored by Oregon Science Fiction Conventions, Inc., organizers of OryCon and other conventions. It is named for the H.M. Bark Endeavour, the ship in which Capt. James Cook explored the Pacific.

Writers, editors, agents and persons who attended the previous year's OryCon may nominate works for the award. Nominations must be accompanied by four copies of the book for use in judging.

The 2000 Endeavour Award will be presented at next year's OryCon. The deadline to enter books published during 1999 is February 15, 2000. Nomination forms may be printed from the Endeavour Award's home page:

www.osfci.org/endeavour/index.html

You can also send SASE to: The Endeavour Award, c/o OSFCI, P.O. Box 5703, Portland, OR 97228.

Canada's NSFFS Folds

Canada's National Science Fiction and Fantasy Society, a public awareness group, has closed according to one of the senior people involved, Peter Halasz. The NSFFS was formerly known as the Canadian SF Foundation, having changed its name in 1997.

Halasz adds, "There is no connection whatsoever between SF Canada and the NSFFS."

Rotsler Art

How are you fixed for same?

L.A.'s own Bill Warren announces, "I've still got lots of it to give out to print fanzine editors who knew who the heck Bill was. Use my eMail address, if you want to post this notice."

Request your Rotsler art by e-mail from: BillyBond@aol.com

Bill Warren has been sorting through this trove of Rotsler illos. "I've spent the last three nights going over all these, and have come to the firm conclusion that (a) Rotsler was a much better artist than even he thought he was, and (b) he was the best fan artist -- in his field -- of all time. Probably the best there ever will be in terms of these cartoons and drawings. He always fretted about 'mastery of line,' which he achieved years back, by comparing himself to the New Yorker artist who often drew elaborate images with just one, long, thin line. But he had a brilliantly expressive line, and knew better how to use white space and black forms."

Warren has also noticed, "I think that some photos by Bill Rotsler can be seen in the new movie *Mumford*. Toward the end of the film (which I do not recommend otherwise), one of the characters flips through old issues of *Adam*, and I'm pretty sure that two of the black-and-white photos we see were taken by Rotsler. There is no credit on screen, of course."

Slanshack Equilateral?

Fans on Mars may soon be reading *File 770* from the comfort of their airdomes, predicts Dave Doering. NASA plans a new enhancement to the Internet called the Interplanetary Network. It will include deployable solar system Internets (for local planetary, Lunar, and asteroidal use), gateway server satellites, and a stable interplanetary backbone for high speed Internet connections.

NASA says that contemporary Internet protocols (TCP/IP) are not suited for the wireless transmissions used to span the deep space long distances. So a new protocol will be invented for space radio

channels such as S-Band, X-band, and Ka-band. These will allow file transfers from local PCs on Mars to servers in orbit, and then to Earth stations or home PC users. NASA will announce its proposed network in summer 2000, immediately followed by the transmission of the first computer virus to the stars.

First and Last Men

Tim Kyger is doing the internet equivalent of passing out cigars -- spamming everyone in North America with his good news. "On November 17, 1999 (the late lamented 'odd' day, if you'll recall), at 11:38 p.m. Kathy Kyger delivered a 10 lb., 12 oz., 22-inch long baby boy: Michael Andrew Conrad Kyger. Mother and baby are doing fine -- despite three initial weeks of medical problems for Michael, which all now seem to be cleared up. And in other news, my vasectomy is now one week old." You can congratulate Tim on either or both events at: kyger@spacelines.com

New Issues of Gegenschein

Eric Lindsay has posted the June and September issues of his fanzine *Gegenschein* at:

http://members.tripod.com/~eric_lindsay/sf/geg85.htm

http://members.tripod.com/~eric_lindsay/sf/geg86.htm

Eric says, "Issue #86 talks about the Townsville Motorhome and Campervan Show, and about our visitors before Aussiecon Three. We had Gregory Benford, Elisabeth Malartre, Rusty Hevelin, Gay Haldeman and Joe Haldeman here before the con."

He and Jean Weber also announced their new "travel" site, and a newsletter aimed at overseas readers collecting material about visiting Australia.

Site -- <http://www.avalook.com>

Newsletter -- <http://www.avalook.com.au/newsletr/oznews1.htm>

To subscribe to the newsletter, send e-mail to:

oznews-subscribe@avalook.com.au

Moving Into Space

Tabloid newspapers, the *Sun* and the *National Examiner*, took an interest in Bigelow Aerospace's plans to develop a rocket-propelled cruise ship by 2015, but not for the same reasons as Greg Bennett,



Viva Las Vegas II

Laurraine Tuihasi married Mike Weasner in Las Vegas on June 26. If you wonder why two LA fans would cross the Mojave Desert to walk down the aisle, Laurraine is happy to explain:

"Why did we go to Vegas? It was easier to get married there -- less paperwork. Also, it was an excuse to go there to do the Star Trek Experience. The Las Vegas fans, a very friendly bunch, gave us a party in the evening, including a homemade cake."

For more photos, see their web site:

<http://members.aol.com/mweasner/062699/>



the company's recently-hired Vice President for Spacecraft Development.

The *National Examiner's* slant on things was that Bigelow is funding "real life X-Files." Although Bigelow says he has never seen a UFO himself, he is known to be interested in both aerospace issues and the search for extraterrestrial intelligence because he founded the UFO research organization National Institute for Discovery in 1995.

NIDS has a home page, and once it's finished trying to download two dozen cookies to your hard drive, you can check out their latest findings, like "Final Report: Investigation of Unexplained Death of a Cow in N.E. Utah."

Medical Updates

Ted White's good news is: "I've been off crutches and on a cane for about half a month now and can walk short distances unassisted. My increased mobility is a great help and I'm almost fully functioning now (in terms of work I've been fully functioning for several months.)"

Ray Bradbury suffered a mild stroke on November 6, the result of a blood clot at the base of his brain stem. He was paralyzed on the right side and his speech was affected. He is expected to make a full recovery — and already is well enough to have threatened to rise from his sickbed and testify for Forry Ackerman in his suit against Ray Ferry of *Famous Monsters of Filmland*.

Mae Strelkov reportedly had a stroke in late September. Australian fan Michael Hailstone reprinted in the letter column of *Busswarble* 36 a postcard from the popular Argentinian fanartist dated September 23. The postcard was accompanied by a

note from Mae's husband Vadim that a few days after writing the postcard, Mae had a stroke. Vadim does not go into details about Mae's current condition, but he did say that her doctor gave her only a "fair" chance of recovery. [[Source: Lloyd Penney]]

FFANZ winner **Linette Horne** was hospitalized at the end of September with arrhythmic fibrillation: her heart beating 200 times a minute (the norm is between 80 and 100). She is now recuperating at home, and must undergo more testing.

Fans have been sending get well cards to Linette's home address: 28 Highbury Road, Highbury, Wellington, New Zealand.

Gordon Garb had knee surgery in October.

Steve Lopata was scheduled to have arthroscopic surgery on his left shoulder on November 29.

Jack Harness was in Kaiser Hospital on November 30 with a heart problem for which he was due to get a pacemaker later that day. June Moffatt said in APA-L that she talked to Jack "who seemed to be in good spirits."

Former Nashville fan **Mike Pendleton** had a heart attack in October. Mike works for CSX rail in Louisville. He is out of the hospital now and is doing well even though he doesn't know yet when he will be returning to work. [[Source: *Kronos* 10/99]]

Club Clippings

The **Futurian Society of Sydney** celebrated its 60th anniversary on November

19. The **Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society** was 65 in October, and threw its own "retirement banquet" with David Gerrold and Bjo Trimble as featured speakers.

Changes of Address

Robbie Bourget, E-mail:

robbiebourget@aol.com

Sherry Boyd, P. O. Box 7488, Little Rock, AR 72217-7488

Linda Deneroff, 11300 First Avenue NE, #113, Seattle, WA 98125-6041

Ralph Green, Jr., 530 Hackberry Lane, Fairview, TX 75069

Teddy Harvia, E-mail:

tharvia@airmail.net

Ed Meskys, E-mail:

edmeskys@worldpath.net

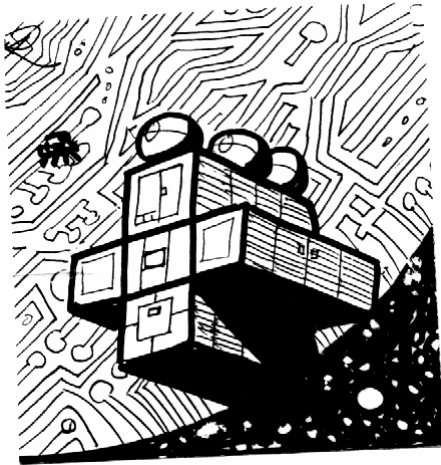
Marie Rengstorff, P.O. Box 434, Honolulu, HI 96726

Lloyd and Yvonne Penney, E-mail: penneys@netcom.ca

Peggy Rae Sapienza, 5904 Chestnut Hill Rd., College Park, MD 20740

Lloyd and Yvonne Penney explain that their old e-mail address, yvonne_penney@email.whirlpool.com, is no longer good. "Yvonne was at Inglis Ltd. for six years, and within months of parent company Whirlpool Corp. moving in, the office was turned upside-down. Just a few days ago, Yvonne was laid off with a generous separation package. So, [when] we receive the computer we ordered from Dell about a week ago we shall have a netcom.com address, and home-based e-mail, finally."

Teddy Harvia ominously suggests, "Recent actions of Big Brother suggest that I should move all personal correspondence to my home address."



Proofreading The Philadelphia Story

When the Philadelphia SF Society club-zine bragged, “We’re the oldest, continuously running science fiction society in America, but LA’s society was founded before ours,” I thought they were mistaken. Unfortunately, my explanation in the last issue of *File 770* was also wrong. (“Tainted by a small degree of inaccuracy” is the phrase I’d use if Diana wouldn’t be proofreading this article. She likes it when I come right out and say “I was wrong.”)

Fred Patten wrote, “I was shocked to read your account on page 5 of the latest debate over which is the oldest sf club, Los Angeles’ or Philadelphia’s. As I have always understood fannish history, the July PSFS News is correct that the LASFS was founded first. You are wrong in stating that Philadelphia was Chapter 3 of the Science Fiction League, thus clearly predating L.A. which was Chapter 4.

“My source is Sam Moskowitz’s *The Immortal Storm*. In his Chapter VIII, ‘The Science Fiction League,’ he lists the SFL’s first chapters as: 1. Brooklyn; 2. Lewiston; 3. Erie; 4. Los Angeles (October 1934). Philadelphia was Chapter 11 (January 1935, briefly ceased, reorganized in October 1935). Moskowitz cites the Lewiston and Erie chapters as examples of most of the SFL’s fannish empire, which

looked grand on paper but most of the chapters were chartered to overly-enthusiastic individual young fans in small towns who never did anything with them, and they soon disappeared. Contrariwise, Moskowitz describes in detail how Los Angeles and Philadelphia fandoms blossomed and grew from their SFL roots.”

Lew Wolkoff, a PSFS member, agrees that “LASFS is about 4 months older than PSFS, something PSFS acknowledged in 1994, when the club voted to send a congratulatory letter to LASFS on the occasion of its 60th anniversary celebration. We also suggested that the two clubs try to do something in tandem, possibly related to Philcon and Loscon, but we could never get the details worked out.”

Even if no controversy needs to be settled, Fred Patten’s additional details of early club history are fascinating to read:

“Your citation of Harry Warner’s explanation in *All Our Yesterdays* of the PSFS’ hiatus in the middle of World War II is accurate. I agree that this alone should seriously damage the PSFS’ claim of being ‘the oldest, continuously running science fiction society.’ However, accuracy demands another correction. The LASFS has not ‘met regularly since it was founded’ in October 1934. It has met regularly only since Forry Ackerman took over the club’s leadership in February 1936. Meetings during late 1934 and most of 1935 were apparently erratic and infrequent. Forry got the LA-SFL organized enough to hold steady bi-weekly meetings, which were stepped up to weekly a couple of years later.

“If I understand correctly, Philadelphia’s argument over which club is older is based upon the technicality of when they adopted their current names. The Philadelphia club dropped out of the SFL and became the independent PSFS in ‘early 1936.’ The L.A. club remained loyal to the SFL until the SFL was clearly moribund by 1939. The L.A. chapter had a dra-

matic vote (according to the fanzines of the day) to officially secede and adopt its new LASFS name at its March 27, 1940 meeting. (Did the SFL still exist in 1940, except on paper? Was it ever officially dissolved?) According to the PSFS, this makes it the oldest club by 4+ years and the hiatus of meetings during World War II does not count. According to the LASFS, the provable continuity of the fan club is what counts and the dates of changes in the club’s name is an irrelevant quibble. Both clubs can trace the reliable establishment of their fannish communities to late 1935. As a significant example of its continuity, the LASFS has always celebrated its anniversary based on the October 27, 1934 date of its first meeting, which requested certification as a SFL chapter (approved on November 13, 1934 according to the SFL news published in *Wonder Stories*), not on its formal secession from the SFL or on the earliest date that its ‘uninterrupted record of meetings can be traced back to.’”

Lew Wolkoff has no quibble with that, and is still quite proud to say:

“PSFS can legitimately claim:

“(1) To be the second oldest club in the world;

“(2) To be the second oldest continuous club. We didn’t hold meeting, but the club did function in a way throughout WWII. Even if you start from the end of the hiatus in 1944, what other club besides LASFS has been meeting since that year?;

“(3) To have hosted the first major inter-city gathering of fans (in October, 1936). It wasn’t an SF con in the modern sense, but it is referred to as such in most of the fan histories, and Philcons are numbered from that event. This year’s is probably Philcon 60, since we’re not sure how many years during WWII were without a Philcon; and,

“(4) To have hosted the longest running SF convention. Even if you start with the 1937 Philcon, with the exception of a hiatus for WWII, we’ve been holding one every year since.”

Graphic Examples

by Mike Glyer

Ken Cheslin goes by the nickname Ken-ch -- a Golden Age fannish nickname coined from two particles of his full name. Others like Silverbob and Roytac don't hyphenate. (Cheslin himself isn't completely consistent about it.) I like the tradition. Of course, it's a lot easier to join in when the result isn't "Migly".

Ken-ch sent me one of his ATom reprint collections this summer so I started sending him *File 770* in appreciation. Then came a couple more ATom anthologies. Followed by a couple of Irish John Berry reprint collections. An instant faanish library!

As a preserver of our heritage, Ken-ch is more prolific than a monastery full of scribes. He's reprinted two ATom collections originally assembled by Ella Parker and Vinç Clarke -- *The ATom Anthology* and *ATom, A Tribute* -- and published two of his own, *ATom 2000* and *The Millennium ATom*. Of the four, Parker's is the most awe-inspiring, doubtless because it had the most creative input from ATom himself.

Ella Parker published her 100-page collection on mimeograph in 1961. Only seven years had passed since Arthur Thomson ended his first letter to Walt Willis with a cartoon footnote, and Willis replied with a letter of encouragement that ATom reacted to with a 30-cartoon avalanche. In that short time ATom's fanzine illos came to personify the faanish spirit of the age. He became, in the words of Willis, "fandom's Art Editor."

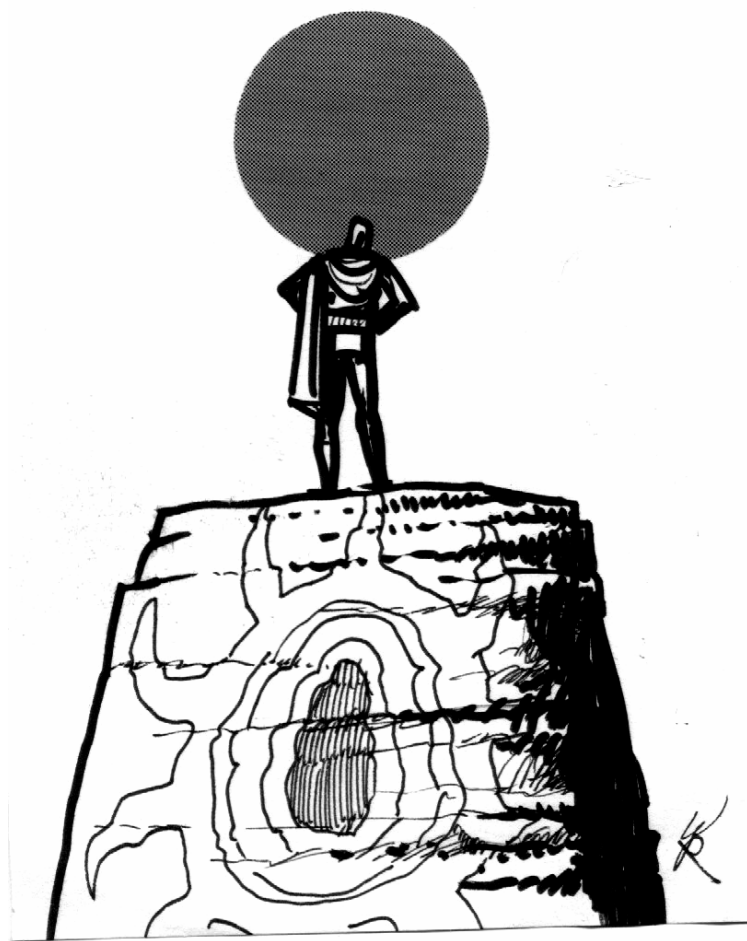
The way ATom worked is a revelation to the rest of us now used to receiving photocopied art or files over the Internet. John Berry wrote: "I would send Arthur batches of wax stencils and attendant brief story lines and within a couple of weeks a parcel of carefully packed fully illustrated stencils were returned. I can still recall the thrill of opening those parcels even though it was over forty years ago."

Most of ATom's early fanart was drawn with a steel stylus directly on stencil. Fans of the day could not have afforded electrostenciling (said Vincent Clarke). Thus, when Parker wanted to publish her sampler, ATom stencilled fresh versions of the chosen illos.

ATom also contributed an article teaching readers how to draw "curly monsters", though Walt Willis' introduction teases, "...This quiet-spoken young London Scot (with I hasten to claim Northern Irish ancestry) happens to be one of the few real geniuses who have appeared in this wild-talented world of fandom. Artistic genius, that is. I know there are some who impute the prose pieces in this volume to him, but I refuse to believe it."

Cartoonists are known by their stock images: in ATom's case, bug-eyed aliens with blunderbuss ray-guns, pear-shaped beanie-wearing fans, "curly monsters", trenchcoated agents of the Goon Defective Agency, wrecked spaceships, and alien militarists in uniforms so elaborate they make Michael Jackson's stage costumes look like civilian mufti.

The Parker collection contains dozens of breathtaking full-page drawings. Three favorites that stand out for their beauty,



humor and fannishness deserve special comment.

The first shows eleven curly monsters struggling to right a crate of mimeo supplies whose "UP" side is not. The character of each monster is expressed by its distorted shape and the exquisite textures imparted to its "fur" or "skin" by ATom's judicious use of shading plates.

Next, ATom references the earliest days of space exploration in his hilarious vision of a monkey straddling a tiny space capsule, head cloaked behind a big antique camera and in his extended hand a pan of flash powder, ready to photograph the earth below.

Lastly, "The Artist at Work" is a scraggle-haired, frog-bodied alien chained to the wall of a room overflowing with fannish references to Bjo, "Von for Taff", sticky quarters and "Seattle in '61" -- ATom's modest self-image.

Vincent Clarke's *ATom, A Tribute* came out soon after ATom's death in 1990. Clarke included some material from Parker's collection, then long out-of-print. It includes on facing pages an informative comparison of the original version of the backcover for *Duplicating Without Tears* and the second version

redrawn for publication by Parker in 1961.

The cover of Cheslin's *ATom 2000* advertises the screwball comedy within: dozens of bug-eyed aliens pilot a fleet of jet-propelled 8-balls with a screw for the rudder.

And inside, the space Vikings from the cover of *Waldo 8* owe nothing to H. Beam Piper. They look like the escaped cast of a Wagnerian space opera who seem to think that all the gods in Asgard resemble the Swedish Chef.

I could wish the illos' publication dates were given when more than one fannish reference fits the punchline. In one hand-stenciled cartoon a bearded fan says to his comrade, "I doubt if it's worth having the operation just for the chance of joining another APA." Is the black-bearded character 1960s omniapan Bruce Pelz? Or is the joke a 1970s reference to "A Women's Apa"?

ATom's work spanned decades. His rich sense of humor expressed in a personal graphic style married perfectly with the sophisticated, ironic tone of Irish Fandom in the early 60's. Perhaps too much so! Although he continued drawing for years afterwards, ATom was so identified with the period that whenever his new illos appeared it was tacitly assumed the publisher had stumbled across an old cache of fanart -- that these illos had undoubtedly appeared in a great old Golden Age zine we'd simply never gotten to see.

It wasn't so: *ATom 2000* contains a whole page of *Ansible* headings done in the 1980s (including a topical "Hansen for TAFF" illo.) ATom was still drawing, mainly for special occasions or as a specific expression of friendship.

Cheslin's latest production, *The Millennium ATom*, arrived while I was writing this article. It contains 114 pages of ATom art, mostly full-page drawings, much of it not previously reprinted. I'd say if you can't order all four, order the Parker collection and this one for starters.

Cheslin's flyer lists the following "break-even" prices in US money. It would be great if you could encourage him by contributing a bit more than he's asked for, considering the cost of postage alone.

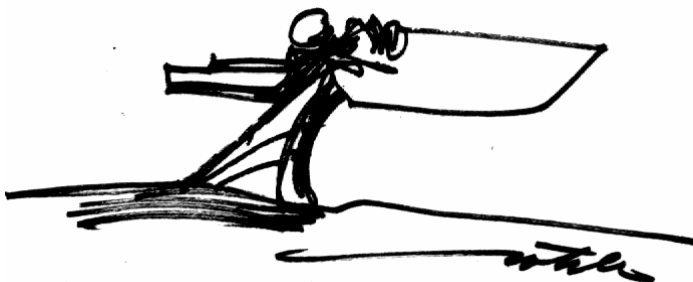
ATom Anthology, by Ella Parker: \$5.00

ATom, a Tribute by Vincent Clarke: \$3.00

ATom 2000 by Ken Cheslin: \$5.00

The Millennium ATom by Ken Cheslin: \$8.00

Send to: Ken Cheslin, 29 Kestrel Rd., Halesowen, West Midlands, B63 2PH U.K.



The fanzine as haiku: "It's only an apazine" is never a comment that comes to mind while reading *Vanamonde*, although John Hertz originated his two-page zine for the twin audiences of APA-L (weekly) and Minneapa (which jointly circulates

with APA-L once a month). For some time he has also run off extra copies to mail to an extensive list of fans outside both apas.

The balance between mailing comments and other content varies from week to week in *Vanamonde*. Either as a correspondent or narrator, Hertz is witty, literate, and unpredictable. He has a dry sense of humor and a devotion to fannish subjects worthy of the root-word fanatic. Above all, he has a poet's heart and with it a determination to compress a world of meaning into an evocative phrase.

Admittedly, I find John's proverbial insights all the more agreeable for believing them to be true. For example:

"Disdain is easy to abuse, a vice which the neo-illiteracy and balkanism of recent years naturally aggravate."

Or in another issue: "In all writing (including pictures), readers perceive the author's intention only by virtue of what he put on the page. There's no tone of voice or facial expression. E-mailers are new to this problem, though fanzines have long talked 'tone of typer', i.e. its absence. I've said the difficulty is that E-mailers imagine they aren't writing."

Each issue is two sides of a sheet, with no attempt made to stuff in more text by using a tiny font. Indeed, behind the scenes John is carefully excising from his text the unnecessary details already possessed by his fannish readers. John thinks an appositive wastes his space and insults our intelligence:

"*Vanamonde* circulates widely outside the APA-L-Minneapa joint venture. Readers write in. It's true I omit their addresses, in the urgent conservation of space. I hope that may be excused by their familiarity in the fannish world of letters, Benford the pro and active fanwriter..., Foster the Best Fanartist Hugo winner, Franson of *Trash Barrel*..."

Vanamonde is a virtual telegram from John to his readers. Not a coded message, not shrouded by eloquence, John's message is just artfully phrased for an audience of fans equipped by years of voracious reading to recognize the depth of the issues involved.

John's "urgent conservation of space," accomplished by giving over no spare wordage to things the faanish reader is presumed to know, does not always rule out a longer item. Economy is not synonymous with terseness. John takes half a page of the September 15 issue to spin three NASFiC encounters into a fine fannish anecdote -- Jerry Pournelle's bursting into a bid party to announce "I've been inducted into the Secret Feminist Cabal Against David Brin!", Amy Thomson's confirmation of the story to him, and his news report to me in the presence of Pournelle and Emma Bull "who took one glance at Pournelle [and] struck her arm against his in a muscular sisters-in-action gesture..."

I recommend that you write to John and ask for a copy of the "full-length" version.

Vanamonde: John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St., No. 409, Los Angeles, CA 90057

Conventional Reportage

NASFiC Body Count

The official attendance for the 1999 NASFiC in Anaheim was 1738, total membership was 2246.

Jordan Brown, who has met fans before, concedes in advance, "There are numerous ways to calculate these numbers; your mileage may vary."

Aussiecon Three Warm and Other Bodies

The nearest to official membership and attendance figures for Aussiecon Three posted so far are:

Memberships of all types: 2813, consisting of:

Attending 1719; Supporting 857; Child 35; Infant (includes stuffed toys) 19; Day Members 192.

The warm body count -- number of unique members present (registered) at the convention -- was 1872.

Baseless Rumor

"The most amusing news out of Aussiecon Three," claims Teddy Harvia, "was that someone told Bob Eggleton that the base of his Hugo Award, which the creator intended to look like Uluru (Ayer's Rock), instead looked more like a baboon's butt. I can confirm that it was a bright orange."

Worldcon Bid Updates

SECFI (South East Convention Fandom, Incorporated), the organization running the **Charlotte in 2004** Worldcon bid is now a legal entity. The directors are: Irvin M. Koch (Chair/President, Kelly T. Lockhart (Registered Agent and Secretary, Thomas Martin (SC), Harry A. Hopkins, Lance Oszko (VA), and Laura Haywood-Cory (NC). [[Source" Kronos 10/99]]

Nieuw Amsterdam in 2004: You can't tell the players without a program! Here is the sought-after list of the Nieuw Amsterdam in 2004 Worldcon bid committee:

Robert Sacks, General Secretary; Brian Burley, Executive Director & Chief Facilities Officer; Roberta Rogow, Chief Bid Operations Officer; Thom Anderson, Treasurer; Mark Blackman, (Corporate President); Bridget Boyle, Webmistress; Andrew Byro, Secretary; Cathy Lynn Carlson, Party Hostess; Fiona Craig, British Agent; Emily Dachowitz, Candice Harlan, Party Hostess; Brad Hausman, (ICON); Rich Hutter, (ICON); Alex Latzko, technofandom liaison; Michael Mason, West Coast representative; Sharane McCurry, Margaret Montgomery, Party Hostess; Marc Ortlieb, Australian Agent; Astrid Byro Osborn, European Party Hostess; Lucy Schmeidler, External Sections; David

Schwartz, RIP Honorary General Counsel; Kerian Shlosberg, Facilities Negotiator & West Coast Party Hostess; David Weiner, Asst. Webmaster.

Dallas in TBA: Shirley Soto of the Dallas in 2006 bid told Teddy Harvia in August that the date is now "in question" and the bidders will take the next year and "lay low." They are considering starting a local SF/Fantasy convention to strengthen their base, because the Dallas are currently has only anime con and toy/comic shows. They are also gathering information on how to start a nonprofit group to run the con and bid.

Willie Siros, at Loscon, said the Dallas bidders had just discovered the city plays host to an international gem show every Labor Day Weekend, so facilities for a Worldcon on the traditional date would be a problem.

Soto still planned to distribute flyers, run bid tables and stage parties at conventions she would be attending, but the flyers won't give a date.

2010: An indefinite group with a definite year are "Maurice & Sherri & Terry & Frank & Millie" who have announced a bid to hold the 2010 Worldcon on the planet Xerps.

Their website is <http://members.xoom.com/Xerps2010/>

Clipping Service

"But the most dramatic moment of [Lexicon] or any other con that I have ever witnessed took place on Sunday morning when, during a heated discussion of World Fantasy space allocations, Ben Yalow saved a fan from falling from a fifth-story window to a certain doom. Brave and Noble Ben...! (If people deny that Ben engaged in heroics, remind them that the fan Ben saved had the first name 'Electric.' That's my report, and I'm sticking to it!)" Joe Rico, *Instant Message* 652.

VCon cleared a profit of \$21.29 on revenues of \$14,593.31. [[Source: Contract 11/99]]

According to the *Fans Across the World Newsletter* by Bridget Wilkinson: "**ArmageddonCon** will be held in Kibbutz Shefayim, Israel, on December 27-31, 2000. Events include an 'End of the World Ball' to be held on nearby Mt. Megiddo."

Lew Wolkoff advises, "For those who don't know it, the Hebrew name of Mt. Megiddo is 'Har Megiddo,' the origin of the word Armageddon. If ever there was a fannish reason to visit Israel, this is it."

Strop, Thief!

Ever had anything stolen from a hotel room where you were hosting a bid party? Hal Haag told the SMOFs list after one party "We were missing an 8-foot bullwhip and an electric razor."



Aussiecon Three

by Jack Speer

[[Reprinted from *ASFacts*, September 1999, by permission of the author.]]

The Worldcon in Melbourne claimed 1,703 attenders, which is just one less than the population of my home town, and about the same as the NASFiC in Anaheim the weekend before Labor Day. (Though it's not a holiday in Oz, the committee honored our usual schedule.)

There were fewer programming tracks than at larger Worldcons, and I didn't panel-surf as much as usual. This report won't attempt to touch everything I attended.

Greg Benford's guest-of-honor speech was drawn from a book he has written mostly about the assignment to devised warnings to future generations for the WIPP site after it fills up and is sealed in twenty years or so.

Greg spoke of how little of their intended meaning the monuments of the past convey to us. He estimated the life of a civilization at a thousand years. After that, he doesn't believe much meaning comes through. So a task force including him designed symbols and arrangements to try to keep people of the far future from digging into WIPP.

He also described the plate he helped design for a ship to go into permanent orbit around one of the larger moons, similar in intent to the one that accompanied Voyager into space beyond the solar system.

Though special guest Straczynski's flight had to turn back because of mechanical trouble, he finally arrived. (He missed his scheduled appearance at the Worldcon last year.)

He says he comes out of the ranks of fans. He shares our opinions of what movie and TV moguls do to stories they buy, but he said there is hope: Some of the old ones who don't understand science fiction are dying off.

He had brought a film of the last *Babylon 5* episode, *Sleeping in Light*, and it was run for us.

Five professional authors made up the "Liars' Panel." Some of their printable lies:

One said, "All my experiences with Hollywood have been positive."

Someone in the audience asked Silverberg to reveal his pseudonyms. He modestly declined to tell us all of them, but mentioned that he has a shelf full of Hugos. He added, "Under the name of Dozois, I edited *Asimov's*."

Perhaps it was Joe Haldeman who gave the lowdown on those exclusive parties for the pros. "What we do in these parties after we lock the door is we sit and look at each other without talking. The first one who breaks the silence has to pay for drinks." There was discussion about the password for such parties. I think it was George Martin who said the password used to be, "Nasty, brutish and short," but Karen Haber said in the alternate reality she inhabits the password is "Shopping."

In "Defence of Hard SF," Greg Benford said hard sf is driven by a body of scientific research which is constantly breaking new ground. With reference to stories that incorporate scientific fallacies, he repeated what he had said in another appearance: "If you set out to write a sonnet and produce something that doesn't rhyme or has seventeen lines, you haven't written a bad sonnet. You haven't written a sonnet."

Robert Sawyer, our GoH at the 1998 Bubonicon, read the beginning of a forthcoming novel, *The Calculating God*, which is to be primarily conversation with an alien about science's assumption of atheism.

Instead of the live skits, with props and costumes, that introduce most Worldcons, this one had a well-produced short movie which began with an abo-

iginal blowing termites out of a hollow stick, which became stars. For the Hugos a short depicted Hugo Gernsback, then montages of many Hugo winners in rapid succession.

San Jose won the 2002 Worldcon over Roswell in a not entirely one-sided vote (666 to 120). The one-shot spoof news-sheet said Roswell demanded a recount. (I don't think any New Mexicans were on the committee for Roswell.) Actually, the Roswell committee said it will give any donated or leftover funds to the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence.

Bids for future Worldcons include Cancun for 2003 and Nieuw Amsterdam for 2004.

A crowd filled all the chairs and sat on the floor to hear "How I Sold My First SF Novel" by Sawyer and others. My main reaction is a takeoff on a hymn: "I love to sell the story, Of unseen things above...."

Stanley Schmidt, G. David Nordley, Jody Lynn Nye and others were on the panel of "Research for SF Writers." I was impressed by the earnestness of sf authors in getting their science right.

Sawyer, Jody Lynn and others were on the panel "Making a Living as a Writer, or 'I'm Not a Professional - Don't Try This At Home.'"

The title was the best thing about "Star Trek - Will We Still Respect It in the Morning?"

"The Great Artistic Challenge" was a contest between artists including Teddy Harvia.

A panel discussion on "Artificial Intelligence" got around to the situation where one can scarcely tell whether the responses are coming from a human or a computer. Albuquerqueans who attended a Bubonicon at Western Skies may remember the program which mimicked a psychiatrist pretty well.

Robert Sawyer said once you stop

restricting the conversation it's pretty easy to identify the computer. For example, he would ask the respondent to make a joke about the fact that East Timor had just voted 70-30 for independence. A human could make a joke, perhaps a poor one. A computer could not.

A symposium on "Time Travel" in one of the large theatres consisted of papers read by several authors, each followed by a comment from GoH Benford. Greg kept speaking of events at the quantum level instead of considering happenings on the human scale and their implications.

The moderatress introducing "A Twist in Time" said the phrase should be alternative histories rather than alternate, but after that everybody seemed to use the latter phrase.

A panel on "Genetic Engineering: Of Gods and Monsters" was positive about the potential in spite of mundane opposition.

"Future Shapes of Mind" was instead about changes we have seen in our lifetimes.

"Posthuman SF" was a symposium, with papers read by four or five authors, including Joe Haldeman, and then Benford commenting on them. Maureen Kincaid Speller, one of the participants, says Greg was a bit swacked at that time.

I went to "Strange Constellations" hoping it would help me find the Southern Cross, but it used the words figuratively.

"You Can Be A Rocket Scientist" was a program to teach how to make model rockets.

"Soviet Space Disasters" was a film I think had been shown at a con before.

"Space Combat: FTL vs. Sublight" dealt with space combat as a subject for sf almost as seriously, but couldn't work up much enthusiasm for FTL warfare.

The panelists on "Terraforming" seemed mostly to think it feasible for a few bodies in the Solar System. Greg or someone else warned that the energy required by various schemes would be exorbitant. But once Mars gets a good atmosphere, it will last for thousands of years, and its distance from Sol is no great problem.

Jim Benford but not his twin was on the "Space Exploration" panel, along with Stanley Schmidt, Ben Bova and an

Australian or two. They felt that human interstellar travel would have to wait until lifespan has been increased so much that thirty years wouldn't seem like too much of one's life.

In one of the large theatres was a discussion of the "Interstellar Precursor Probe." Greg and Jim Benford were both on this panel. Greg said we need not wait for virtual immortality to go to bodies outside the Solar System. A body larger than Jupiter but not quite large enough to ignite fusion has been found, glowing only by the energy of the matter collapsed by gravity. For them, another category has to be added to the sequence Oh Be A Fine Girl Kiss Me. Since bodies are more numerous the smaller they are, we must assume that there are many of these small bodies, and I think Greg said one is not far beyond our Oort cloud, much closer than Alpha Centauri.

"The Tithonus Option Is Not an Option" was the title of a panel based on the myth of Tithonos, the original Struldbrug, for whom Eos got immortality but forgot to specify eternal youth. "Are We The Last Generation of Mortals? Eternal Life in Science, Religion and SF." I didn't hear any mention of religion. Despite the title, the panels and audiences were not much concerned with immortality for persons not yet begotten.

At Bubonicon, GoH Jack McDevitt, told of a hypothesis he set for a story: By stopping the loss of telomeres, you can give your children eternal life, but they will be sterile. As you may remember, he said the mundane reactions was "Who would want to live so long?" McDevitt would gladly take the option of sterile immortality for his children. At Aussiecon, the discussion assumed that we could get rid of the death program built into the telomeres. Whether this could be done for persons now alive seemed to depend on nanotechnology; reshaping the very DNA seems to me a hard thing to picture.

Greg said that one effect of immunity on aging would be that people would become very careful, with so much life to lose by accidental death. Someone in the audience said the probability of fatal accidents is such that a person immune to aging would have a half-life of only 500 years. It was agreed that the solution to this problem would have to be a sup-

ply of cloned bodies into which one's "mind" could be transferred.

Assuming that present or future generations could be freed from program death, some speakers acknowledged that while each of us would think immortality was a good thing for himself, we are not eager to confer it on everybody.

There was much talk of achieving immortality by putting oneself into a computer. As I've said in the *Alpha Centauri Communicator*, that looks like less than complete survival: We are much more than the sum of our memories and thought-patterns; we are also body, hormones, appetites. Benford said if we achieve immortality by computer, we had better give it to everyone: we must depend on others to keep our computer selves running.

At a Teeklatsch after the con, I put the 500-year half-life to several fen. Their reaction was they'd hardly know what to do with that much time, except to catch up on their reading.

FAN FUND NEWS



Mavens of DUFF: John Foyster and Fred Patten, who founded DUFF, join current administrators Janice Gelb and Terry Frost on a panel at Aussiecon Three.

Y2K DUFF Race Opens

Nominations are now being taken for the Y2K Down Under Fan Fund Race to send a representative of Australasian science fiction fandom to Chicon 2000.

"An ability to eat enormous servings of food and accept high levels of friendly hospitality is essential," Janice Gelb explains. Although highly qualified in that respect, the freeloaders who inhaled the contents of the Loscon green room may not run because unless they are Australasian-based fans.

Nominations should be received by the administrators before the 15th of February 2000. Candidates need three nominators from Australasia and two from the USA. The contact address is Terry Frost, 4/8 Walker Street West Brunswick, Victoria, 3055, Australia. For more info please contact Terry Frost at hlector@netspace.net.au or Janice Gelb in the USA at j_gelb@yahoo.com.

The DUFF 2000 web site is at:

<http://home.pacbell.net/jgelb/duff2k.html>

Australia Trip Photos on Web

Janice also has created a web site to show photos from her DUFF trip:

<http://home.pacbell.net/jgelb>

Janice asks, "If anyone has any additional photos of me, or of events that I participated in but don't have pictures of, I'd really appreciate getting copies! (People pictures especially welcome.)" Electronic copies go to: janice.gelb@eng.sun.com

Prints can be sent to her at: 1070 Mercedes Avenue #2, Los Altos, CA 94022.

Now Janice is finishing her written trip report so she can send it for illustrations by Teddy Harvia, Joe Mayhew and other leading fanartists.

She's also hunting for great faanish and stfnal items she can auction off and replenish the fund. "This is a plea for any donations of fanzines, fan art, or professional sf material you might have lying around that you'd like to donate to a good cause." Send your treasures to: Janice Gelb, 1070 Mercedes Ave. #2, Los Altos, CA 94022.

Look for future DUFF auctions at Boskone in February and Corflu in March.

A GUFF Odyssey

GUFF will send another Australian fan to the British Eastercon in 2001 if administrators Karen Pender-Gunn and Paul Kincaid have anything to say about it. Would-be candidates have until April 14 to round up five nominees (three from Australia and two from Europe), write a platform of no more than 100 words and post a bond of A\$20.

The ballot should be out around Easter 2000, with a November voting deadline. For further information, or to make a donation, contact either of the administrators: Australian Administrator: Karen Pender-Gunn, PO Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria 3130 European Administrator: Paul Kincaid, 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ, UK. E-mail: Karen Pender-Gunn, fiawol@ozramp.net.au; Paul Kincaid, paul@appomattox.demon.co.uk

GUFF Trip Report

Ian Gunn and Karen Pender-Gunn's GUFF trip report *Oh, to be in England, In the summertime, With my love* is now available from Karen at P.O. Box 567, Blackburn, Vic 3130 Australia for A\$6.00 plus postage.

Ian Gunn Memorial Fund

Karen Pender-Gunn reported in Australian SF Bullsheat: "The Ian Gunn Memorial Fund has donated \$500 to the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria. I also got a letter from Gail Plumstead (Sponsorship office at the Zoo). The pink pig money box I took along the Tuesday after the worldcon netted \$135.45 for the Fijian Banded Iguana. Not bad for small change!"

TAFF

Nominations are now open for the year 2000, Westbound (Europe to North America) TAFF Race. The winner will attend Chicon 2000, the 58th World SF Convention, in Chicago, August 31 - September 4, 2000. Prospective candidates should ensure that signed nominations (two from North America and three from Europe) reach the Administrators by midnight on December 1, 1999, along with their 100-word platform and a bond in the amount of UKP 10 Sterling or US\$20 made out to the administrator.

TAFF gratefully accepts your freely-given money and material for auction; such generosity has sustained the Fund for over 40 years. TAFF is fandom's oldest travel fund, and one of its worthiest causes -- give early and often! Please contact your nearest administrator for details.

The European Administrator: Maureen Kincaid Speller, 60 Bournemouth Rd., Folkestone, Kent, CT19 5AZ, UNITED KINGDOM

The North American Administrator: Ulrika O'Brien, 123 Melody Ln., #C, Costa Mesa, CA 92627 USA

Aussiecon Diary

by Roy Pettis



[[Roy wrote and posted daily installments of his Aussiecon report to the Compuserve Science Fiction Forum. In giving File 770 permission to reprint his report, Roy modestly warned: "I've had a few comments on the posts that 'You must have gone to another con than I did,' so it doesn't necessarily represent everyone's experience." I think this postscript to the first installment said everything that needed saying: "This report is of personal experiences. No actual fans have been harmed in the creation of this report, nor does it represent the official position of SMOFs."]]

Wednesday, September 1: Well, my first impressions of Aussiecon Three are favorable, fun and unique.

It looks like a beautiful convention center, and like we have most of it. A review of the pocket program suggests that the use of space has been well planned -- topics seems to stay in one place, and most rooms seem to have a defined function that you could figure out in one day (video in one place, fan programming in another).

A review of the pocket program suggests to me that this is a con relatively favorable to video and gaming -- two ghetto areas in most Worldcons. The video program seems focused on three themes (my opinion, not official): Australian SF&F film and video; the very best of Japanese *anime*; and J. Michael Straczynski. There is a panel tomorrow morning to explain the selection of the video. It is unusual that I find myself expecting and scheduling to show up for

part of the video program, but some of this seems to include some material I can't see in the states. And they do have *Buckaroo Banzai* scheduled at 11 p.m. tomorrow night -- that might draw me away from filk!

As for gaming, they have included description of game tournaments in the pocket program as though (!) they were regular program items. They have scheduled multiple teaching sessions for many games -- B5 CCG, M:TG, RoboRally, and Rail Baron. (They tell me it's an Australian thing to play Rail Baron at an SF con; I'll see.)

Registration was so easy I kept wondering what I should do next. The basic package of material was easy to carry (in a brown shopping bag, that I expect to see rip several times in the Huckster Hall), and mainly informative. I find myself very impressed by the work of the program committee, facilities, and by the concept of the publications committee.

The pocket program is useful, and sufficient. I can't help complaining a bit, since I think it is a step backwards from most recent years. So I'll get it off my chest: the descriptions of the panels/events usually do not list participants, so you have to make a correlation between the participant list to see who is on each panel (a very awkward process). The event descriptions are mostly easy to find from the title listed on the program grid -- I say mostly, because items like "The Role of Science in Science Fiction" is listed alphabetically under "T" for "The", which becomes a large cate-

gory. Fan history panels are listed in a separate list at the end of the grid, without any mention anywhere else. Readings are explained under "Author Appearances," even though most are panels for which only the Panel name is shown in the program grid. The pocket program explains how to sign up for Kaffeeklatsches, but gives no pre-planning list of which authors are scheduled then. These things do *not* destroy the usefulness of the PP as a planning tool, but I think it took me twice as long to plan Thursday as usual. A small complaint, that no one should take too seriously, but one that I hope we fans will do better in the future.

Finally, there is lots of evidence of planning, preparation, readiness, and both indigenous skill and support by the wider fan community. As one who lived through the disorganization (but culinary delights) of NolaCon II, and really enjoyed myself, my standards for sufficient may be questioned, but I think there is potential for a really great Worldcon here in Melbourne.

Thursday, September 2: It is a fun con. I was right that it is gaming friendly -- the game demos abound. I do game, although I mainly go to gaming conventions for gaming, not the Worldcon, just that (as a filk fan), I am impressed when ghetto fandom receives more than its fair share of attention.

The highlights of the day for me was the panel on "SF Across the Media". This started with a grand apology ("It's not our fault") for JMS not being at the panel (we were told that his plane from LA was turned back for mechanical problems, and he is arriving late), then went on to an interesting and entertaining discussion of common trends in media, what makes shows good and bad, how do outside influences affect the evolution of a show.

I particularly enjoyed the rant on fan inconsistency about B5: "Gee, first season was not all bad, I think this is a good show." Next year: "Second season is very good, even though first season wasn't very good." Next Year: "Third Season is outstanding. This is great stuff. Of

course, second season was okay, even if the first season was pretty bad.” Next year: “The first half of this season is brilliant! I mean, third season was okay, but this is great TV. I remember that second season was pretty bad, and first season sucked, but this has gotten pretty good.” Then we get to fifth season: “This is dorked up. I know he never meant to make these episodes. You could see the seeds of this in fourth season. Now third season, that was really great.” -- I think I’ve heard this conversation.

The dealers room has quality books and games for sale. I think I like it being small enough that I can actually look at everything in the Huckster Hall. That hasn’t been true for me since ConFederation.

Some changes in the video and panel schedule occurred, but they were mainly done very well by adding things to the existing schedule, not moving things around. I’m assuming there is a good reason why there was no midnight showing of *Buckaroo Banzai!* But they seem to have added the Hugo nominees to the plan, which I always approve of.

People are nice, it is easy to talk to folks, perhaps easier than at a larger Worldcon.

Friday, September 3: I know this sounds crazy, but I keep being surprised at how many of the people at the con with whom I strike up conversations are Australians. (Yes, I know how silly that sounds.) It is different from Glasgow -- there most of the people I ran into were the same crowd I run into at every Worldcon, and mainly Americans. The same filk crowd was there; even the people I saw in the airport were the same. Here they are Australians, and often this is their first Worldcon. There is real value in every day holding a “Newcomers Guide to the Worldcon.” And I am meeting new people, and getting to exchange views and experience between US and Australian about fandom, SF, work, politics and everything. I like it.

Critical Data: J.M. Straczynski arrived, did signing at noon, and is participating fully. He seems to be having fun, from an outside observer. He brought a copy of “Sleeping in Light”, and showed it to fans who had never seen it, since it has not made Australian or NZ TV be-

fore. As usual, he seems really at home with fans, and to care what they think. I’ll try to post some comments I found interesting on the B5 forum.

I suspect folks may be surprised I talk about panels. Usually I’ve seen every panel topic I ever want to see, and I go to panels if I want to see an author to understand how he thinks (or to meet her and compliment about the writings). To my surprise, I am enjoying the panels and the people. The “Science in SF” panel was really quite good; even though it is an old topic the people had interesting things to say. Benford’s arguments that “if there isn’t scientific verisimilitude, it shouldn’t be called science fiction” was a good call to debate.

The “How To Do Research” panel was interesting for the difference between the Nordley (“I like to use books”) approach and the Pratchett (“I find people who have done it”) approach taught me some things. One question from the floor (and he really asked a question, not made a speech, “What element of research are you most proud of having done now, in retrospect, that made a real difference in your work?”) led to some really interesting sharing by the authors.

To bring some things up to date, the reason that Kaffeeklatsches were not pre-scheduled is that there are none scheduled. I miss them; I liked a chance to spend time in a small group with an author, artist or editor I had not met except through their work. Guess I just have to go up and introduce myself.

The art show is certainly the smallest I’ve ever seen at a worldcon. Nonetheless, the amount of money I have already bid is about half what I usually do, suggesting I will spend about the same no matter what.

Saturday, September 4: Still a small con, with many unique features and people. A nice experience. As usual, making contact with a few friends, seeing comments by authors I don’t know, and looking for the occasional thought provoking comment are the high points.

The high point of the day was the Hugo awards. There are two awards I cared most about. First, I think it is high time that Stan Schmidt got the Best Editor award; that, of course, did not happen. Second, I thought that *To Say Nothing of the Dog* was such a really great

novel that I cared about it winning. (Often the works are all so good, I can have a favorite but root for all -- this time they were all good, but I thought Willis’ novel was on another plane entirely). There fandom agreed with my judgement. For me the greatest shock of the night was the Hugo for Dramatic -- I was not expecting *The Truman Show*, and I don’t think most around me were either.

I really enjoyed Langford’s wit in accepting. Something like “After the Australians gave me my first Hugo, I thought ‘I have to visit that country.’ So I saved up my money, but then I spent it on things like food and shelter. UK fandom, to my surprise, raised unheard of amounts of money to ensure that I would leave the country. When Australian fans learned of this, they raised equal amounts to ensure that I would return to the UK.” Still, it is surprising to have seen him accept a Hugo in person, rather than hearing about the phone call that will wake him up.

I was a bit surprised at the number of winners not in Australia to accept. Really only Langford and Brown were here. In several cases we heard of excellent reasons why they were not on hand.

A really good panel was “How I Sold My First Novel” with Rob Sawyer, Dirk Stasser, Kate Jacoby, Kate Forsyth and Dave Luckett. Not only was this a slightly different panel (not saying what to do, but sharing experience of “what happened to me”; interesting in its own right), but I realized slowly that *none* of these writers are American, and their stories told of issues in UK, Canadian, and Aussie publishing that I had never thought about.

I’m learning so much in this convention about SF in the rest of the world that I’m starting to think about what I might have learned if we had really gone to Zagreb in ‘92. (Other than to duck, that is.) I also saw two people wearing Bermuda Triangle in ‘88 shirts, but they moved too fast for me to corner them; I still bring mine out for cons now and again, since I liked that bid idea. Bev votes BT as a write-in (for second place) in most years.

Filking really seemed to happen last night for the first time in this con, or at least the first time I could find. I could hardly call this con “filk friendly”, but

it's not unfriendly. There is one filk program item tomorrow.

Sunday, September 5: A day for shopping in the Huckster Hall (as prices begin to drop), guarding my bids, talking with friends, and a few panels.

The masquerade was certainly the most unusual I've ever seen at a Worldcon. I think the Costumer's Guild might have been appalled, but first, they were apparently off at the NASFIC, and second, I don't think I've enjoyed an evening of SF as much since the live performance of "Treks not Taken" at LA Con III.

Basically, there were too few entrants for a formal masquerade, and there had been rumors that it would be called off. In fact, the presentation of costumes took less than 35 minutes, with at least half of that filled by shtick done by the MCs.

So the evening started with one hour of filk presentations, each performer doing one or two songs. This may well have been one of the nicest exposures of filk out of the ghetto I've ever seen -- usually the filk concerts as half-time entertainment are picked to be "strong performances, in case people don't like the filk." This, instead, was filk at its best -- puns, laughter about technology, a song or two based on our shared SF heritage. It was *great*. Of course, I was surprised when I noticed that one hour had gone by, and we still hadn't started the masquerade.

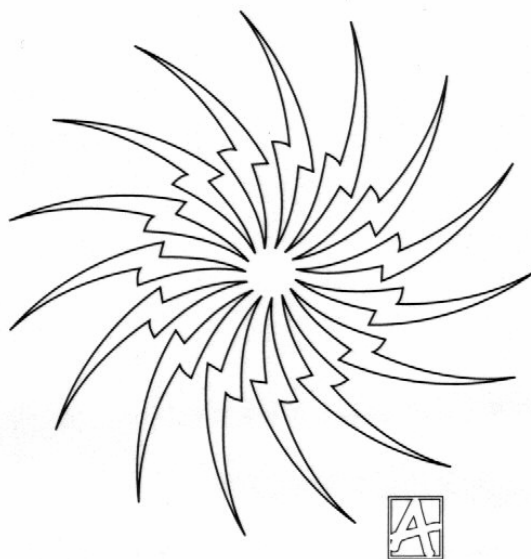
Then the MCs, including Danny Heap who has been one of the most visible parts of Australian fandom at this convention, proceeded to do long, involved Laurel and Hardy style routines. The first of these had nothing to do with SF, and I thought fell a bit flat. They would introduce a few contestants, then do another routine. I admit that I almost always wanted them to skip the routine and go on with the contestants, but I also found myself laughing so hard it hurt at most of the routines. I would not want to have missed the real life explanation of "how the slow motion bullet scene was done in *The Matrix*."

The contestants themselves almost all had humor built into their acts, and it tended to work. I've been told that humor is a critical part of Aussie culture, and it seemed to work well here. Just

one example: Yoda explaining Jedi philosophy by singing "Always walk on the bright side of life" from *Monty Python's Life of Brian*. A very, very enjoyable evening. It didn't seem professional in the style of most Worldcons, but it was really, really fun.

OTOH, I saw at least a couple dozen people leave during the middle, and I think they were leaving out of disappointed expectations.

I thought that the panel on overrated and underrated authors (panel of George R.R. Martin, Stephen Baxter, David Hartwell, and Peter Nicholls) was very good. It focused on US authors (a rarity here where they have authors we don't know very well), and I thought that the panelists had given a lot of thought to



their comments. Martin, in particular had thoughtful, well justified discussions.

Finally, this con has been the one where I've come to understand why so many Hugos are given to Dave Langford. This man's writing is bloody brilliant! I'll admit to being a philistine who hardly ever tries to read fan newszines. But I might just have to start reading *Ansible*; I don't think I can wait to 2005 (assuming a UK win, of course) to have more his wisdom and style.

One more day of joy to go. As usual, the best part is seeing old friends and enemies.

Monday, September 6: Last day of the con. Not over yet, there is still filking!

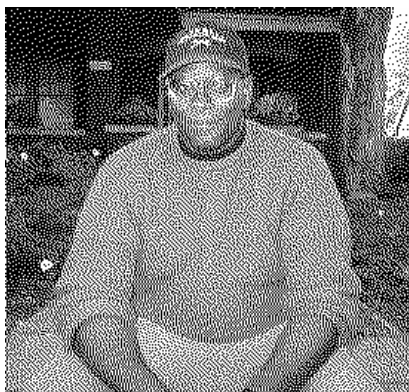
For me the Monday highlight was Greg Benford and Peter Nicholls on a

panel "Defending Hard SF." It included good thinking, and some great lines. For example, Benford said "When I hear someone bring up post-modernism, I want to reach for my revolver." I think that, as Nicholls said, there has hardly ever been a Worldcon GOH who worked as hard at it as Benford. He did very well. Of course, as a physicist, I might be a bit biased.

I enjoyed seeing a low-budget, made for state TV, *X-Files* like series which premiered at the con, called *Damon Dark*. There were several things to let you know it was low budget (I think the producer said that they had made it for 1300 per episode. I must have heard that wrong.) But it was well intentioned, and has some potential if they make more than the first five episodes.

I found myself buying books and magazines, as I realized that many of these were *not* available in the states except through the Internet, and as dealers started to cut their prices significantly. I think I'll be mailing some of these home on a slow boat, but they will get there eventually. It is hard to go to the Worldcon and not buy a lot of books, even though I try to just write them down for purchase at home. (Of course the "just written down list" has over 100 books on it.)

A surprising end-day thing for me was finding that many of the staff were asking me (and other USfen) about how this con was different from other Worldcons (except for smaller) -- how the art show was different, how the masquerade was different, etc. Most of these fen have never been to a Worldcon before this one, and have no comparison. They did really well, *and* the con really was different.



It's My Rant And I'm Sticking To It

By Chris M. Barkley

*Episode 4: The Case for Commemorative
U.S. Postage Stamps for SF Artists, Authors and Editors*

Author's Note: Another version of this column appeared in *Challenger #9*, edited by Guy Lillian III and on the Association of Science Fiction Artists website.

The idea of getting a campaign together for a series of U.S. Postal commemoratives has been kicking around fandom for the last decade or so. My interest in doing something serious about this began when I read in *Entertainment Weekly* (of all places!) this last April that the late Ayn Rand (1905-82) is going to be honored with a commemorative stamp by the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) sometime this year. Three of her novels are well known in the sf community; *Anthem* (1938), *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957). She is better known as the originator of the philosophy of Objectivism whose main aim, quoting from John Clute's entry for her in the *Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (St. Martin's Press, 1995), is "...to heed one's own self interest, to abjure altruism and to maximize the Superman potential within each of us."

Which in itself would be fine if Ayn Rand weren't such a mean-spirited, money-happy, selfish, backstabbing bitch.

Ever since she immigrated from Russia back in the 1930's, her every waking moment had been spent in pursuit of power, glory and (especially) wealth, mainly for herself. She had taken the basic concepts of Libertarianism and had twisted it to such an incredibly severe and perverse degree, that I could imagine robber barons like Rockefeller, Morgan and Carnegie blanching in fear at the sight of her.

Ayn Rand turned me off a long time

ago; I witnessed her in action on Phil Donohue's show one summer in the mid-70's. A small, gnome-like woman with gnarly little hands and an ever present frown, she was rather cold, distant and rude towards an audience that by the looks of it, was more than ready to adore her. What I witnessed that day (and what Donohue truly intended to show) was that all the humanity and soul had been wrung out of her a long, long time ago.

And yet, Ayn Rand is getting a commemorative stamp.

Then my question is, where is Catherine Lucille Moore's stamp?

C.L. Moore (1911-1987), under her own name and with her equally talented husband, Henry Kuttner, were one of the premiere writing teams during the first Golden Age of Science Fiction. She had a hand in writing classics like "Shambleau", "Clash by Night", "Jirel of Joiry" and novels such as *Judgment Night* and *Fury*.

And if we're going to give her (and Henry, of course) a stamp, we'll have to give one to Theodore Sturgeon. And Robert A. Heinlein. and eventually, Isaac Asimov (more on that later). I could go on (and will very shortly, too) but I think you're getting the point.

America has honored its greatest writers and artists with stamps; Hemingway, Cassat, Faulkner, Pollack, Fitzgerald and Steinbeck...what about the artists, writers and editors near and dear to our collective hearts; men and women who have inspired and influenced astronauts, filmmakers, scholars, engineers, lawyers and lawmakers, even captivating our current President, William Jefferson Clinton and his daughter, Chelsea? It would not be hyperbole to state that the writers that I have just mentioned, had more talent, more imagination, more

essence of soul in their right pinkie fingers than Ayn Rand had in her entire body. With the new Millennium at hand, the time is ripe for such honors.

The task at hand will be very daunting. The CSAC's rules regarding commemorative stamps are located at:

www.usps.gov/fr_stamps.html

Proving that our beloved and dearly departed are worth is easily done...mustering enough popular public support to fulfill our wishes will be an uphill battle.

In order to muster support for this effort, I enlisted (ok, it was more like gang pressed) the services of the Cincinnati Fantasy Group's resident genius/web-geek/designer, Scott Street, to build a website.

Over the course of the summer we came to basic agreement on the overall design and contents. One of the major sticking points was over which nominees would be placed on the initial ballot. I had wanted a much longer roster but Scott argued (correctly, I might add) that a longer list would make the website larger and consequently a longer period of time would be needed to upload it. I was also persuaded to limit the nominees to those who were actually eligible now. Thus, headliners like Asimov, H.L. Gold, Lester Del Rey, Donald and Elsie Wollheim, Roger Zelazny and Avram Davidson who have been deceased a decade yet, are not present. If the drive can be sustained over several years, it's my hope that they all will eventually be honored.

As of this writing, the main chore to be accomplished is writing the mini-biographies for each candidate which is my responsibility), gathering together photographs, collecting and scanning representative book covers for the candi-

dates. The design will include a link to the CSAC rules, a short bio of the artist, author and editor nominees (with a voting option, whose results will be collected and sent to the CSAC), e-mail to the USPS, a section for comments, suggestions on future nominees (or those that may have been overlooked), links to ASFA, the Science Fiction Writers of America, the World Science Fiction Society and the Science Fiction Web Ring. With a little luck, Scott and I will announce the opening of the website before Thanksgiving. Besides the sf sources online, the announcement will also be sent to every major news organization, the US Postal service and the American Philatelic Society.

And I'd also like to extend my deepest appreciation and thanks to Joe Siclari and the staff of Fanac.Org (www.fanac.org), for their undaunted support and enthusiasm for this project and for offering to host the website.

The Nominees: Artists: Frank R. Paul, Chesley Bonestell, Hannes Bok, Virgil Finlay, Vaughn Bode, Roy Krenkel, Ed Emshwiller, Jack Gaughan.

Editors: John W. Campbell, Jr., Judy Lynn Del Rey, Anthony Boucher, Terry Carr, T.E. Dikty, Geoff Conklin, Terry Carr.

Authors: E.E. "Doc" Smith, Robert A. Heinlein, Clifford D. Simak, Paul Linebarger (Cordwainer Smith), Will Jenkins (Murray Leinster), Theodore Sturgeon, C.L. Moore and Henry Kuttner, Leigh Brackett, Edmund Hamilton, A. Merritt, Alfred Bester, Alice Sheldon (James Tiptree, Jr.), Philip K. Dick, Cyril M. Kornbluth, James Blish, Fritz Lieber, Frank Herbert, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Edgar Pangborn, Stanley Weinbaum.

Some final points: (A) Scott and I realize that the list is overwhelmingly male. Sexism aside, this could not be helped; they are the pioneers of our genre and their greatness must be judged by their historical significance and their work, not their gender.

(B) Your comments and suggestions prior to and after the website opens are always welcome!

(C) I really don't know if all of these deserving nominees will receive their just due. Once the CSAC approves of the proposition of sf stamps, there will be no telling if there will be a limit on

the number issued. It is my hope that they will all be honored over several years in a series of issues. We can only hope the CSAC be persuaded to do so.

My friends, with a little luck and some help from you, this may all come to pass.

P.S. And for Ayn Rand...If I had been that particular committee and could not block the commemorative issue, I would vigorously lobby to grant her a stamp that would be appropriate and fitting for her....Bulk Rate/3rd Class direct mail.

Update on the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo Amendment: And now for the downsized, but yet heartfelt, half rant...

I as sat down to draft my remarks for this month's column this past weekend, I fully expected to write that I was giving up any effort to amend the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo, as I had outlined in last month.

I had read of and heard the eyewitness accounts of what happened at the AussieCon 3 Business Meetings; about the rather heated debates among those present (including George R. R. Martin's caustic retort that there wasn't enough "good material" being produced yet to warrant the splitting of the BDP) and voting down of several mutations of the original amendment.

Well, my message to anyone who has an interest in this issue, pro and con is: Get up early, put on your voting shoes be sure to be at the Chicon 2000 Business Meeting because this amendment, in some form or another will be re-introduced.

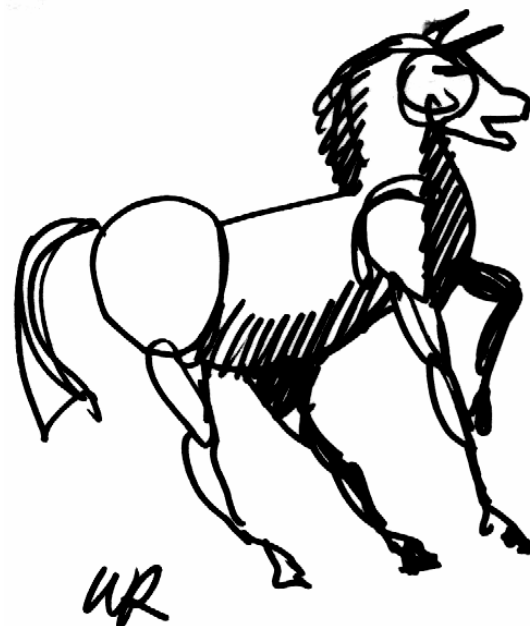
I made up my mind to do so because I encountered two opponents of the split, Mike Resnick and Leah Zeldes, at Octocon 26 recently. Mike, who has been badgering me about the amendment at every opportunity since coming back from AussieCon 3, asked me if I really intended to reintroduce the amendment at Chicon 2000. Up to the very moment he asked, I was not feeling inclined to do so. It took a critical mauling down there and the prospect of having my head handed to me by some of the more vicious parliamentarians in fandom against it, isn't something that I exactly relish.

But in talking with Mike then, I had a moment of realization, I was responsible for this debate and to cut it off now, even in the face of certain defeat, would be irresponsible and cowardly. I can see Mike's point of view on this issue (and I have no doubt that there's a reply to my previous column is somewhere within these pages); the World Science Fiction Society is primarily a literary organization whose sole efforts should be put behind written sf and fantasy, not to propagate and add to the bulging coffers of Hollywood actors and producers.

I, on the other hand, have come to the point of view that the Hugos are fandom's finest presentations of sf and fantasy, it should be marketed as more than just "fandom's award." Publishers and bookseller have, why haven't we done so? Why haven't we used the Hugo to encourage better films, tv and other various forms of entertainment? That, in a nutshell, is next month's column.

So when Mike asked me if I was going to re-introduce the BDP amendment, I didn't hesitate when I said I would. And when Leah Zeldes chimed in and said that she didn't like the measure, I replied that if she wanted to make a statement about keeping WSFS focused on purely literary venues and achievements, then maybe she and Mike ought to come up with an amendment to abolish the BDP Hugo.

Get ready to rumble, kids...this should be interesting.



Obituaries



Walter Alexander Willis

1919-1999

by John Hertz

He died just weeks before his eightieth birthday October 30, unequalled, perhaps the best fanwriter we ever had, deft, comical mostly, quick even in sober moments, sure-handed, pungent, and affectionate. With Bob Shaw he wrote our enduring fable *The Enchanted Duplicator* (1954), in name a quest for a mimeograph to publish fanzines, but like all good fables, about much else. He was the sun of the Worlds of IF, i.e. Irish Fandom; in the glory of his famous though not his only home Oblique House he was, as his 1958 Hugo Award read, our Outstanding Actifan. His genius was for the light touch. He was MagiCon's Fan Guest of Honor in 1992, part of the gold of the 50th Worldcon. Harry Warner, Jr., called him the most fannish of all. Forty years ago Willis wrote about the cartoonist ATom, whom he had done much to bring forward, what was indeed, to use Rob Hansen's word, true of himself: he gave us humor without cruelty, satire without malice, wisdom without arrogance, good taste without ostentation.

His fanzine *Slant* was published on letterpress; its mimeograph successor *Hyphen* and his column "The Harp That Once or Twice" in *Quandry* were, if possible, better. "WAW with the Crew in '52" was a fund that brought him from Belfast for the TASFiC (Tenth Anniversary Science Fiction Convention, "Chicon II"), laying a foundation for the Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund, of which he became the first European administrator. Undaunted by Peter Graham's hoax announcing his death, he set TAFF an example by publishing two trip reports, "Willis Discovers America"

Walt Willis

Geri Sullivan announced on November 6: "It's not a surprise, it's even something of a relief, but it's still hard news: Walt Willis has died.

"Peggy White sent me a note with the news after receiving a note from Madeleine Willis dated October 20th. Madeleine wrote that Walter had a heart attack and died. He was 79 years old. Walter and Madeleine's son, Bryan, made the funeral arrangements.

Walt's precise date of death is not yet known: Geri says the October 20 date of the note is probably not it, "though I think it's likely that Madeleine wrote the note to Peggy within a few days of Walter's death (before the funeral)."

before he left, and *The Harp Stateside* after he returned. Brought over again, to the 1962 Worldcon, he published "Twice Upon a Time", and after a third visit in 1988 for the Florida convention Tropicon, *The Enchantment*. He was a Knight of St. Fantony, a judge of the International Fantasy Awards, and a masterly punster. His fanwriting was collected in *The Willis Papers* (Ted Johnstone & George Fields eds. 1961), the climactic 600-page 28th issue of Richard Bergeron's *Warhoon* (1980), and *Fanorama* (Robert Lichtman ed. 1998). In 1969 he published a mundane book, *The Improbable Irish*, under the name Walter Bryan, only fair since his wife, née Bryan, used the name Madeleine Willis. She survives him.

His expressions were the stuff of legend, from "It was curious that in one hotel there should be a bellhop with the soul of a fan, and a fan with the soul of a bellhop", to the typo "poctsarcd" in correspondence with Lee Hoffwoman. Others spun the thread, notably John Berry, whose tales of drinking tea and playing ghoddminton at Oblique House, of Goon Bleary, the Goon Defective Agency, and further inspired madness, have been reprinted by Ken Cheslin. Forty years ago Willis said he was retiring from fandom, having achieved everything he wanted. He continued to be voted top of the polls in *Skyrack*, and although *Hyphen* ended except for one revival issue in 1987, luckily for us he never put out the light. He inspired the Nielsen Haydens, Greg Pickersgill, and Geri Sullivan. In my own purview he wrote wonderfully for the Rick Sneary memorial *Button-Tack*, and regular letters to Vanamonde. He was exemplary. He created so much and so well that we are all in his debt.

I've said fandom is a mood. Willis in

The Duplicator said "The Way is hard, for it lies over the Mountains of Inertia which surround Mundane." He smiled at serious-and-constructive fan activity, though he later admitted that the sercon and the fannish could live in the same fan, at least if it was Jack Speer. With everyone but us, fan means fanatic, collectors of autographs and celebrities' nail polish. We have collectors, and some of us actually read science fiction, but we can't bear being dreary about it. That's what takes us over the mountains. Like Jophan in *The Duplicator*, Willis slid into fandom on his Shield of Umor. He might have said Umor offers not just a shield, but a magnet.

In 1999 we also lost James White and Chuck Harris from these realms of sun. Last year Tommy Ferguson in Tommyworld 43 talked of how White and Willis were troubled by what they feared was adulation. They wished that instead, as Ferguson put it, "fans of today would pull out the finger and continue what they had started all those years ago." Amen.

Ed Connor

Ed Connor, 77, died November 7 in Peoria after being hit by a pickup truck when he crossed the street against the light. According to the *Peoria Journal Star*, police didn't expect to ticket the driver.

Leah Zeldes Smith reminds: "Connor is probably best known for his unique fanzine, *S.F. Echo*. In the 1970s, after a recalcitrant Peoria postal clerk refused to let him mail the mimeographed zine at book rate because it didn't look like a book, Connor took to hand-binding the

Twil-tone pages in book format, a tremendous effort.

"He hadn't been active in quite a while, but many of us remember *S.F. Echo* fondly. Like Martin Alger and many others who've gone before, Connor was a champion of fannish ingenuity."

Before *S.F. Echo*, Ed published *Moe-bius Trip*. I always read that zine cover-to-cover and often wrote a loc replying to his provocative views.

Eddie Jones

Artist Eddie Jones died at the age of 64 in a Liverpool, England hospital on October 15. He had been in deteriorating health since a recent stroke. He was a popular fan and a successful pro. In 1969, he was TAFF delegate and the Worldcon Fan GoH (St. Louiscon).

Jones did many professional book covers in the 60s and 70s, including some *Star Trek* covers for Bantam. His art was also published in two German prozines.

Mike Ray

Huntsville fan Mike Ray died September 7, five days after injuries received in an explosion and fire. Ray worked at Luna Tech, a specialty pyrotechnics manufacturer in Huntsville. The blast occurred in a storage magazine next to the lab where he worked. He survived the initial explosion and was transported by air to a local hospital, before being transferred to the Trauma/Burn ICU at University Hospital in Birmingham.

Ray is survived by his wife, Robin. Both have been long-time members of NASFA and the SCA.

An assistance fund has been set up with AmSouth Bank in Huntsville both for Mike's family and the family of Michael "Doc" Brookshire (also a fan) who was gravely injured in the same explosion. Send contributions to:

Ray/Brookshire Support and Assistance Fund, c/o AmSouth Bank, P.O. Box 507, Huntsville AL 35804.

Robin has requested that in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions be sent in memory of Mike to either the Burn Survivors Group, University Hospital, UAB, 625 19th St. South, Birmingham, AL 35233, or MedFlight, Huntsville Hospital Foundation, 101 Sivley Road,

Huntsville, AL 35801.

Marion Zimmer Bradley

Marion Zimmer Bradley, author of the "Darkover" stories and *The Mists of Avalon*, suffered a heart attack on September 21 and died in a Berkeley, CA hospital on September 25.

Bradley sold her first story in 1953. She began writing in the "Darkover" universe in 1958, a series now spanning more than three dozen novels, collections, and anthologies.

Her influence on the field multiplied as she nurtured the careers of many new authors. Their work appeared in her anthologies (especially *Sword & Sorceress*) and in the magazine she founded and edited.

Reprinted in this issue is Sourdough Jackson's editorial about MZB's impact on fandom and him personally.

Jim Keith

The late Jim Keith became famous as the chronicler of paranoid "black helicopter" conspiracies. But in the late 1960s he was a member of the ValSFA, a group of east Los Angeles County fans also attended by Don Fitch and the late Larry Nielson, founder of APA-H.

Keith died in Reno, Nevada on September 7. His nephew, Chris Davis, said Keith broke a leg at the Burning Man Festival over Labor Day Weekend and a blood clot released during surgery on the knee caused a fatal embolism.

Ruby R. Scott by Becky Thomson

Ruby R. Scott, mother of Elizabeth Warren, Northwest Fandom's infamous *DragonLady*, and a surrogate mother to me, passed away on November 16 in the aftermath of a massive stroke. She was 85 years old.

Ruby delighted in living life to the fullest, in travel and diversity. She was an avid reader, especially of science fiction, fantasy and mythology. Although she was unknown to 99% of the fannish community, she attended, at the least, *Iguanacón*, *Chicon IV* (where she worked as a volunteer), *L.A.Con II*, the 1980 *Westercon*, and several *Norwescons*. She owned a small collection of science fiction artwork and had a special interest in filking.

Both fortunately and not, Ruby saved every scrap of memorabilia that came into her possession. Her four-bedroom house in Huntington Beach, CA is packed to the ceiling with an unimaginably eclectic accumulation. The family is in the process of sorting and cleaning, and will be passing on any fan related material to the FANAC Fan History Project.

In spite of increasing infirmities, Ruby was one of the most spirited, fiery women I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. The world is a sadder place without her.

In Passing

Condolences on the loss of a parent to: Andy Porter (mother), Linda Deneroff (mother), and to Allan Rothstein (father).

First Fandom member **Art Saha** died November 19. According to Brian Burley, he had been in the Albany VA hospital with a recurrence of cancer. Art was 76.

Norwegian fan **Ingrid Jonsson** and her mother were fatally shot by her father on October 4. Ingrid was membership secretary of *ReConnaissance* (BEC 2000). The family lived in Bergen, a small town, and the violent crime has shocked the entire country.



Marion Zimmer Bradley and James White: A Reader's Appreciation by Sourdough Jackson

[[Reprinted from the October 1999 DASFAx by permission of Sourdough]]

Two more of our old masters are gone. Since the last issue of DASFAx went to press, the news has come to me of the deaths of James White and Marion Zimmer Bradley.

James White, Irish fan, physician, and science fiction author, passed away August 23, one day after suffering a stroke. He had written SF professionally since 1953, and was best known for his long-running Sector General series. He was 71.

Marion Zimmer Bradley suffered from a massive heart attack September 21, and died September 25. A lifelong professional author, she made her first sale around 1949, and began publishing her well-known Darkover series in the early 1960's. She was 70.

So much for the bare facts of the news. Both these authors were personally important to me, both wrote series that I have been fond of, and I had been following both since boyhood. Shortly after I first began reading Heinlein juveniles at age 10, my father got into the habit of occasionally bringing home an SF paperback for me to read. One of these was **Hospital Station**, by James White. Another was an Ace double, one half of which was **The Door Through Space**, by Marion Zimmer Bradley (the other half was **Rendezvous on a Lost World**, by A. Bertram Chandler, another author whose books I became intensely attached to).

I found both books to be quite confusing. At that age, I tended to think of science fiction as mostly space opera. **Hospital Station** was not that at all. It was about doctors and an immense multi-species hospital, wherein doctors from all over the galaxy assembled to treat the most difficult cases from all over the galaxy. "Ben Casey" and "Dr. Kildare", two medical TV shows of the time, actually gave me a better understanding of what was going on in Sector General Hospital than did the novels of Heinlein or Clarke. **The Door Through Space** featured a mad run through a

sword-and-planet situation, complicated by some kind of teleportation system, killer robots, and mind control devices. One of its crazier elements was the Dry Town culture, an Arabian Nights-mare of male supremacy and chained women. The same noisome culture turned up in the Darkover books, to the confusion of most readers of MZB's complete works.

I did not rediscover either author until much later, when I found fandom and had sustained contact with other readers of the genre. I think it was M.R. "Hilde" Hildebrand, one of the social mainstays of Phoenix fandom, who introduced me to Bradley's Darkover books. I quickly found and read every one that had ever been available, partly because I had by then grown to appreciate well-done SF that was not space opera, and partly because Darkover bore a great climatic resemblance to Alaska, my home State. Around this time, I also rediscovered James White's Sector General stories, which had by then grown to several volumes.

I often saw MZB at conventions in my first ten years in fandom. She was always quite accessible to fans, and could be quite friendly. I think the fan organization, "The Friends of Darkover," grew out of the necessity of having some organized way of dealing with fans at cons and at other times. She could occasionally be exasperating—I still recall a pair of buttons she wore at one convention, during a time when controversy had erupted due to homosexual themes that sometimes turned up in her novels. One button said, "How dare you assume I am straight?" The other said, "How dare you assume I am gay?"

This raises the question, how dare we assume anything about an author's views or personality from that author's fiction? What can we tell about, for example, Heinlein himself by reading **Starship Troopers** and **Stranger in a Strange Land**? What can we tell about MZB's views on women by first reading **The Door Through Space** (in which the protagonist promotes male supremacy) and then **The Shattered Chain** (in which feminism is the major theme)?

The only thing I can infer about either author is that they greatly enjoyed thought experiments, and had fun pushing their readers' buttons.

Bradley must have written well over two dozen Darkover books, covering over two thousand years of the history of a lost colony in space (and this does not include the anthologies of Darkover fiction written under her editorship by her readers). In them, she explored psychology, parapsychology, feminism, sexuality, feudalism, and more. She was forever relating everything to culture. I do not know whether she had ever had any training in anthropology, but Darkover often seemed to me to be a great laboratory for cultural thought experiments. However, the characters in these thought experiments were not just cardboard lab rats. They were real people with complex psyches, and they suffered like Russians. Almost invariably, at least one principal character was a misfit in Darkovan society, which usually caused that character to come down with a massive case of culture shock at the least convenient point in the plot.

Neither James White nor Marion Zimmer Bradley ever won a Hugo or a Nebula, although both authors greatly deserved such awards. The sad fact is that both authors put their best creative efforts into series fiction, and series fiction rarely wins awards, unless it is written by a science fiction icon such as Asimov. Rightly or wrongly, neither White nor Bradley were ever accorded icon status in the world of science fiction. MZB, at least, also had to contend with some confusion as to whether she was even writing science fiction. The sword-and-planet story, once a major part of SF, was not seen much by the 1970's, when she hit her peak as an author. Many readers mistook it for fantasy, and fantasy seldom wins Hugos. This misconception was frequently reinforced by her publishers, who would often mislabel Darkover novels as fantasy. Make no mistake, MZB also wrote first-rate fantasy—**The Mists of Avalon**, her Arthurian novel, is an excellent example of this. But Darkover was no more fantasy

than it was nuts-and-bolts hard SF.

Both White and Bradley are now gone. For fans of Sector General, there is the consolation that one last novel in the series had just been sent to the publisher before his death. At this time, I do not know whether this was also the case for MZB. However, there is hope that there might be future Darkover stories to come from either collaborators of hers or from those readers who developed as published authors by writing Darkover stories under her tutelage.

Two N's, One Eh

The Conadian board of directors is still finding good deeds to do with the 1994 Worldcon surplus. The latest announcement from Winnipeg is that they have created the Millennium Grants, unconditional one-time grants of C\$1,000 each.

The first will go to five long-standing Canadian sf conventions: Concept (Montreal); Ad Astra (Toronto); Keycon (Winnipeg); Conversions (Calgary); and V-Con (Vancouver).

The grants will be presented during the dinner at Summit 2000 over the weekend of February 5-6, part of Cabin Fever IV, a Winnipeg relaxacon. Conadian is flying in one chair from each of the cons at its own expense, where they will be treated as Fan Guests of Honour take part in program items "reflecting this rare opportunity to meet and talk with their fellow conchairs."

Not only is this very worthy. After seeing the copy submitted to the NASFiC souvenir book, I was highly impressed to see that Conadian's press release spelled "millennium" correctly.

Balticon Shifts Dates

Balticon 35 chair Hal Haag announces that his con will be held over Memorial Day Weekend of 2001. The weekend was formerly scheduled the now moribund Disclave.

Balticon 34 will still be celebrated on Easter, 2000.

Aurora Award Winners

The Aurora Awards, Canada's national science fiction and fantasy awards, were handed out at InConsequential II/CanVention 18 on October 17.

Best Long-Form Work in English: *Darwinia* by Robert Charles Wilson

Meilleur livre en francais (Best Long-Form Work in French): *Corps-machine et rêves d'anges* par Alain Bergeron

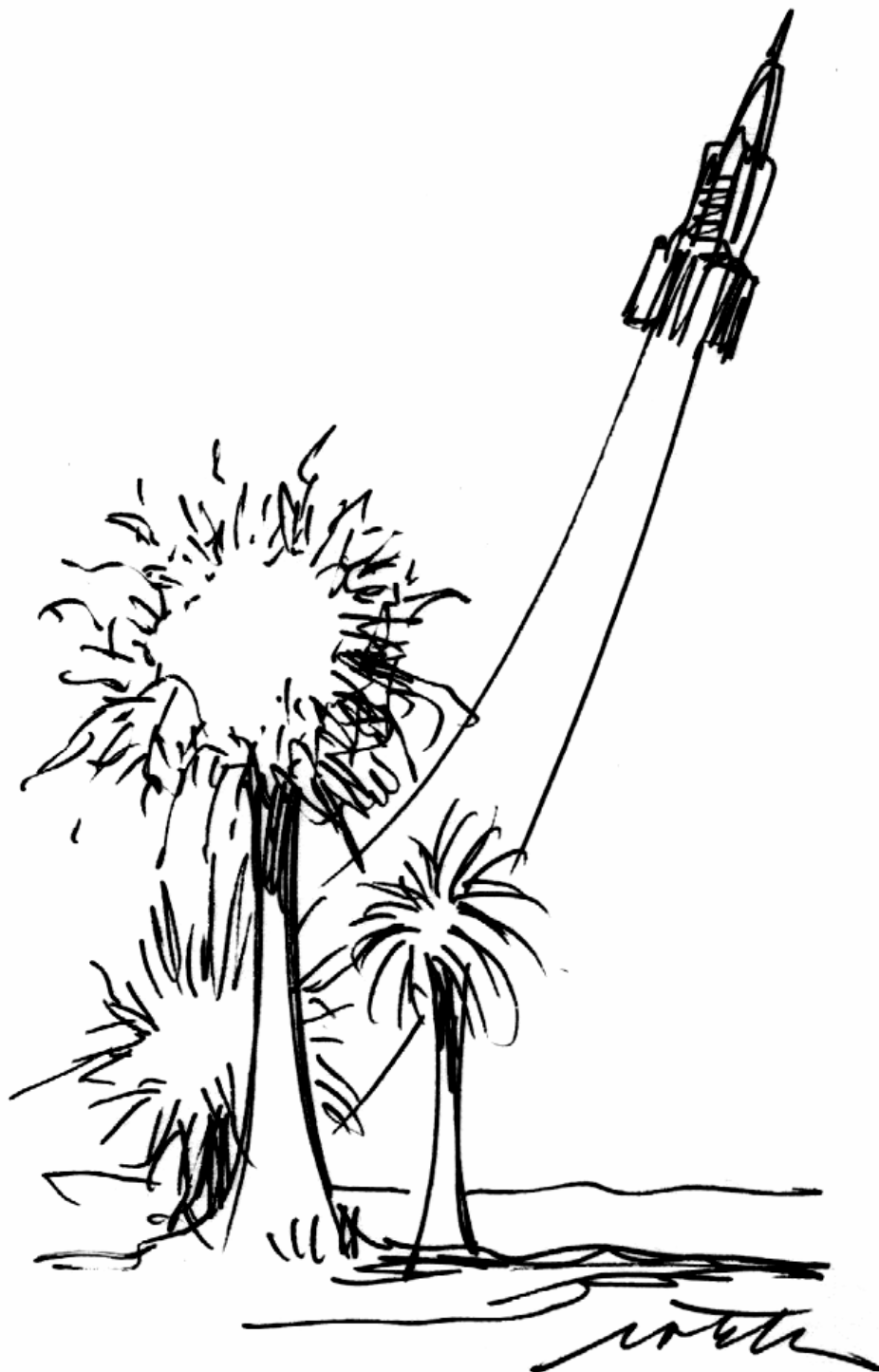
Best Short-Form Work in English: "Hockey's Night in Canada" by Edo van Belkom

Meilleure nouvelle en francais (Best Short-Form Work in French) "La Demoiselle sous la lune" par Guy Sirois

Best Other Work in English: *Arrowdreams: An Anthology of Alternative Canadas*, Mark Shainblum and John Dupuis, eds (anthology)

Meilleur ouvrage en francais (Autre) (Best Other Work in French) (tie): "L'entreprise de Frankenstein" par John Dupuis; and Jean-Louis Trudel, *critiques* (Solaris 124-127)

Artistic Achievement: Jean-Pierre Normand



The Fanivore

Arthur D. Hlavaty

File 770:132 received and enjoyed. But while the content is up to your usual high standards, I must complain that I find the typeface ugly and cramped. In fact, in some places, like the Conucopia report, you see to have developed a laser-printer version of the old Selectric error of using a 10-pitch element at 12-pitch spacing.

[[Sorry about the eyestrain. I used Microsoft Publisher for the first time last issue and was very late in discovering why it was setting everything in "condensed."]]

Robert Lichtman's "FAPA News" is not FAPA news, or at least neither Bill Danner nor G.M. Carr is in FAPA. (In fact, I don't believe either has been a member in the 18 years I've been in it, which I realize is not much by FAPA standards.)

Marty Cantor may have attempted to turn the OEship of Woof over to me at Denvention, but I am pretty sure he did not succeed. I wasn't even present at the collation that year.

[[I missed the Denvention to have emergency dental surgery. Was that better than becoming OE of WOOF?]]

Ray Capella

Here -- an attempt at restoring balance to the *Star Wars* controversy, such as it is.

Having done my bit on the flood of tie-in products for nearly every other heavy-handed "SF" flick, perhaps it's time to point out that *none* of the *Star Wars* movies are either as good -- or as bad -- as fans view them. It's a matter of perspective... and a perspective that perhaps requires the hand of a seasoned non-fan film reviewer.

Nay, I don't claim to be the latter. But an important factor most reviewers and fans continually ig-

nore is that the teenager or adult who saw *Star Wars* the movie was 22 years older when he saw *Phantom Menace*. And forward from said point, the fan who saw the others was 19 and 16 years older. *That gap alone* engenders a different person, a new perspective, on what was originally a somewhat flawed but charming form of escapism.

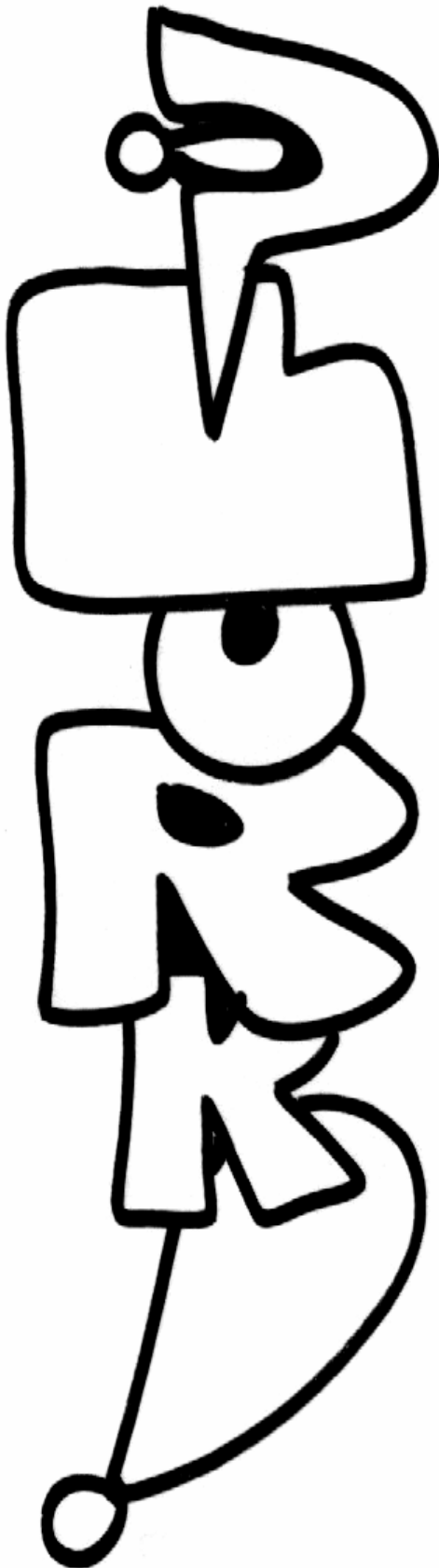
In the 70s, both Lucas and Spielberg endeavored to evoke the action, innocence and sense of values inherent in movie serials and action films of a generation removed from their own. In that sense, I believe both were contributing something valuable which is lacking in many 90s movies. Both are far younger than this fan -- who enjoyed said old film generation. And both are, like it or not, filmmakers who studied their art, and whose sensitivity and intelligence garnered them deserved success.

One of the values of the *Star Wars* trilogy was that it focused on characterization, so all the leads -- villains included -- become an endearing factor in the minds of the viewers. And said endearing quality is missing in the "prequel" because that one is *designed to give density and credibility to Lucas' pulp universe*. It's unfortunate he had to wait for the state of the art to catch up with what he had in mind.

Keep a hold on this -- I'm not defending the film, merely seeing it for what it is. (In some ways, however, long-time SF fans could wish that what's *really* out there might be even a smidgen as lush and colorful as what Lucas imagines.)

One can't identify with *Phantom Menace's* people; it ain't meant for that, man.... So if you want to fervently bash it, see if you can flay it's background-building. See it a second time -- it will, like it or not, grow on you. Darth Maul aside, the characters are less cardboard than those in the trilogy, but you miss it because they're -- with a few exceptions -- history. So *then* if you're a special-effects whiz, or, Ghu forbid, see yourself as an intellectual, you may endeavor to hit it with a rock upon a selected soft spot, if you're inclined to.

But please don't visit the whimpers or cheers upon me. Because if you're



trufans 22, 19 or 16 years older than what you were when you saw the trilogy, I'm sure you've better things to do than carry on the argument 'til Sol freezes over.

Lloyd Penney

James White adds to the lengthening line of fans who have passed on. If death were a disease to catch, I'd say we were in the midst of an epidemic. (If being sweet and nice, and charming and gracious, with a sense of humour, is an indication of fans leaving us before their time, I can think of a few fans who will probably live forever, and just to spite us, too...) Marjii Ellers, Lan, Chuch Harris...it's all happening too fast, and to too many.

Since closing down *Stefantasy*, Bill Danner has written to me a couple of times, and the contents echo much of what was in Robert Lichtman's piece. Perhaps we could get in touch with Bill's nephew and encourage him to carry on as promised; perhaps even produce an issue with our tributes to Bill... and do it before he passes on. I'd rather he was able to see this tribute, instead of never knowing.

Your comments on the Canadian Unity Fan Fund are unfortunately right. The fannish population here is not large enough to start up an exciting voting contest, so basically, anyone who shows any interest is very likely to win it. Yvonne and I are still working on our trip report.

I read about Roger Sims' having a triple bypass a while ago, but didn't know the date of that operation until reading it here. I guess Roger just had to wait until this year's Midwestcon was done before he had the operation. (As I read on about heart attacks and injuries, Fandom is truly becoming the Walking Wounded.)

An update on our own First Thursday pub night...we think we've found a new home in the uptown section of Toronto. The Granite Brewery is a restaurant, pub and microbrewery all rolled into one. It comes highly recommended, and we have the upstairs semi-private room with the fireplace...we'll be there on November 4. In the meantime, our other regular pubnight, the Third Monday, continues

to be quite comfortable and welcome at Orwell's Pub in the west end. The e-mail at the end of the article of no longer any good, seeing that Inglis/Whirlpool let Yvonne go after six years there. The new e-address given above will do just fine for further contact.

I understand Chris Barkley's frustration on getting recognition for quality SF productions that don't quite fit into the requirements of the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo. If Hugo won't change, Chris may have to change his focus to another award like the Saturns, if they are still given out, and I believe they are. Maybe the Saturns can be voted upon and given out at Worldcon, if there is space, and interest from the group that administers the Saturns.

I am happy to see that after some years of asking "Whither Worldcon?", new fans are starting to answer that question with new Worldcon bids. I think we have to embrace them and help them learn what Worldcon is all about, for if we don't, we will lose what we all take for granted, and some people will get their Hugos in the mail. We all want people with experience, but we seem to have little or no patience with people trying to get that experience. (Sounds like looking for a job, doesn't it?) On the Toronto in 2003 committee, we have some people with experience, some people who have attended one or two Worldcons, and several who have never been there, but are willing to go and learn. We need them all to make a Worldcon work, and we hope we have the opportunity to gather to do that next Labour Day.

If there's a *Mimosa* Live Fanthology in Chicago, I will happily volunteer to be a reader. There are such opportunities to be a reader in Toronto, but I have been turned down at every opportunity, even though they are meant to be voluntary positions. Alex von Thorn and Marah Searle never told me about Jerry Pournelle bursting into their party...they were probably too busy running it to pay too much attention.

Dave Langford

It's good to see you getting your teeth into a substantial con report again, with the NASFiC coverage. How I sympa-

thize with your urge to strangle the fan who triggered another Harlan Ellison rant about Charles Platt. Taras Wolansky actually sent me a tape of this, but since I deafly don't own a player, I have labeled it "Radioactive Material" and put it in the firesafe.

I think the terrible tale of Farber vs. the Toast has mutated somewhat in the telling. As I remember it, I started making toast, left Gary to watch it while taking a phone call, and came back to find him appropriately positioned but writing earnestly in a notebook. "This peculiar British toast seems to be very dark," I imagine it went. "Now it's developing glowing red patches! Perhaps this is substandard bread. Wish I were online and could do a web search on the properties of British toast.... Now Dave Langford is hurling blazing toast from the kitchen window! This may be an amusing incident worthy of mention in a trip report!" Or maybe not.

Depressing, isn't it, writing all these obituaries? The curse of the newzine editor.

Harry Warner, Jr.

Sometimes I think the fanzine Hugo award is no longer useful. It is hard to imagine the low placings this year in the voting for splendid publications like *Idea* and *Trapdoor*.

No contradiction this time is necessary for the news about the new edition of *All Our Yesterdays*. I couldn't confirm it on the other occasion because I hadn't agreed to sign a contract yet. Since then my stipulations about the new edition have been agreed to in contract form, I signed the document, and I know of no reason why NESFA Press won't do its usual fine job with production.

Chris Barkley seems to be on the right track in his proposals to get a fairer voting method for the dramatic presentation Hugo. The only thing that bothers me is: how will a voter ascertain whether a recent movie runs more than 100 minutes? If he didn't time it when he attended the screening, he might have trouble finding a source that shows theatrical release running times. The problem could also exist for a televised movie that has a time slot of two hours, 15 minutes or two hours, 30 minutes. Some networks or cable channels are so

inventive in finding commercials and promotions that they might stretch a 98-minute film into such a time slot.

Isn't the title, "John Hertz's Westeron Notebook," incorrect? He could hardly have gotten all the notes needed to write this article into just one notebook, so the plural would seem to be necessary. It's hard to remember the last time I read a conreport so crammed with exact information on individuals, statements, and other aspects of the things he experienced.

Your own narrative of your adventures at Conucopia were also fascinating. You may be correct that fan history loses much of its interest when most of the participants are dead. However, I originally thought that each of my two fan history books would appeal only to those who had lived through those decades of fanac and I have never been quite able to believe the way they have been bought and read by fans who weren't born yet or weren't old enough to be fans in the 1940s and 1950s. I hope someone videotaped "The Demolished Fan," because something as difficult to prepare and produce as a play shouldn't be lost with the utterance of the final lines. In fact, it's time to try to get scattered movies of old conventions and the occasional dramatic presentation by fans onto videotape and stored in some safe place for future viewing purposes. A lot seems to have been accomplished to get still photographs accessible and duplicated but I haven't heard of any similar efforts with movies.

There is an occasional exception to the rule Joseph Major writes about, the failure of sequels to live up to expectations aroused by the first in a series. I don't think *Valley of Dreams* is a let-down after *A Martian Odyssey*, Stanley Weinbaum's great short story. I didn't read the Skylark novels in the order of creation but I can't remember any complaints that *Skylark Three* was a disappointment following *Skylark of Space*. Much the same holds true for the C.S. Lewis interplanetaries, Jim Blish's Cities in Flight series, and the sequel whose title I can't remember to Jack Williamson's *With Folded Hands*.

The reaction of Albuquerque fans to bomb squad's orders reminded me of what a state policeman once told me.

"Everyone resents it when someone tries to save his life."

Somehow, I've never seen Barney on television and I have no idea of what Jar Jar even looks like. Just think how much less hatred I can exude by living such a sheltered life.

Kathy Laskowski

I want to express my sincere thanks to both you and Mark and Evelyn Leeper for writing such kind words about my late husband George "Lan" Laskowski in the September issue of *File 770*. I appreciate very much the copy you sent me and will always treasure it among the mementos of our brief life together.

We were only married three short years. Half of that time was dedicated to fighting the dreaded illness that took so much out of him and left him weak and emaciated. He tried his best to carry on with some sort of normalcy to our lives and was determined not to just give up and feel sorry for himself but to continue to be as active as his health permitted. It was some sort of miracle that he was able to finish out the school at Cranbrook as his health was progressively deteriorating in spite of all the treatments.

His courage and determination proved to be an inspiration for many including myself and my family. Although he knew he was dying, he never let that interfere with his daily living. He lifted my spirits when I became depressed over the situation and gave me hope to face another day. He put his faith and trust in God and accepted the ravages of the cancer with dignity. He passed away at home with me by his side. The last thing he said to me was "I love you." We were both truly blessed to have found each other and although he is gone from my side now, his spiritual presence has not left me.

Joseph Nicholas

Many thanks for *File 770:132* -- skimmed at speed this morning rather than studied diligently, as it was but one item in a pile of mail awaiting us on our return from a week of gorging ourselves on art and architecture in Madrid late yesterday evening.

Our flight home to London Stansted was delayed by an hour due to what were euphemistically referred to as "rotational difficulties" -- i.e., a longer turn-around time -- at Stansted. We see from this morning's paper that Chinese leader and mass-murderer Jiang Zemin flew out of Stansted at the end of his state visit last night, and wonder whether the longer turn-around might have been attributable to the security arrangements shielding the butcher of Tiananmen Square from the pro-Tibetan demonstrators who, despite reported repressive behavior by the police, have dogged his every step.

So one comment only, then (before we have to go out and restock the larder for the coming week), in response to Harry Warner's observation that people flying across the Atlantic require the same comforts as people travelling in space. While this may not be a difference of kind, it is certainly one of degree. Aircraft land, people get out, and are back in the natural world from which they were temporarily parted for a few hours. Spacecraft, by contrast, land only when they have returned to the Earth they left; their passengers disembark at the mission's destination, when they do so at all, for only a few hours at a time, and require protection from the hostile outside environment at every moment. There is, in other words, no comparison whatever between passengers on an airliner and the crew of a spaceship.

Francis Hamit

People who were shocked by my comparison of DS9 to Tolstoy's *War and Peace* should read the whole sentence: "for character development, complex plotting and moments of compelling, even gut-wrenching drama." I did not say that DS9 was comparable for dialogue, literary style or description.

Let me do a little bit of literary hair-splitting to enable this point. Tolstoy's narrative is a fiction; a one-to-one communication between the author and the reader. Much of its impact depends upon the theater of the mind.

DS9 is a one hour dramatic form that is very tightly constrained by the parameters of the medium and relies upon all kinds of mutually-agreed-upon con-

ventions between the producers (who are the true authors, both legally and spiritually) and the audience. It's more a one-to-many form of communication. Such comparisons are also compromised by the comparing two very different narrative forms. (For further details, see Aristotle's "Poetics").

It is also well to remember that most people read the abridged, rather than the unabridged version of *War and Peace*. The reason for this is simple. Tolstoy was writing a political treatise in novel form and this polemic, having lost all relevance to the world as we know it today, is very daunting for the average reader to wade through. I know. I did it once.

I also wrote a DS9 spec script with the encouragement of one of the producers. It was submitted through my agent but we have yet to receive a reply. Make of that what you will. One does not expect to sell a spec script, by the way. It's a demonstration that you can write that kind of show. And before you ask, no, I can't publish it or show it to you. I don't own the underlying copyrights: Paramount does.

I'm going to miss DS9, but I have a theory that every television series has a natural life span beyond which it should not go. I suspect that this is why spin-offs of most one-hour dramas seldom survive that first season. The Star Trek universe does allow characters to be imported from one series to another successfully, but the underlying situation is new and novel and the characters change to accommodate that.

Marty Cantor

I can see that the defenders of the inappropriate are at it again. I mean, not only does our (supposedly literate) hobby not need to be awarding Hugos to movies and television shows, but here we have Chris M. Barkley proposing that we increase the number of these awards. Hey -- when SF books have categories in the Emmys and Oscars, that will be a good time to give awards to movies and television shows. Sure, lots of fans watch these shows, but that is no reason why we should have awards for them. Many fans also collect stamps -- should we also give awards for best stamp collec-

tion? I say that we need one less Hugo Award for movies and television shows, not any more of them. At this point, I will spare you and the readers my usual rant about what is and what is not SF. Let the Barbarian Hordes (historical reference) honor their own whilst the rest of us sit down to a good read.

Tom Feller

Your challenge with the spelling of Plokta reminded me of the time I wrote an article on Cordwainer Smith's *Nostrilia* for the Salem Press. Somehow I had saved "Nostrilia" in my spell checker, and that's how the word appeared throughout the article. Fortunately, the editor, fellow fan A.J. Sobczak, caught it.

One error no one caught until too late occurred on the program book for the 1997 DeepSouthCon. Teddy Harvia's cover had the wrong dates for the convention. Neither Tim Gatewood, the editor, nor I, one of the proofreaders, spotted it.

Anita and I saw *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace* during its first week of release. However, we did *not* go to the 12:01 a.m. on opening day. We went at a normal 7 p.m. viewing time after having dinner. By the way, there is a theater in Nashville with 27 screens. All 27 were showing the movie at 12:01 a.m. on the first day.

I didn't avoid reading the articles about the film before I saw it, but I didn't seek them out either. We liked it well enough, although nothing could have equaled the hype. Anita would have liked a little romance, and I wondered if earlier drafts of the screenplay included one between the Liam Neeson character and Skywalker's mother.

In the early 60s, a woman came up to Fred MacMurray and slapped him, because she didn't like his character in *The Apartment*. That was the last time he ever played a murderer, as in *Double Indemnity*, or even a morally ambiguous character, as in *The Caine Mutiny*. Thereafter he concentrated on his TV series, *My Three Sons*, and on mediocre films for Disney.

Chris Barkley

A note to Alan White: I'd like to relate

to you an anecdote that may (more or less) explain myself.

In 1975, while I was a freshman at the University of Cincinnati, I took a course in Human Sexuality. I usually sat with a gay friend named Charlie. Late in the spring semester, the class was debating the merits of the burgeoning feminist movement and its effects on relations between men and women. During the discussions, the professor decided to ask our opinions on the correlation between the gay rights and civil rights movement.

For a minute, no one wanted to respond. Remember, this was only six years after the Stonewall riot; homophobia was more rampant then than now and no one in this class, on a conservative mid-western campus was in any hurry to out themselves publicly.

I was seated up front and center with Charlie, five rows back from the professor. Charlie, who was not out at that point, did not raise his hand, which did not surprise me in the least. I didn't raise my hand because I was still trying to get a handle on my sexual identity and petrified at the thought of expressing myself in front of a crowd of 200+ strangers.

After a little cajoling, a woman one row down raised her hand and was recognized the professor and stood up. She said, in a very clear, loud, strident and antagonistic voice, that "Gay people have no rights! I can't see any connection between them and what black people wanted. They should just shut the hell up and stop bothering other people about their problems..."

Needless to say, Charlie and I looked at each other and we both in a state of shock. He, because one of his classmates just stated that he, an American-born citizen had no rights and I because these words had been spoken by a black woman. Mercifully, the class ended soon afterwards....

After class, I confessed to Charlie that I was ashamed that I had not spoken up and challenged her right then and there. Charlie shrugged. What can you do about people's attitudes, he said sadly.

I thought about what happened and what Charlie said for a full day before I plunked myself in front of a typewriter at *The News Record*, the weekly campus newspaper and began to tap away, com-

posing an editorial. As a journalism major, I was required to be a staff reporter and work regular assignments. Several hours later, I was done. My editor, (whose name escapes me at the moment) didn't even bat an eyelash when he read it, said he would print it. Two days later, he did.

The 350-word editorial described exactly what happened and exactly how I felt about it; the shame of not speaking up, the horror of listening to a classmate let her prejudices and hate dictate what rights others should or should not have and the irony of her being black. I wrote that the battle for gays rights was my fight too. If lesbians and gays weren't free to associate, rent property, marry and adopt and do all the other things straight people do every day, how could I, or anyone else, call themselves, truly free.

And I waited for the flood of mail that I thought would come tumbling into the office.

The next issue: nada.

The issue after that: nothing

And so forth and so on for the remainder of the school year. Not even a thank you from the gay and lesbian group on campus. The whole city in fact was in the firm grip of spring and baseball fever. Charlie and my journalism teacher, Jon Hughes, told me that it was great, which in itself, was enough of a reward for me. I learned to stand up for myself and my opinions and I haven't been able to shut up since then.

It sez right here on my Dissidents License that it is not only my right to piss people off, it is my duty and sacred honor to do so. In doing so, I engage and provoke you, expose you to points of view you may or may not have considered before, to either to solidify or soften your resolve on certain issues. To afflict those who are comfortable and to comfort those who are afflicted. This is what informed criticism, art and literature is supposed to do.

As for the charge of preaching to the converted...I plead No Contest. Just look at the comments my columns have generated. Some think I'm generally right (thank you again, Mr. Warner) and others, like yourself, think I'm just plain nuts or misguided. (I can hardly wait to see this month's reaction to the BDP

Hugo Column. Be sure to read the latest developments on that brouhaha in the current column...)

Having said that, I am not "powerless" as you assert, because I take the time to write to a fanzine. To me, the size of the venue of the protest doesn't matter as much as the fact that I stood up to be heard. The act of doing so does not diminish me, it empowers me. The readers of *File 770*, the staff and President of *EW* know *exactly* what I think of them and their magazine. They know that I don't share their point of view nor will I swallow any of their brand of slick, shallow and narrow-minded pabulum that passes for informative mainstream journalism nowadays.

It also may interest you to know that in my 23 years plus in fandom: I have had my own *sf/fantasy* talk radio show (for six years on a public access station), worked on or been in charge of the Media Relations staff for eleven Worldcons and in 1995, was in charge of the entire genre fiction at the Cincinnati branch Joseph-Beth Booksellers, the year our stores (there were *only* two back then) were named Booksellers of the Year by the American Book Association.

Needless to say, I feel I have the fan-nish credentials to back up my opinions. When I choose to rant, I make damn sure I know what the hell I'm ranting about. When I'm dead wrong, I'll readily admit it. Believe it or not, I also value the opinions expressed here, pro or con. So, I'll keep churning out these entertaining little ditties and reviews once a month, for my own mental well being and at the pleasure of Mr. Glycer who personally requested I do so. Practice makes perfect, y' know.

As for my review and comments on *The Phantom Menace*; I stand by what I've written.

And Alan, by all means, keep those cards and letters coming in. I get pretty worked up over them and look forward to responding. And don't worry about Mike's sanity; it's always been in question (just ask any of his friends) and I know that he *loves* receiving and printing adversarial correspondence each month.

And speaking of being adversarial; a note of clarification to Allan Burrows: you, like many others before you, have

mistaken the writer for his work. Just because I take a few days out each month to write about how I feel about *sf* does not mean I eat, sleep, bathe in, breathe out and dream about it 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I do not spend my idle time trolling the area thrift stores for collectable Star Wars bed linens. My attitude is strident because while *sf* is an important, pivotal part of my life and fuels my intellect, but is not life itself, at least for me. N'uff said.

Even though we did not see each other very often, I knew and respected Lan Laskowski. I only wish he were alive for me to thank for his comments on my column in his very last loc. I will miss him dearly.

Errata: In last month's *Fanivore*, New York Yankees pitcher Roger Clemens was mentioned in a letter I wrote. He was the first pitcher that came to mind when I started and somehow he survived all several subsequent drafts before the letter was sent, via e-mail. Being a Yankee hater since birth, he was never meant to be the final choice. To strengthen your appreciation of the analogy, please go back to the previous issue and scratch Mr. Clemens name out and insert the name of Boston Red Sox ace Pedro Martinez, whom I personally feel is a more appropriate choice. Again, my apologies for the error and inconvenience.

Elizabeth Ann Osborne

No matter how silly a bomb threat may seem, it has to be taken with serious thought. Recently at work, one of the students told his teacher there was a bomb in the building. Everyone had to evacuate, all the teachers and educational staff. The maintenance people and their workers also had to get out. The kitchen crew who were busy making lunch for 1200 people had to get stop. Even the Ohio parole board which was meeting on the other side of the campus had to leave. Our warden and the members of the Critical Incidents Management team were halfway to Columbus for a conference when they had to turn around and return. Everyone sat for two hours while security discussed if they should call the local police bomb squad or call in the state police's version

(which was on the other side of the state on a training session.) I got to go home from work early but it was not fun. However one feels about the inconvenience of a bomb threat, it is nothing like having to live through a real bomb.

News of Lan's death has reached me and I mourn for him and his family. I must have met George before my first Worldcon and I became a regular reader of his zine for years afterward. My first published article was a trip report about the Atlanta Worldcon of 1986, which gave me more egoboo than I ever could have guessed. His zine also provided his life in detail, so I followed and often felt his ups and downs, at school and in his family. I often saw George and his wife at Ohio conventions and after I moved to Florida, at Worldcons. I remember well, standing in the hotel line at Nolacon in 1988 right in back of them, him turning around and with a start saying, "Beth, you've lost weight!" His last few years were not all that happy. He found disappointment, frustration and depression about his job and family. He seemed to pull out of it, and in 1992 he was the fan guest of honor at Marcon in Columbus. It was the last time I saw him. The news of his divorce was a shock to me, but I was happy to hear of his remarriage and new family. Living across country, it was hard to be in personal touch but he stayed on my Christmas card list and I always looked forward to his zine, even as time lengthened between issues. In 1995 or so, *Lan's Lantern* published my trip report to England and Scotland. That was the last I heard from him. The next news was that he was sick. He was upbeat about his illness but seeing the death toll from this killer I had little hope. His last notes were positive and I am glad that he had made his peace with family and with his faith.

George was often criticized by some fanzine fans for not producing what they considered a "good" zine. When *Lan's Lantern* started winning the Hugo Award there was much argument about its merits. George deserved that award and the praise that went with it. *Lan's Lantern* was an opening to fanzine fandom that fans read and adored. For many, it was the first zine that they ever read or wrote for. Some people have fallen away but others are still with us,

some producing zines of their own.

The idea about dividing the Best Dramatic Hugo into two parts was an interesting brainstorming session. What happens when nothing qualifies? I remember it was a long dry spell between the end of *Star Trek* and the first *Star Wars* movie. SF TV and films are enjoying a bit of a boomlet right now, but it was not always so. Do we want to give the Hugo to every TV show with ray guns and uniforms? Would *Space:1999* or *Battlestar Galactica* rate an award. They were almost the only SF TV on in their time. The request for a change seems to make sure that B5 gets a Hugo, but there is no promise that in five or ten years any SF TV will be on the airwaves. The airwaves are littered with SF TV that didn't make it, good and bad, *V*, *Earth 2*, *Space, Above and Beyond*, *Mercy Point*. It may be that we should leave the awards for the science fiction film to the Saturn group and keep the Hugo as an award for the written word.

Gene Stewart

Blatant Trumpeting: My story "Up the Hill" appears in the current *Talebones*. Rave reviews welcome.

Nice Foster lager cover. Yggdrasil's nightmares, eh?

James White shall be missed, even as his spirit lives on. Same with *Stefantasy*, one imagines. And R.I.P. to all those who have passed on, whether noted in the Obituaries or not.

And welcome back Harry Warner Jr., indeed.

That *Ansible* won another Hugo is unconscionable, but typical. At least Ian Gunn was recognized, albeit a bit late.

Chris Barkley's hyperbole on behalf of Harlan's "Ticktockman" was nice but ill-aimed. See my prior loc for my own take on this. Glad to see you bothering this particularly knotty sector of sub-reality, though, for any who remain outraged and/or confused. And yes, Harlan's right, there are dire shortcomings and limitations involved in how sf or imaginative literature is viewed by mundanes. So what else is new?

As for Barkley's current rant, again, I just don't care as much as he seems to, and so I'll remain silent, except to say that the only reward that ever matters is

another reader for a story or book and another viewer for a movie or TV show.

Dale Speirs does excellent reporting in his Con-Version 16 report. Orderly, clear, concise. Bravo. Modesitt's remarks about publishing are right on the money, by the way -- not accepting unsolicited mss is absurd, and will only hasten the demise of this pathetic stance. New blood will out.

Really enjoyed the somewhat nonsequitur quotation snippets scattered through John Hertz' Westercon Notebook. The report itself was a bit dense.

The estimable editor's Conucopia report held my interest, and Harlan giving Newt the finger made my day. Bless Harlan, eh?

Hitchcock's own definition of a MacGuffin is "...that item or excuse or reason that motivates the characters, but that the audience doesn't care about at all."

Back cover: Superb. Just how I feel, actually.

Joseph T. Major

That's My Rant: Considering that there is already an Academy of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror (movie people giving each other statues) one wonders if Dragon*Con would consider infringing on them. The SF Book Club gives awards, so does *Locus*. What have these done to the Hugo?

The "Hugo voting only" membership might work, if members were not allowed to pay their memberships with consecutively-numbered postal money orders.... This only failed because whoever did it made some silly mistakes. For \$5 it would be worth signing up everyone in the office to vote for a book.

Hasbro To Buy Wizards of the Coast: Short after WotC bought TSR™ I noticed a trend. In the 60s, board wargames had been the hot trend, and one of the leading companies had been Simulations Publications Inc. (SPI). They faded, and the hot trend became role-playing games. THE leading rpg company was TSR™, and one of their acquisitions was SPI. So I figured that this trend would repeat itself and, well,

However, Hasbro had earlier bought up the *other* leading board wargame maker, Avalon Hill. Besides board

games not usually within the fannish purview, they produced the original, good, not movie tie-in (I may be repeating myself here) *Starship Troopers* game, and had the rights to (and produced well-made copies of) *Diplomacy* and *Kingmaker*. However, Hasbro has not done much with their Avalon Hill games.

All which bodes ill indeed for *Amazing Stories*....

Conucopia: “Why Do People Write For Fanzines”: Because there isn’t a paying market for minor things that authors think are worth saying.

Fanivore: Harry Warner: *The Phantom Menace* has a 30s serial title because Lucas was writing from a 30s serial mentality. Remember, he had originally wanted to do a remake of Flash Gordon, but could not get the rights. (And when Dino diLaurentis got them, the result was an atrocity, but that is another story.)

I found my MidAmeriCon program book yesterday and sure enough, there was the announcement that this new production company was showing off material from their forthcoming movie, *The Star Wars*. Pause for everyone who had been at MAC and had not realized the significance of this to kick themselves again.

[[At MAC, Mark Hammill told Bill Warren – the one from LA – “I’m the star of a major motion picture, only nobody knows it!”]]

It is unfortunate that **Lan Laskowski** is no longer around to calm and moderate the heated debate between **Chris Barkley** and **Alan White**.

It is a pity that **Lloyd Daub** should feel ashamed of having perpetrated the pinnacle of fan writing, the Fan Hoax, and with two characters simultaneously. Having such disparate personalities and styles would take a great deal of work in keeping up one character, so with two it was particularly noteworthy and commendable.

Eric Lindsay

Many thanks for *File 770:132*. Great back cover! [[by Ray Capella]] Especially considering some of the contents.

Your comments “When Time Is Out Of Joint” on the Philadelphia chapter of

the Science Fiction League and the Philadelphia SF Society mention one James Hevelin as PSFS president.

I just had an e-mail from one James Hevelin (first time Rusty has set hands to keyboard to me in the 25 years I’ve known him), thanking me for the good time he had on his visit here to Airlie Beach.

Gay and Joe Haldeman, who brought Rusty along with them to Airlie Beach, also expressed amazement at Rusty actually doing an e-mail. Joe and Gay at least were familiar with the area, having first been here nearly 20 years ago to see the Great Barrier Reef.

Other pre Aussiecon visitors to the remote Airlie Beach area were Judith Buckrich (whose biography of GoH George Turner was launched at Aussiecon Three). Continuing with the GoH theme, Gregory Benford and Elisabeth Malartre were here around the same time as the Haldeman party, although they were travelling in the opposite direction.

After Aussiecon we brought Tom Whitmore and Marci Malinowitz back from Mackay with us (we had so much luggage that we left a suitcase full of fanzines with Leanne Frahm). Their visit to the local wildlife park (where the crocodile got the food bucket this time), and sailing to Blue Pearl Bay to snorkel among the coral and tropical fish will appear in *Gegenschein*.

Fans we last saw at Corflu, Jack Heneghan and Elaine Normandy arrived a week later for three day sailing and diving trip on Pacific Star. We liked that idea so much we booked and went along. Jack got his diving training and certificate while on board, and we all had a great time in the water at Bait Reef and other spots on the Great Barrier Reef. Jan Howard Finder was our last visitor, and was another fan who went SCUBA diving. He is still driving around Australia, on a 26 week trip for which he has details of 1520 different tourist items he wants to see (figures it will take him eight years). Apart from Rusty, Jan was our oldest visitor; he was also the only one I was able to persuade to come paddle an outrigger canoe with other crazy people at dawn.

Our visitors seemed to have such a good time that we are tempted to ask the Corflu powers about the possibility of a

Barrier Reef Corflu in 2002.

I had a great time at Aussiecon. Luckily the only thing I was entrusted with was running the ANZAPA party (and Bev Hope did all the hard work of gathering most of the supplies). Even better, the party was in the All Seasons Grand, so I didn’t have to deal with the Centra Hotel and their idea of how to ruin a party. The All Seasons Grand were exceedingly helpful.

William Breiding

I’m always in a state of semi-gafia: from that perspective I find Chris Barkley’s column a bit hysterical, a strange proponent of FIAWOL. And a media-oriented one at that. (Let’s face it, his autobio is about *comics*, okay?) The more reasonable view, Alan White, still echoes Chris’ hypertension seriousness, but gets closer to a more relaxed FIJAGH view, but not quite. In the long run, trash like *EW* has little bearing on anything at all.

Phantom Menace was gravely bad. It broke all the basic rules of entertainment. It was lackluster, boring and uninvolved. All mystery was sapped from the film by all the tie-ins and preview promos.

Marie Rengstorff

I appreciated that you included the information on James White. He is my hero. I knew this was coming. I had read something by him where he discussed his juvenile diabetes, onset, or at least discovery during his early fandom years. It was the primary cause of my father’s death.

When I heard that James White had died, I wanted to go dig out the books I have by him and re-read them. I did that the weeks before my Ph.D. orals. I found them relaxing. The “Beings” in his books are a long way from perfect, but there is no evil villain. For the moment, however, I will go read some ancient pulp edited by Campbell. When I was unpacking boxes and putting a few readables onto temporary shelves, a pile of *Analog*, *Asimov*, *Astounding*, and *Galaxy* were on top. I’m sure that the ones from the early 50s will feel new. In a couple of weeks I’ll buy a table saw. Then I’ll build a serious bookcase across one

wall. Then I'll dig out James White.

No. There is no way I can wait *that* long. When I finish cleaning out the jungle I'll shuffle boxes again and dig out James White.

Franz Zrilich

The black box found in Albuquerque on the steps of the SF club was properly treated by the bomb squad. A tactic of some bombers is to set two bombs. One small one goes off, then ten minutes later, when people are milling about the place, gawking, a more powerful one nearby, in a hidden spot, goes off, having a concentrated mass of people-targets nearby.

This is called the one-two punch.

However, it is my belief that we are indeed grossly over-responding to alleged terrorist threats. Many of these threats -- such as Mr. Bin Laden's band of merry pranksters (this is called dark humor, graveyard whistling in the night, nervous belittling, also known as wishful humor) -- are frequently creations of our own government.

Elizabeth Ann Osborne

Strange to say, but I haven't been following *Deep Space Nine* close enough to make a comment on the new actress Nicole de Boer.... Nothing excuses bad behavior, either in public or private. I don't know if many or most ST fans like or dislike the turn of events *[[of her replacing Terry Farrell in the cast]]*. I wonder if the people at Electronic Entertainment Exp. were "typical" fans or just people who watch TV. I also noted that Francis Hamit wrote that "some of the people in line were not very nice to her." That means that some of the fans were nice to her. I would have been interest in reports of the fans' reactions at the other appearances but I know the writer did not attend those events.

Fans, like all customers, have a

right to complain about something if they want to, just as you or I have a right to complain if our sandwich at McDonalds is cold or the curtains we ordered arrive in the wrong shade of yellow. Fans, and all other viewers, expect and should be treated with respect by the producers of a project who very often seem to think that they can put the words "Star Trek" or "Babylon 5" or a spaceship on anything and sell it. This is not only true of SF TV but of most of television today and maybe one of the reasons why so much TV is losing viewers right and left. "Who the hell do they think they are" is a fair question, the answer is, we are the customers and life is too short to watch something that isn't very good.

One last word, the acting life is not for the fragile or the faint of heart. Rejection and criticism is part of it. DeBoer may have made a success of it but few do. According to SAG, the actors union, only 10 percent of their members can make a full-time profession out of it. I hope that deBoer has a more positive relationship with the show's fans and continued success in her career.

Robert Whitaker Sirignano

Chris Barkley's Hugo revisionism could be sorted out to the following: (A) Television production, (B) Theatrical Releases.

But this causes a few problems: what of audio releases such as Douglas Adams' *Hitchhiker* series, or the Firesign Theater Album that was nominated a generation ago? If you open up the nominations a bit too much, you'll invite Too Much media. Over the years there have been graphic novels worthy of a Hugo (I'm thinking of *Watchman*) but fell out of the categories because over the years the "Best Media" presentation has been movies and television. It would be best to keep the awards streamlined, without adding things to

the point that it becomes meaningless and contrived.

Chris may be right that "Repent Harlequin" is one of the finest of 20th Century stories, but not being in a book of the *Best American Stories* does not detract from its value. There are many stories and novels that do not get even nodding acknowledgement for years. How many years was the Cordwainer Smith short story "Scanners Live in Vain" buried after its initial publication? How long did it take people to understand what Philip K. Dick was doing? David Lindsay died with *Voyage To Arcturus* out of print for decades.

Anthologies are signposts. To me they seem to say: if you like this short story, look up the other books this person wrote. And because writing is an aspect of human nature, it is never an absolute that the best short story someone suggests will be the same thing you would pick. And I've met a good handful of people who despise everything Harlan Ellison has written.

The Fandom Menace -- fans who take that Lucas film a bit too seriously?

Joy V. Smith

I like the cover, especially the kitty critter in the dreaming tree. The back cover is also good and has some great marketing ideas. (Yoda's Sodas, Star Wars sweat bands.... Hmm, I'll take two of each.)

Chris M. Barkley has a good idea for changing the Hugo Awards' Best Dramatic Presentation category into Short Form and Long Form, as in the Sidewise Awards and others. (Many nominees in all the categories need more publicity.)

I enjoyed the Aussiecon coverage, but I want to say that I got some great e-mail reports from Karen Johnson while she was there, which I imagine she'll be printing in *Out of the Kaje*. I enjoyed the other con and

panel reports, too. Excellent Westercon and Cornucopia (1999 NASFiC) reports.

The letters of comment are interesting, as usual. (I think Chris Barkley did a good job of responding to *Entertainment Weekly's* SF list, btw, and I'll always miss *MSFire* and its crew.)

Martin Morse Wooster

I'd like to pass on the following anecdote to show some of the problems with Aussiecon.

Whenever I'm at a con, I always try to attend the banquet to help the con out. But I was carrying U.S. dollar traveler's checks, and didn't have \$50 Australian to buy a ticket.

But when I returned the form, the fuggheaded New Zealander who was staffing the desk explained that no one had a machine to process the credit card forms, so they were only taking cash. I explained that I would have to pay the following day, since I had to go to the back to convert my American dollars into Australian ones.

"Well, *heh heh heh*, you can give us fifty American dollars," the fugghead said. "But we won't accept anything less, *heh heh heh*."

Now fifty Australian dollars is worth about US \$35, and the implication was that this stupid American (i.e.) is so desperate to attend our banquet that he'll do anything to buy a ticket. Moreover, food in Australia is so cheap that I rarely spent more than \$15 Australian for a meal.

So I politely excused myself and skipped the banquet. If the fugghead had been less condescending, I would happily have paid US\$40 for a ticket. But apparently the convention felt that attendees would be so excited about the banquet that they would do anything to attend.

In any case, I wouldn't be surprised if Aussiecon lost a lot of money on the banquet.

[[I would. From the outset, Aussiecon charged an outrageously high membership rate which it supposed North American visitors would see as a mere fraction of their total trip cost and submit to pay. However, I don't actually believe the opportunistic prankster from New Zealand who volunteered to sell you a banquet ticket for US\$50 was part of Aussiecon's policy of fiscal responsibility.]]

We Also Heard From

Brian Burley: Let me take a stab at that record. Columbus in '69, plus some contact with every New York Worldcon and NASFiC bid from 1977 on. I think it totals 8. And now I'm executive Director of Nieuw Amsterdam in '04....

Michael Nelson: I was surprised to not see an Aussiecon review. I'm wondering if people were having the same problem I have. When I think about what I would write, it just sounds so negative. But I had a great time and I would prefer to write something positive. Oh, well.

David Bratman: I did indeed mean that remark as a compliment. Your quips in the daily newsletter were among the highlights of NASFiC. Being second in humor quotient to Dave Langford is a high honor, even if coming in behind him in Hugo races is more of a frustration.

By the way, I found that listening to others reading articles aloud from *Mimosa* was as much fun as reading them myself. I'd been thinking of going for at least part anyway, but I'm glad Richard hijacked me onto the reading squad.

Noreen Shaw: I keep seeing reports that people are "searching for me", but I'm *not* missing.

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