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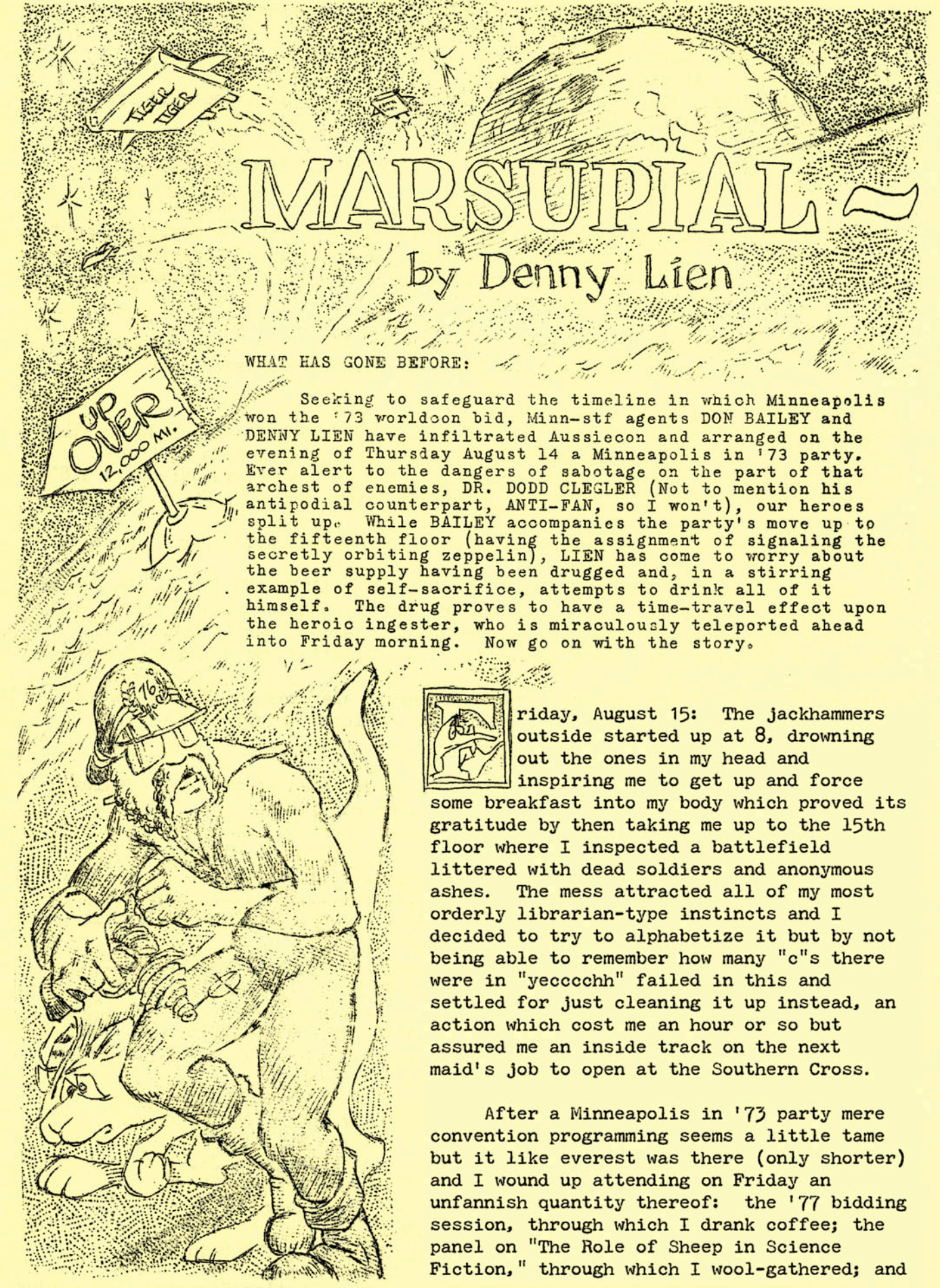
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MARSUPIAL ~

by Denny Lien

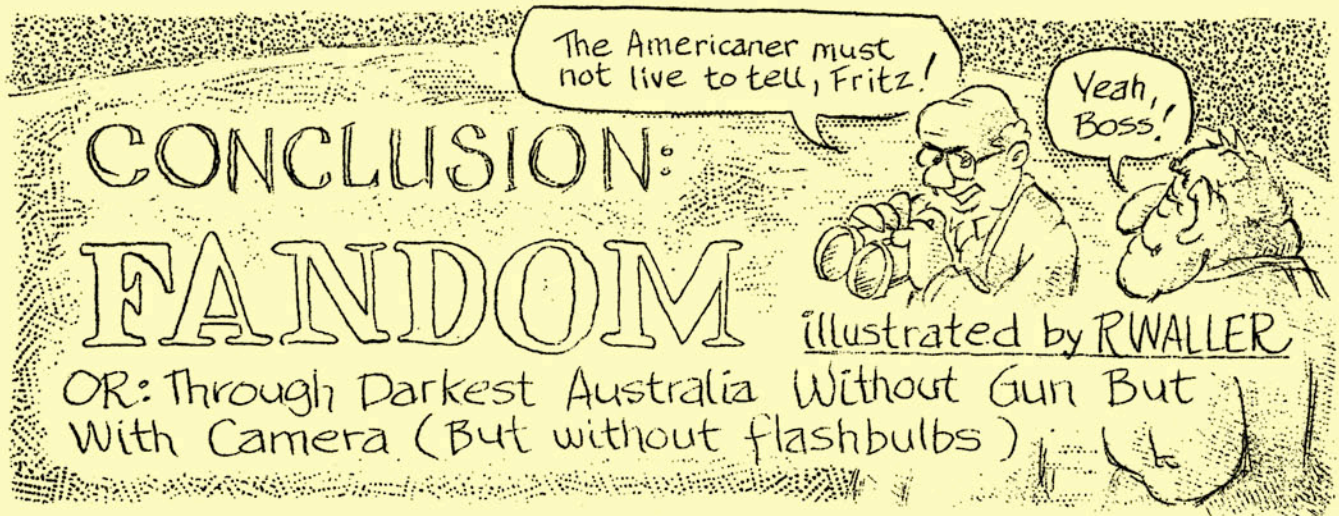
WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE:

Seeking to safeguard the timeline in which Minneapolis won the '73 worldcon bid, Minn-stf agents DON BAILEY and DENNY LIEN have infiltrated Aussiecon and arranged on the evening of Thursday August 14 a Minneapolis in '73 party. Ever alert to the dangers of sabotage on the part of that archest of enemies, DR. DODD CLEGLER (Not to mention his antipodial counterpart, ANTI-FAN, so I won't), our heroes split up. While BAILEY accompanies the party's move up to the fifteenth floor (having the assignment of signaling the secretly orbiting zeppelin), LIEN has come to worry about the beer supply having been drugged and, in a stirring example of self-sacrifice, attempts to drink all of it himself. The drug proves to have a time-travel effect upon the heroic ingester, who is miraculously teleported ahead into Friday morning. Now go on with the story.



Friday, August 15: The jackhammers outside started up at 8, drowning out the ones in my head and inspiring me to get up and force some breakfast into my body which proved its gratitude by then taking me up to the 15th floor where I inspected a battlefield littered with dead soldiers and anonymous ashes. The mess attracted all of my most orderly librarian-type instincts and I decided to try to alphabetize it but by not being able to remember how many "c"s there were in "yeccccch" failed in this and settled for just cleaning it up instead, an action which cost me an hour or so but assured me an inside track on the next maid's job to open at the Southern Cross.

After a Minneapolis in '73 party mere convention programming seems a little tame but it like everest was there (only shorter) and I wound up attending on Friday an unfannish quantity thereof: the '77 bidding session, through which I drank coffee; the panel on "The Role of Sheep in Science Fiction," through which I wool-gathered; and



the "Tucker Bag" panel which went smoothly. The sight of 500 Australians mouthing "smoo-o-th" and gesticulating with their coffee cups unnerved me enough to go grab a pizza with Don (and having grabbed it to eat it), after which we repaired to the room where I wrote messages on postcards and sealed them into bottles while Don composed the following letter which appeared in the next day's DAILY CON:

"Dear Mr Con,

It is my sad task to inform you of a flaw in your report of the Minneapolis in '73 report in the DAILY Con 2. Dennis Lien, his mommy, and his daddy all prefer to spell his name LIEN. While we approve of freedom of the press, it is requested that you humour this foolish abberation of theirs.

While I personally don't mind that I wasn't mentioned, I have a mortal obligation to warn you that there is an orc out after your head. You see, I took a thorn out of his foot once and he's been looking after my interests ever since. The latest news on the '73 bid is that we still don't have enough votes to secure it. Rest assured we will continue to throw 'Minneapolis in '73' parties at future conventions until we are successful.

Donald Bailey"

A bit later I went down to take in a demonstration of ESP which didn't, though it did at least keep me off the streets (and the sidewalks) for a while until I got hungry. I considered telepathing the nearest lunch bar into sending over an order of sausage and chips but wound up going out on the streets after all and got my own, after which it was according to the schedule time for the Masquerade and the Paul Stevens Show, the former of which actually occurred. (The latter didn't, and I'll probably always wonder just what it was that Paul had planned to show and what local ordinances they could have gotten him on). The masquerade's highlight was a totally believable melee by the local equivalent of the SCA, who apparently use real swords and one of whom eventually needed to use a real doctor.

By now it was party time, the heart ~~and liver and kidneys~~ of a convention. Party of choice for the first part of the evening was Ken Konkol's WisCon NonCon NonBid party in room 830 (not prime). WisCon looks like a tough noncontender; it would be hard to vote against it (if only because it isn't) and it would not do to alienate Ken as he is a notorious photographer and thus not only knows where all the fannish bodies are buried but has pictures of the undertakers. The slides he had along at present were however those of mere pros. I tried my

hand at announcing them to the assembled masses for a bit and discovered that even if my hand is quicker than my eye, neither of them is very accurate. (Ben Bova had the same job later in the evening and managed to be both accurate and amusing, which scarcely seems fair.)

I struck up a conversation with some of my fellow attendees, one of whom proved to be Meg Curtain of Canberra, a longtime sf reader who was just discovering fandom and whose sense of wonder continued to expand exponentially each remaining day of the con. Her delight in the discovery of the international siblinghood of fandom was infectious and I suspect that even if I'd otherwise failed to enjoy my trip the happiness of being part of something that brought so much pleasure to someone like Meg -- not to mention the other hundreds of new fans that I didn't get to know -- would have been worth it all by itself. ~~At least until the wills arrived.~~ I spent much of Ken's party talking to her and her friend Bobbie until it was late enough to occur to me that I ought to explore other parties. (The fact that by then I'd seen each of the slides something like fourteen times also played a part in this decision.)

I experimented with both the Orlando Victory Party and the Space Age Books party which were at opposite ends of the same floor, and wandered fro and to between them for an indefinite period. Vignettes:

- (1) Watching Don B. display unsuspected skills in coping with an apparently-tripping neo and feeling vaguely envious both of people who felt free to freak out and of people who proved competent to deal with them.
- (2) Discussing at great length with Roger Hanney the panel's topic of the "Role of Sheep in Science Fiction," dragging in every unspeakable pun around and coming to vague agreement that one can't really roll sheep very efficiently as they tend to have these quadruple appendages what prevents one from more than just at most like pushing them over if you sneak up on them. In Roger I finally found someone who fit my stereotyped conception of an "Australian sense of humour" and much enjoyed it once I managed to push my leg back into the socket.
- (3) Trying to avoid a sercon discussion on racial matters between a young Australian fan who seemed determined to demonstrate his essentially liberal (small "l") instincts and an American fan who seemed determined to demonstrate that the Ugly American image occasionally has a basis in fact.
- (4) Noticing that it was 5 a.m. and hence bedtime.

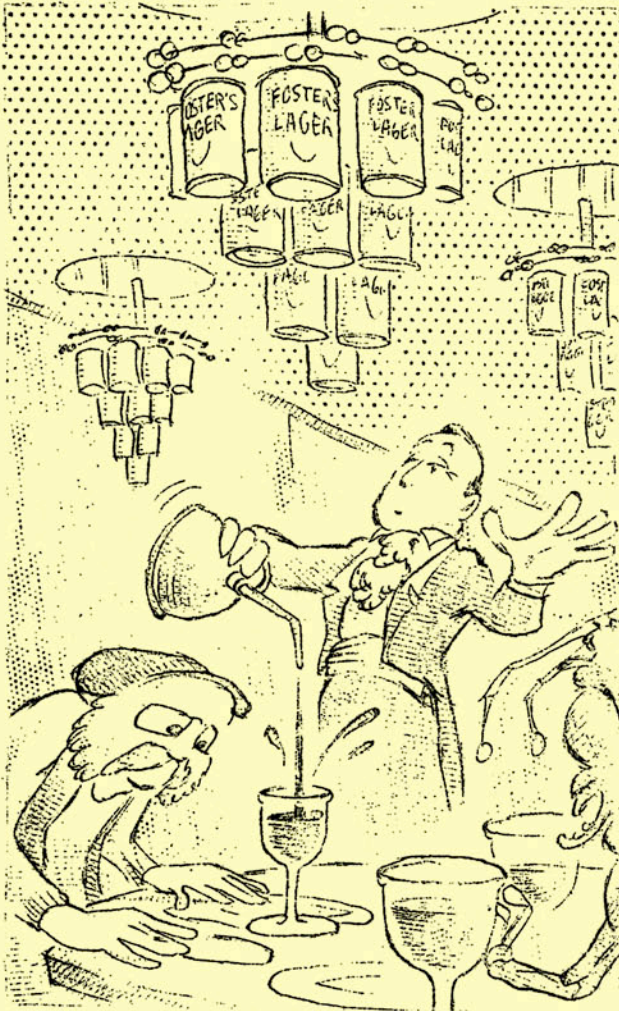


What was left of the next day (Saturday, August 16th) started for me around 11:30. For the third straight day I used the Pancake Parlour to remind my body of the solidier things in life which in this case was Hawaiian Pancakes featuring ice cream and pineapples and other strange things which seemed like a good idea at the time, though I suspect that at least to Leigh and Valma (with whom I was eating) my face was about the strangest thing going at that moment. After I bought off my innards with black coffee I psyched myself into walking down to Space Age Books again which didn't take much psyching as I like books even better than beer and certainly better than pineappled pancakes. I could spend a couple of pages detailing all of the booty I got from pillaging the used magazine room but Fred would just cut it anyway. After an hour or two of collecting orgy I returned to the hotel, dropped off my new toys in the room, and headed down to spend the rest of the afternoon in a similar orgy known as the book auction where I sat from 2:30 to 7:00, writing postacrd and talking to Ned Brooks and T.G.L. Cockcroft and occasionally waving my arm aloft and shouting out monosyllabic integers. The auction and my postcards and my spare cash ran out approximately together in time for me to shower and dress (in that order) for the banquet.

Everyone else seems also to have dressed for the banquet which saved us no end of worrying about a raid by the local vice squad. I met Don B. and we set out to find Table 26 which in a well-run hemisphere would have been between 25 and 27, but who knows how those strange folk downunder count. It turned out to be tucked off in a corner near the kitchen which put it about as close to Minneapolis as we could have gotten and made us feel right at home. The Aussiecon Banquet worked on the "distribute the local pros" theory to make sure each group of Yanks had someone watching them to prevent their stealing the silverware; we drew Lee Harding ~~who said it was a reasonable likelihood~~. The food was adequate as banquets go and warmer than most if only because we were next to the kitchen and my brandy on the rocks was also adequate ~~and warmer than most~~. After studying the lengthy winelist with care most of the people at our table ordered intelligently only to learn that the hotel was out of all but one brand which fortunately was named "Chateau Orlando" but which unfortunately proved to be undrinkable; cries of "ro-o-ough" wended their way over to Tucker's table and we all had fun playing with the ball of black scraggly sediment found in the bottom of one bottle and showing it to the wine steward for his admiration and comment.

As for the awards themselves, everyone knows by now who won or else doesn't care so I shan't repeat them here except to note that as usual almost nobody I voted for came through which proves that everyone but me is out of step. The Awards Committee announced only the winners and refused to release runners-up, let alone order of finish or vote totals, on the apparent theory that the full results of an award instituted, voted on, and awarded by fandom at large is no

business of fandom at large. (Anyway, one must needs protect the presumptively tender ego of a professional author who might be devastated and embarrassed to learn that his or her short story was considered to be merely the fifth best of the five hundred or so of the year.) I say it's spinach and I say the hell with it. For the rest, John Foyster talked on sexism in the English language (he's in favor of it; I'm not) and 4SJ Ackerman talked and talked.



The parties of this evening failed to stick in my mind or my notes. Brisbane fandom threw another party which was rapidly overcrowded and Orlando threw another party which (in a much larger suite of rooms) was rather undercrowded and quiet and therefore to my taste pleasant, but aside from discussing in uncomplimentary and quasi-scatalogical terms with Elayne Pelz the merits of an obscure brand of California (?) beer, no details remain. This was the last official evening of the con, which was as good an excuse as any to get a bit maudlin (and I require very little excuse). I presumably enjoyed myself; I obviously lived through it; and I probably crashed around 2 a.m. The rest is silence.

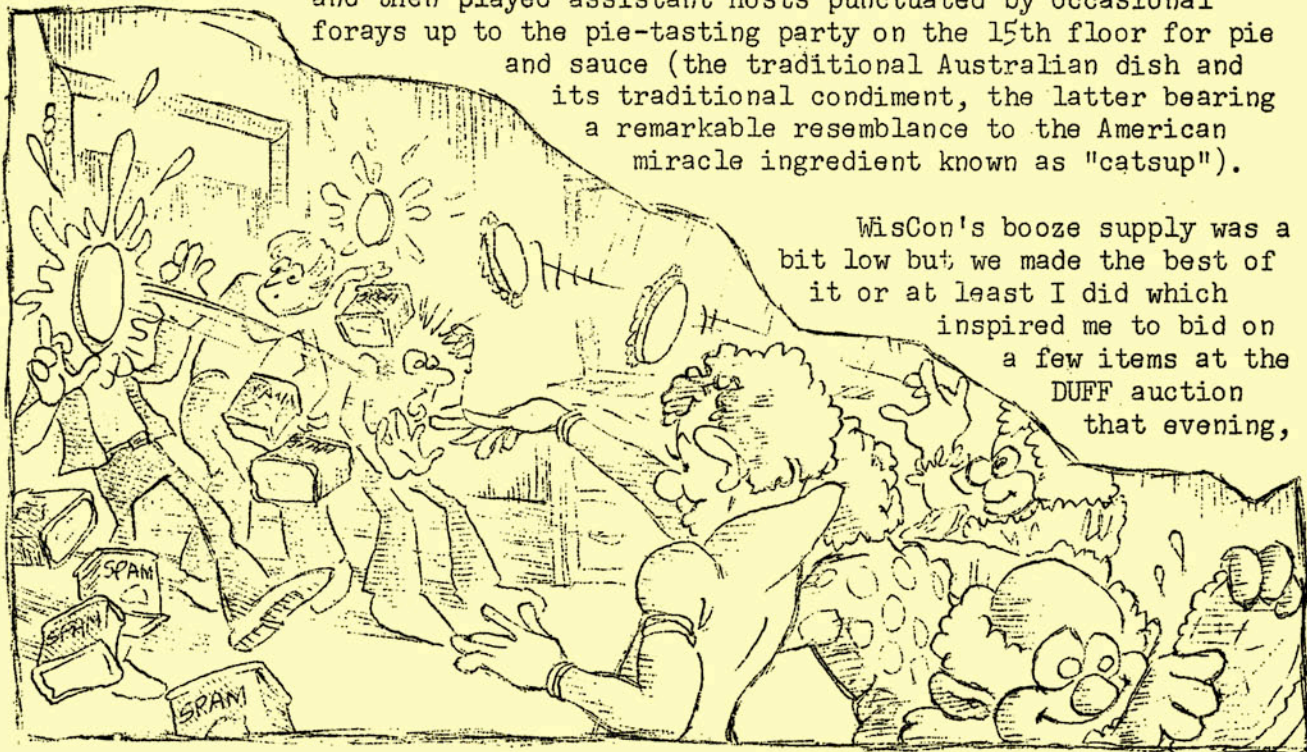


Sunday August 17th was the last official day of the con -- a good excuse to stay maudlin, even if sober. Having in the best fannish tradition missed virtually all of the previous day's program it seemed a shame to break a streak so that after the usual breakfast I spent the morning walking about town and sightseeing. I got back to the hotel around 2:00, chatted with Meg and other folk for a bit, and got laundromat recommendations and directions with the aid of local fen, the yellow pages, and telephone information. The directions seemed a bit complex but Don B. and I were all set to believe them and head down for the railway station to catch a #15 train for the suburbs until we realized that ~~that was the way to the station~~ we had misunderstood and were to take a #15 tram instead. Makes a bit of difference and we had a narrow escape from winding up in, say, Adelaide with two bundles of dirty clothes. Instead we wound up where we were intended to, washed, and returned to the hotel just after the official close of the convention, late but otherwise smelling like a rose (or at least something other than what we had begun to smell like).


If the previous night had been a trifle sad, as indicating the Beginning of the End, this one was quite a bit more so and signified the Middle of the End. Dead Dog parties (Dead Dingo parties, in this case) are a bittersweet enough institution at less unique conventions -- the crazies are taking off the silver shoes and stepping back through the Looking Glass and one is thinking of tomorrow when friends slip away, not to be seen again for a few weeks or months or maybe not even until the next year. But Aussiecon wasn't going to be happening again in another year or two or ten and this particular batch of crazies (and nice sanes) had -- barring quick discovery of cheap teleportation techniques -- little chance of getting together in a very similar way again. This wasn't an ordinary convention, or even an "ordinary" worldcon. Something pretty extraordinary had been born, grown up healthy, and was now slipping over into death.

Being officially dead didn't keep the convention from twitching a bit with another WisCon party in Ken's room providing several of the twitches of whom Don and I as honorary Wisconians were appointed to be two. With Joan Serrano we ate up the remainder of Ken's supply of spam and cheese, and spam, spam, and spam, and then played assistant hosts punctuated by occasional forays up to the pie-tasting party on the 15th floor for pie and sauce (the traditional Australian dish and its traditional condiment, the latter bearing a remarkable resemblance to the American miracle ingredient known as "catsup").

WisCon's booze supply was a bit low but we made the best of it or at least I did which inspired me to bid on a few items at the DUFF auction that evening,



some of which such as an hour of Mike Glicksohn's time I unfortunately won. Al Fitzpatrick proved something about Australian fannishness or possibly just insanity by paying \$5A. for my Minneapolis in '73 button; I think it's only fair that if we get the bid he should be encouraged to run as the '73 DUFF candidate. Around 1 a.m. Ken started auctioning off his slides, and not having a slide projector and not being in any of them and having run out of beer it seemed time for me either to go off to sleep or to put a lampshade on my head and recite "Gunga Din." The former was less work. End of the Middle of the End. . . .

allarat beckoned on Monday August 18 and some 75 game but tired fans (including almost all of the North Americans) succumbed to its lure and were at the railway station at some ungodly morning hour. Unfortunately the train had not succumbed and was an hour late. The fans assembled beguiled the moments with such amusing activities as wandering around, playing gin rummy, and blowing on cold fingers, to which I added the personal pastime of attempting to digest my breakfast, which had consisted largely of room-temperature mashed potatoes. Susan Wood and John Berry purchased and distributed daffodils as semi-official Ballaratcon badges and we tried our hands at telling daffodil jokes of which we quickly discovered there does not exist an hour's worth.

The train finally pulled in, paused, and pulled out again, taking almost all of us with it. (We lost a couple of fans with slow reflexes.) This was the first time I'd been on a train for ten years or so but the excitement wore off rather fast and aside from the greater number of sheep to be seen out the windows it wasn't much different from my last U.S. train (I would have at least expected it to run on the wrong side of the tracks). I spent time reading or napping or looking for the train one-shot which someone else always seemed to have or simply trying to keep warm until the train stopped and spewed us out into Ballarat which proved to be just as cold as the train and cloudy to boot.

We were split in half (as a group, not individually), herded into two buses, and taken off to the historic/ghost town/tourist ~~xxx~~ attraction sector of Sovereign Hill where my busload was told to eat and the other to look at the sights, positions later to be reversed. This would have worked well enough if it hadn't been raining and everyone hadn't been hungry; as it was those of us in the lucky bus tended to lose our appetites at the sight of the shivering alavering faces pressed up against the window glass and I for one kept recalling Neil Rest's "Eat the Rich" t-shirt. Fortunately Robin or someone managed to intercede with the mundanes leading the tour in time to let the outs in and prevent insurrection. I ate with Leigh and Valma, Rusty Hevlin, and Ben Yalow and enjoyed the food, once the waitress had run out of ways to foul up our orders. I also finally got a chance at the TrainCon oneshot and inserted an ad offering to sell my hour's worth of Mike Glicksohn in ten-minute lots, offering various suggestions as to what one might reasonably expect to do with ten minutes of Mike; for some reason I had no takers.

Sovereign Hill itself was a bit of a disappointment though I took various photographs and enjoyed the reaction of visiting mundanes watching 75 adults with (mostly) strange accents walking around carrying or wearing daffodils. (Don B. informed some of them that we were part of a florists' convention.) I clambered up and down steps, stared at a blacksmith blacksmithing and a printer printing, watched Don make friends with a horse, and was not too sorry when it was time to regroup for the buses. Fred Patten and I and two or three others had decided to attack Ballarat's one potentially scientificfictional bookstore instead of continuing with historic sights, and we were accordingly dropped off there and left to make our own way to the railway station. The bookstore also

proved a disappointment and I decided the most desirable purchase I could make at the moment was a sweater which I wandered off in search of. Having arranged to warm my exterior I took care of my interior with a pie and sauce followed by purchase of a bottle of cheap brandy for future interior wellbeing and then found the railway station just as my fellow fen and our train arrived from their respective directions.

With 75 fen around it probably says something about the machinations of Dr. Dodd Clegler that Don B. and I found ourselves joined in our compartment by the only two mundane passengers on the entire train: an elderly couple who'd missed their own and had begged a ride on our special. I didn't begrudge them the ride but with the group scattering across the continent the next day I did begrudge a bit the time so we made our excuses and wandered back to the last car where we joined Ken Konkol, Ben Yalow, Alan Huff, Genie DiModica, and two people whose names I've forgotten (one of them an Australian with a name which sounded like Fuccio Gerardi and perhaps even was), offering the brandy as our calling card.

After our calling card was tasted I began to fear being thrown out of the compartment and under the wheels; this was undoubtedly the vilest form I'd discovered alcohol hiding behind since I was a college freshperson. It was so bad that some people began to refuse their turn at the bottle as it was passed about, and I began to occasionally think about refusing.

The compartment was warm and happy and fannish; Ken instituted another auction and attempted to auction off American money to the Australians and we took turns blithering in the TrainCon one-shot . . . and Genie DiModica quietly and quickly got extremely ill which when announced dampered said warm and happy and fannish elements considerably. We rustled up spare coats and sought out alkai-seltzer and dithered at delays on shunt lines and when we finally returned rushed her to the nearest car to the hotel and its doctor (who pronounced the illness less serious than it appeared; after a night's rest she was able to resume her trip schedule).

Meanwhile -- Genie into the car with the driver and others and me back at the station about to hunt up a tram. Saying last goodbyes to Leigh and Valma and talking of returning in a few years to see them but knowing that plans tend to fall through and in any case years tend to be long and it is not a happy time; the convention is pretty much over and I have a momentary feeling that it has slipped between my fingers.

I catch my tram and the fans aboard expand the TrainCon one-shot a bit, declaring TramCon I and adding a few more lines. I've still no offers for Glicksohn.

Saturday had been the last official night of the con; Sunday the night of the last official day of the con. There was nothing official about Monday -- it was just the last of the con. We'd gone as high up the mountain as we could and slipped off the other side; for a final evening we were hanging on with our fingers but they were starting to slide. The next ledge was quite a ways down and only big enough to hold a few of us.

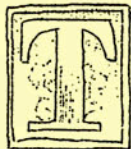
Don B. and I had decided ours was as logical a room as any to hold the Again, Dangerous Dead Dingo Party. After a quick supper and a beer run, we settled in as a small, quiet, melancholy/pleasant party started forming around us. Shayne McCormick defended cricket against Yank charges of silliness; Tucker told us how he'd just accidentally smashed his room's window and we scented a new Tucker legend aborning; Bill Wright and Shayne debated the merits of British Australia vs. Australian Australia; all of us sipped or munched on whatever we

chose; and one by one the people drifted off and minute by minute the convention continued to wind down into an honorable but gently depressing death. End of the End.



Tuesday, August 19 proved to us that the End is Not Yet, or that there is life of a sort after death, or something. At some time that morning we awoke to find the floor littered with paper cups, empty beer cans, and crashing Brisbane fan who picked themselves up (while we picked up the rest) and left mumbling something about Sydney Cove in '88 -- obviously code.

We paid our last visit to (and bill at) the Pancake Parlour and repaired to our room to try to discover a new law of topology which would allow us to fit an infinite amount of clothes and books into a finite amount of suitcases -- and succeeded, thus proving again the educational value of scientificfictional stories just as Mr. Gernsback used to tell us. We descended to the lobby; said temporary goodbyes to Robin Johnson, Eric Lindsay, and Bill Wright; found a taxi which had come to find us, and that was that.



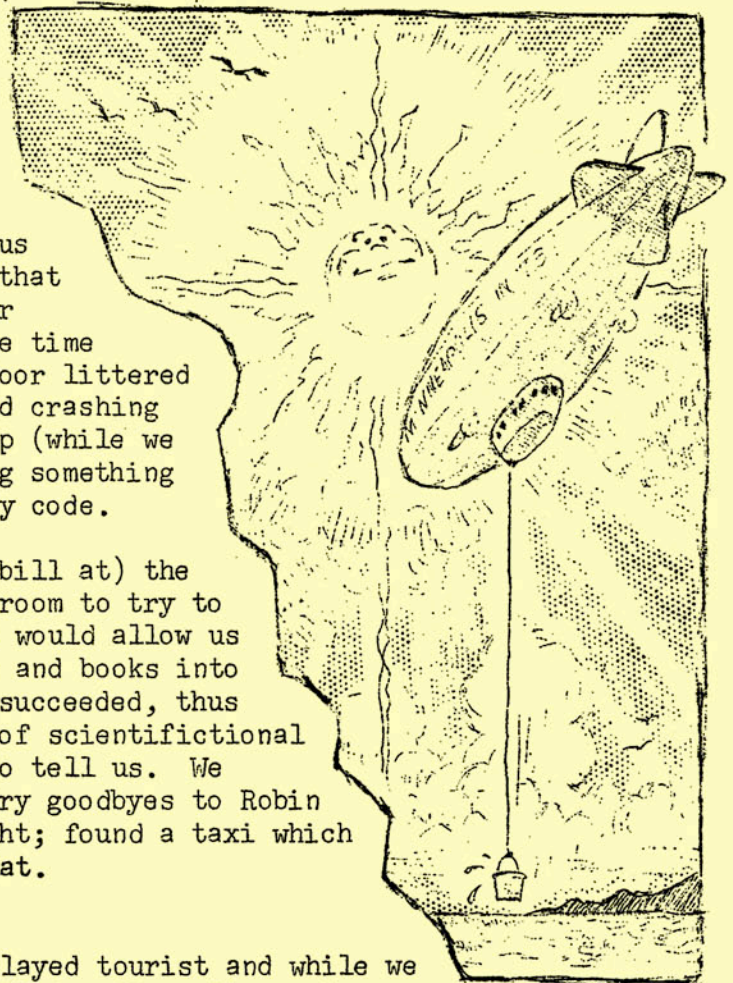
The next few days Don and I played tourist and while we basically had a good time RENE is after all a science fiction fanzine and as we did little that was either science fictional or fannish and as this is causing the death of too many trees as it is I'll pass over them quickly:



TOWNSVILLE, Tuesday August 19 - Thursday August 21: We flew up to Townsville on the northeastern coast with the idea that it would be easy to get out to the Great Barrier Reef from there. It proved to be impossible and we didn't find too much else to amuse ourselves with in town except for barhopping, though we did spend most of Wednesday busing and then biking around Magnetic Island off the coast which was scenic and otherwise fairly pleasant. A hotel booking mixup left us sharing a room one night with a Massey-Ferguson salesman from Darwin who proved to be the only thoroughly unlikable Australian we met on our trip; I'd never buy a used tractor from that man.



BRISBANE, Thursday August 21 - Saturday August 23: Brisbane is a bit of an economically-depressed-looking city which for some reason I took a liking to even though I had no interest in the lotteries which were advertised at every-other shop or the bait-and-switch con-game we watched being pulled one morning. Our hotel was of all things temperance but they didn't make objections to one getting boozed up outside its walls which was fortunate. Don found the local chess club and I found three used bookstores and we went through our respective discoveries like avenging angels. On Friday we boated out to Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary where we got to handfeed kangaroos and photograph them while trying to induce them to wear propeller beanies, but there's a limit to what a kangaroo will put up with for a few crummy kernels of



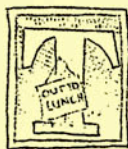
corn. We also visited the Brisbane Botanical Gardens but trees are not interested in corn and look silly in beanies.



CANBERRA, Saturday August 23 - Monday August 25: Several other American fans were here while we were and we did the bus tour of sights routine with two of them, Joan Serrano and Jake Waldman. I didn't take much to the city, livable as it looks on paper, though some of my bad impressions were irrelevant: a cramped and starkish airport; our overpriced and undersized motel room; a depressing bar where we watched a couple of fights; cold weather. I was very impressed by the Anzac War Memorial but had only a short time there on the bus tour. Sunday night, Meg Curtain picked us up and filled us with steaks, wine, and beer at her house, and we had a fine time talking late into the night with her and a pair of her friends -- one of the most enjoyable moments of the trip. Monday morning, Meg showed us additional sights of the town (including Australian National University and the Australian-American Friendship Memorial, a wings-upraised eagle which bears a striking resemblance to Bugs Bunny and is thus generally dubbed). So Canberra turned out to be okay after all.



Monday August 25 continued with the plane from Canberra dropping us off in Sydney (after fortunately coming to a stop first). We ran into Evelyn Clough and Connie Mellot at the airport and shared with them a taxi into town which dropped them just where they wanted to be and then dropped us about ten blocks from where we wanted to be, driving off before we discovered the error and leaving us to walk with our suitcases -- not the most exuberant sort of "welcome back" hint. By the time we got to our hotel we were tired enough to simply sit and watch television for a while, even though our choices turned out to be Gilligan's Island, Land of the Giants, The Flintstones, and an Australian version of Hollywood Squares. This refreshed us (or something) enough to face our supper pizza and a further exploration of King's Cross, including a branch of Melbourne Public Library, a waxworks which we talked ourselves out of entering, a maze which we solved fairly quickly but wandered about in for an hour or so, scaring other customers and generally having fun, and a computer game/pin ball area in which I surprised both of us by finding a game at which I could consistently beat Don (it was a "chase" game, and I'm good at fear). Eventually we returned to the hotel and proved that we're both pretty good at sleeping.



Tuesday August 26 was another first "last" and like the others a sad one. This time it was our last full day in Australia. I decided that if I was going to get my full masochistic pleasure out of this Beginning of an Even More Final End I should concentrate on the power of positive negativism. Fortunately the sky cooperated with my mood by intermittently raining on me. Don and I arose, ate, and moved from our hotel into the Hyatt Regency where all of the other North American fans (and many of the Australians) seemed to be arriving even as we stood around, many of them

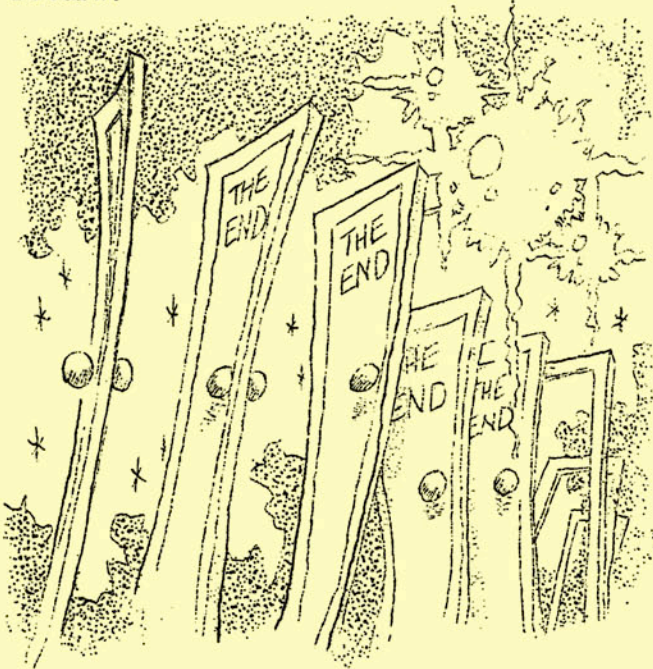


with digger hats which they'd acquired on their travels.

We bused to the harbor area and spent the morning on a walking tour of "The Rocks" which is the historic area of Sydney and then visited the "Opal Skymine" which is a mockup of an opal mine on the 15th or so floor of a skyscraper and is almost as silly as it sounds but the gems there did seem to be a bit cheaper than those at the forty-thousand or so previous opal shops we'd noticed so we broke down and bought some. After this our paths diverged: Don felt that with the limited time remaining in town the next thing to do was a detailed tour of the Opera House while I felt that a raid of every used book store within walking distance came first, so we split up and each had our own sort of fun. At the third and best store I encountered yet again the end of still another era: I stacked up the books I wanted, counted out the money I had left, and decided that I'd exceeded my limit and unless I could count on mugging someone or selling blood I had best put some of them back. Which I did.

Fortunately the Hyatt Regency bill, including my bar bill there, was on credit card so that when I got back and found Robin Johnson, Al Fitzpatrick, and Genie DiModica in the bar it took minimal hesitation before joining them, which pleasantly occupied an hour or so punctuated by the attendant's insistence that I remove my cap and everyone else their diggers' hats.

Ron Graham had invited visiting fans out to view his home and collection and a number of us took him up on it this evening, me included. I'd expected to be made envious but the intensity of the shade of green my liver turned surprised even me: not only does he have virtually everything any sf fan would want, many items in multiple copies and almost all in good to mint condition -- but he has it all bagged, catalogued, and cross-indexed. After drooling over treasures for an hour or so I understood why he seems to have not only an unlisted phone number but an unlisted address, as if I were ever to join a band of Donald Westlake characters planning a major caper I'd take Graham's collection over Fort Knox anytime. I willed my palms to stop sweating and went down to the lounge where I discovered that his refrigerator is in its own way as much a completist's as his library -- it seemed to hold every Australian beer I'd seen or heard of to date and a great many that were new to me, so I made the acquaintance of a couple of them and generally chatted until it was time to return.



There was of course a party that night. This was the Last Dangerous Dead Dingo party, or the last ledge to huddle onto on the mountain's side for the next 1300 miles, or the Middle of the Even More Final End, according to which metaphor you prefer (or find least obnoxious). At any rate we invaders knew that it was our last party in Australia which gave us the option of alternating between being sillier than usual and sadder than usual. As my contribution to the former, I vaguely remember singing "Waltzing Matilda" in two-part disharmony with A. Bertram Chandler, fortunately quietly enough so that only those in our immediate area (and of course ourselves) were amused. I spent a fair amount of time talking with Susan Wood and with Keith Curtis and

feeling that it was unfair that I'll have numerous future chances to do so with Susan but probably not with Keith. I finally sold part of Mike Glicksohn to John Langner, but John wanted and paid for only ten seconds worth and it seemed hardly worth breaking up the set. I discussed the Sidney Cove in '88 bid with Eric Lindsay, said discussion consisting mostly of me apologizing for not having the money left to join right away in spite of it being an obviously grand idea. I had all in all a great time feeling terrible; there's nothing that cheers us phlegmatic Scandanavian types up so much as a rousing round of depression -- unless it's alcohol, and there was some of that around too. Beating one's breast from the inside is an interesting physiological challenge but though it may strike one in retrospect as largely an amusing stunt, it can hurt quite a bit at the time. Still, as everyone knows, the pleasure of hurting oneself is that it feels so good when you stop -- and so I eventually got around to stopping and toddled off to bed.



Wednesday, August 27 was departure day. It had to happen, and it did.

As though to soften the blow, the Hyatt served us the worst breakfast I'd tried to eat in years -- everything came late, cold, and scaly, except for Robin Johnson who joined us and who may have been a bit late but was neither cold nor scaly so far as we could tell.

We joined the mob checking out of the hotel, made a last-minute souvenir run, and rather too soon found ourselves at the airport. Somebody, probably Susan, had again purchased and distributed flowers which we all affixed. The Australians who'd come to see us off traded last goodbyes with us and then passport check split us apart and we moved down the pipeline and they left. And we got on the plane and we left.

Air New Zealand once again pumped us full of orange juice and food and sprayed our daffodils to prevent disease (as nobody loves a sick flower) and pumped us full of more orange juice and food and set us down in Auckland. As we wended our way through customs we again discussed the possibility that this flight was just a hoax and we were really back in Sydney and the con was starting all over again. Or maybe we were in Los Angeles and IASFS had dipped into the building fund to hire actors to portray mundanes and lure us into NASFIC. Or maybe we were in a super-hoax and this was really Minneapolis and the year was 1973.

But it turned out to just be Auckland.

We passed through customs, were met and taken to our hotel, checked in, and went out wandering the nearby docks and slightly less nearby downtown of New Zealand's largest city, though as it was 9 or so at night by now and fleshpots proved few it was a rather aimless wander. We listened to stoplights buzz at us, watched the local bobbies, talked vaguely of a party without planning one. I returned to my room, broke out the beer I'd bought, and had a religious experience: in twelve dissipated years of swilling, New Zealand's Dominion Bitters turns out to be the best beer I'd ever encountered. Somewhat cheered by this realization that the Glaroon (or the Great Spider, or Whatever) was watching out for me even in New Zealand, I went to bed.




Thursday, August 28: Got up, breakfasted with Don B., Alan Frisbee, and Jackie Simpson, and went downtown to hit used bookstores. Just like Australia, except that I couldn't find any used bookstores. I did find a Scientologist, but Don and I scared him off by informing him that the people we most admired were respectively Wilson Tucker and the Great Spider and


that the ability I would most like to have is the ability to make Scientologists shut up and go away.

Speaking of going away, we returned to the hotel and were taken on a bus tour of Auckland. High points were the Anzac War Memorial Museum with a fine Maori display and an extinct volcano to which we tried to sacrifice a virgin but Tucker refused to jump. I used up a few more seconds of Glicksohn, ordering him to jump. He did, but not in the direction I'd suggested.

So we were all still alive when the tour ended, and so we all returned to the hotel (excluding Neil Rest, who'd jumped ship in Australia, and Ken Konkol, who'd gone straight home to the States the day before). Don and I wound up at a Chinese restaurant with Rusty, Tucker, Glicksohn, and Don (of Denver) Thompson and that didn't kill off any of us either. All being alive it seemed only natural to hold a party (the First Dead Kiwi Party?) to celebrate this but it didn't quite come off as planned and Don (of Minneapolis) Bailey and I eventually wound up instead hosting a card party in our room 308 (not prime) featuring such sinful activities as bridge, hearts, and oh hell ~~and bopping~~. The party broke up early when Gail Barton and Jackie Simpson had their room burglarized and some of us ran around trying to catch the thief which no one did. We folded everyone else's tents and slipped them away and slept in our own.

riday morning we spent trying to get the hotel dining room to serve us breakfast before Friday evening which we all finally did manage except for Frank Olynyk who was still waiting to be served when our bus pulled out (he caught a later one and caught up). Our bus took us through various scenic and/or historic sections of the North Island on our way to Rotorua, its Maori village, its geysers and its thermal pools and mud baths. (I offered to pour a bottle of Beam into one mud bath if Tucker would then drink it; he refused, but began to waver when I upped the ante to a case.) After watching the natural wonders perform their natural functions, we returned to the hotel where I skipped supper in favor of practicing drowning in comfort in its thermal pool. (Don B., Gail Barton, and Jackie Simpson all tried to teach me how to swim, with little luck. I have this uncontrollable reflex action when surrounded by large amounts of liquid: I try to drink it....)

After supper (dinner, if you prefer) and sinking practice, our group was bused to a Maori concert which proved one of the high spots of the New Zealand section of the trip even if it did run late enough to make our chances of beating the liquor store's closing time problematical...as it happened, some did and some didn't but those who did were the Washington fans who threw a Fifth Friday party for the group (a suggestion of a Sixth Sunday party to follow just over the dateline was hooted down). The booze hastily purchased unfortunately proved to be semi-undrinkable, which didn't stop us but did slow us down and encouraged us to break up around 1 a.m. (For those keeping score, this was the Second Dead Kiwi Party, or the First Lively Dead Kiwi Party, or the Beginning of the Absolutely Final End, or the last ledge before the first chasm. For those not keeping score, be warned that there will be a quiz.)

aturday, August 30, dawned foul and rainy and got worse. (Weather had been cold since we'd landed in N.Z. but now we were sure it was hinting for us to leave.) A trip to the Rotorua airport enabled those of us with any money left to fly over the sundry thermal wonders and the rest of us to settle for the thermal wonder of the heated airport coffee shop where Susan Wood displayed a postcard featuring a sickeningly cute crypto-Disney lambie-poo which she intended to send to a sheepphobe friend.

The next stop turned us all into sheepophobes as we entered a large barn-like building where we were to view allegedly trained sheep and a shearing exhibition (as Don B. noted, it would be nice to see someone else get clipped for a change). The trainer/shearer had "taught" his sheep where to stand by putting food dishes there and letting loose only one at a time and even then several made mistakes; while he displayed his wares he kept up a running patter managing in rapid succession to insult women, Orientals, and "long-haired youth." I wound up with a higher opinion of New Zealand's sheep than its people from him, and none too high a one of the sheep (as I genially remarked to Glicksohn later, why, I've met Canadians who were more intelligent than those sheep). (Speaking of Ugly Americans....)

Lunch, and off to the local trout hatchery -- I scribbled down in my notes that we were spending the day watching the sheep hatch and the fish get sheared. The rain hit full force early into the fishwatch and most of us were driven back to the souvenir shop. (Our tour guide kept assuring us at every stop that the shops would be open. Somehow we were never surprised.) Back to the bus and back to Auckland via a long drive in the rain with only last night's now-warm beer and still-foul wine to keep us going (that, and the bus). At Auckland we dropped one-third of our group off at the airport for their flight home -- Air New Zealand had overbooked, and the rest of us were given an extra day at their expense. For the rest of us, there were one evening and one day to go....

The evening was spent at another new hotel (our third in four days in New Zealand), miles from downtown, lacking thermal pool, requiring coat and tie in the bar. On the theory that anywhere else would be an improvement, Fred Patten, Bruce and Elayne Pelz, Don B. and I walked $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to the nearest pizza parlor, where we were eventually joined by twelve others of our diminished group, declared PizzaCon I, and created our program book.

The Pelzes held that evening's card party, from which Don B. enticed John Hartman and I into a round of Dungeon (thus it was that his special Australianized Dungeon got its try-out by three Americans in New Zealand). In spite of a promising beginning, in which John tried to mug and roll the White Rabbit for its gold watch, the descent was not a smashing success and it by then being 3 a.m. the only proper thing to do was to fall asleep. And sleep was a smashing success, even if it was a pretty mundane way to spend the last evening of the last full day that the last segment of our group was spending in the last city of the tour. Given all those "lasts," a more appropriate activity might have been sitting up waiting for the Last Trumpet.



Sunday, August 31st, was our (guess what) last day in (or at least on) New Zealand. Back in Australia things were presumably getting back to normal; ahead in the U.S. a NASFIC was winding down; there in Auckland the 35 or so remaining fen were also winding down if not precisely becoming normal.

What is there to do on a rainy Sunday afternoon in Auckland, New Zealand?

The best idea most of us could come up with was a trip back to the Anzac War Museum and after the Lundrys bullied the hotel into laying on extra limosine service for us we carried this out. I was fascinated with the astronomical exhibit which accepted the near-miss wandering star theory of the origin of our solar system as proven (at least they mentioned no other) and looked vaguely around for a phlogiston exhibit as well without luck. After a while, last night's hardcore pizza and marching society (Patten, the Pelzes, Don B. and I) decided to walk downtown instead of hunting up a bus and as possessor of the only near-map among them elected me leader; as I am the only person I know of

to ever have gotten lost in Audubon, Minn. (pop. 250) I thought this was quite an honor and quickly managed to lose all of us again -- a situation which Bruce Pelz spoiled when he flagged down a bus and browbeat the driver into telling us where we were and how to get where we wanted to be (which turned out to be by taking said bus).

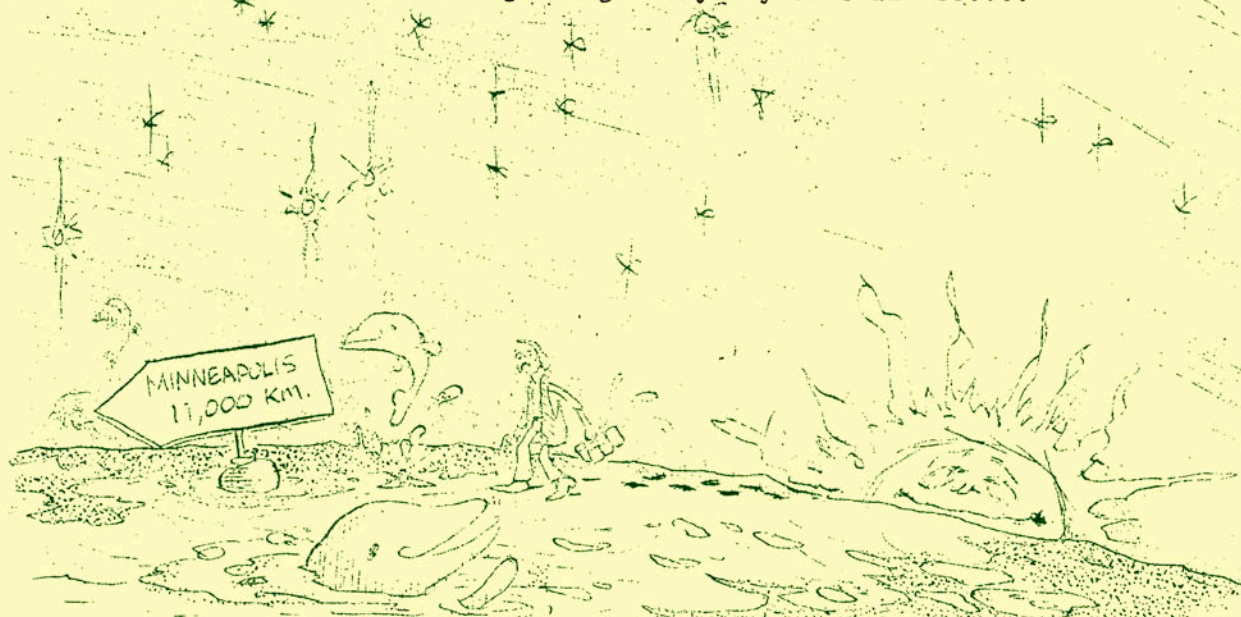
Back to the hotel, playing cards and staring at the rain and our luggage. Onto our airport bus and off to the airport, staring at the rain and our luggage. Onto the plane, luggage spirited away, staring at each other. No more "last" jokes, even within the privacy of my mind. It wasn't funny any longer.

Fannish things happened and fannish things were said on the trip back. Not even the details of everyone being exhausted and broke and a few of us being sick and some of us being depressed could prevent that. But the end was a foregone conclusion and the end was Los Angeles, customs, luggage checks, friends and relatives, sleep, returning to jobs and school and the rest of the real world we'd pretty much forgotten for three weeks. The usual copious quantities of orange juice and food couldn't make us forget that we were going away instead of going to, and that when the flight landed we'd have come from. And we did and it had and it was over. And if it were starting all over again tomorrow I'd be there smiling. So it goes. So it went.

ADDENDA:

There are any number of notes taken at the time but scratched through by me as I wrote this -- RENE doesn't need a never-ending epic serial, and more than enough is more than enough. And there are even more memories never quite put into notes and not put onto paper as I wrote this -- and they probably never will be now, but they're mostly nice memories anyway. There are plenty more people who should be mentioned and plenty mentioned who should have been mentioned more often. There are a number of folks whose names I've forgotten or never heard. There's a lot of people to whom I'm grateful, including everybody who voted for Aussiecon way back when...but special thanks surely ought to go (among the Americans) to Don and Grace Lundry, for running the trip so well that they by consequence became almost invisible in my report -- it's always easier to write about problems than about problems avoided -- and to Don Bailey, for being long-suffering; and (among the Australians) to Robin Johnson, for being so competently in charge of something which turned out so well worthwhile, and to Leigh Edmonds, Valma Brown, Al Fitzpatrick, and Meg Curtain, just for being. Thanks, everybody.

And just to get an early jump on the Start of the First Initial New Opening of the Beginning of the Next Beginning -- Sydney Cove in '88....



Lasting Value: Classicism and James Blish

by Reed Waller

Revisited:

The Issue at Hand, William Atheling, Jr. (Advent, 1964)

Essays from 1952-1960, in which "Atheling" (Blish) reviews current sf magazine stories, without mercy.

More Issues at Hand, William Atheling, Jr. (Advent, 1970)

Essays, speeches from 1957-1970. "Atheling" extends his scalpel to novels of Sturgeon, Heinlein, Budrys, A. Merritt, Aldiss and the New Wave, skewers Moskowitz, runs amok.

Those countless hordes of you who have long ago read and fondly remember these delightful books of watershed sf criticism don't need me to remind you how special they are still. But now that Blish is no longer with us (sadly done in by cancer, medical bills, and the ignominious job of Star Trek books) it seems like a good time to recall the Issues Still at Hand.

Those of you who have not yet had the fortune to read them, do so. It would be surprising if your enjoyment of sf, and literature in general, did not greatly increase -- quite aside from the enjoyment they themselves provide.

They are truly classic. (?)

* * *

Classic. Nice word. Has a kind of ring to it.

As a matter of fact, it has a kind of familiar ring to it. A survey of the local environment produces some examples of its usage: Doctor Isotope's Revenge, a classic sf novel by Figment Borngrime. Goody Three-Shoes, the long-lost classic tale of mutant girl scouts in post-holocaust Indiana, now back in publication as the latest in Avon's celebrated series of expensive Ace reprints. Potato Planet, a Byzantine sf Classic by D.E. Clegler, Ph.D. Seems to be a pattern here.

My American College Dictionary informs me that CLAS SIC (klas' ic), adj., means "1. of the first or highest class or rank. 2. serving as a standard, model, or guide." Sounds like the root word, then, is "class."

Common publisher-hype seems to indicate a belief that anything which is old and popular is classic, but the dictionary quite conspicuously fails to mention anything about either age or popularity. A potential classic cannot be voted in, nor can it merely age until it ripens. It should be definitive, the best or among the few best of its kind.

It should be not only a superior work, but one of lasting value.

It looks like we've solved a case of misuse. But wait a minute. My dictionary also says: "3. of or characteristic of Greek or Roman antiquity, esp. with reference to literature and art. 4. in the style of the ancient Greek or Roman literature or art; classical."

Classical. Now that really has a ring to it.

So where does "classical" appear in common parlance? The first phrase which comes to mind is "classical music," meaning, it would seem, anything which is old and unpopular. But that hardly corresponds with the matching dictionary definition.

More misuse? Of course; what people are usually talking about is classic music.

"Classical" is whatever is a product of classicism, which refers to those principles of art which emphasise form and the eternal. A classical work of literature is likely to have characters which represent types of humanity, in a formal situation dealing with a static, eternal human problem. This is opposed to a romantic work, where you have individual, sometimes even peculiar characters, reacting uniquely to an unpredictable, turbulent or hostile environment. The ever-changing balance between classicism, with its emphasis on form and technique and its intellectual bias, and romanticism, with its reliance upon emotional impact and its veneration of style and individualism, makes a good history of art all by itself.

If romanticism sounds more attractive to you, it's not surprising; romanticism has dominated the art scene for practically the last two hundred years, with sf a very good example. For all its claim to intellectualism, sf is mostly emotional stuff. It's not good ideas that make an sf story, it's new or clever ones, good or not. Not a careful, solid style but a flashy, imaginative one. And not so much a profound or eternal problem or situation as a colorful or surprising one. Sf is highly romantic art, and that's why it's fun and popular.

"Well then," you might say, "if classicism is so foreign to sf, then who needs it? I say it's spinach and I say to hell with it." But I say, "If a story is so crammed with cleverness, color, and imagination that it has no room left for something of personal relevance for me, then I say it's spinach and I say to hell with it." For a story to have merit as a story, let alone a classic one, it must contain both classical and romantic elements. The romantic element gives a story its identity, and the classical element gives it its meaning and its lasting value. But although no one today needs to be told that art is worthless without style and originality, it is a regrettable fact that many of us don't seem to quite realize that nothing is worthwhile without meaning.

Just as a description of romanticism resembles a description of the fire of youth, so might a checklist of its shortcomings be mistaken for an old man's denigration of "these damn kids today." These shortcomings are:

1. Technical incompetence and disregard for established principles of good craftsmanship;
2. Ignorance of past accomplishments of others, and inability to learn from them;
3. Excessive lust for novelty and amusement; and
4. Little or no concern for the future, other than as an object for scorn or a stage for fantasy.

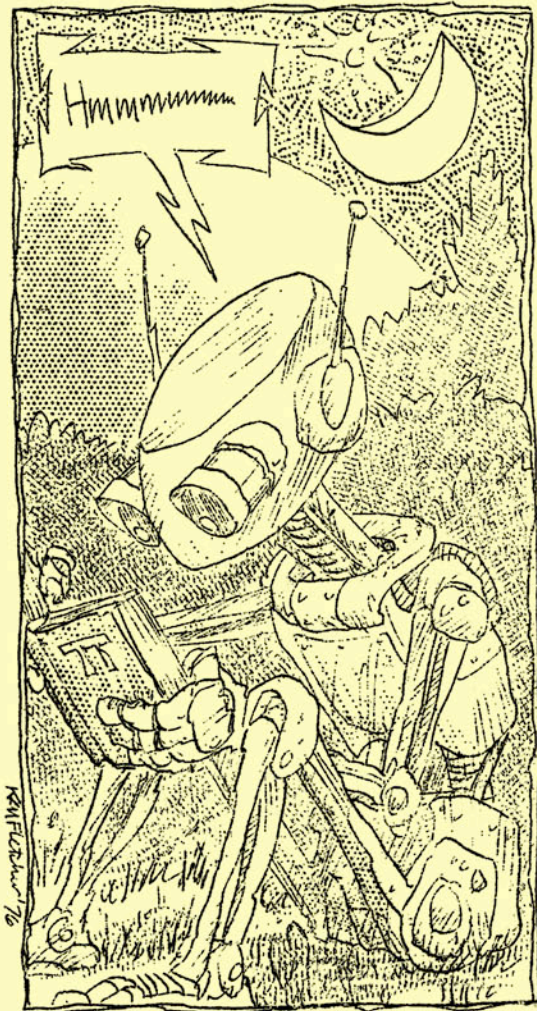
These shortcomings (although admittedly I've exaggerated them a bit) are

unremarkable inside a culture in which youth is exalted, enthusiasm is everything, and the old and the wisdoms of age and tradition are regarded with no more than a sneer. But if we sometimes feel that something meaningful is missing from our colorful lives, we are probably suffering from our own loss of belief in the importance of the human problem: the traditional questions, the classical principle, the eternal truth.

* * *

Neither "classic" ("I am versed in the classics.") nor "classical" ("I conforming to established taste or critical standards...") were terms unfamiliar to James Blish, whose knowledge and critical acumen in the art of belles lettres remain unsurpassed in the sf field to this day, and whose own literary skills compare favorably with those of such master craftsmen as Kornbluth, Aldiss, Sturgeon, and Bester. Blish was fully aware, when he began his "Atheling" essays in 1952, that the sf camp could very well produce classic works, and that there were at least two things he could do to encourage the production of such works.

First, he could try to write some himself. Given the examples of his Okie stories (later Cities in Flight) and his novella (and later novel) A Case of Conscience (If, Sept. 1953), many of us believe he succeeded. A Case of Conscience, especially, is a work of almost Greek depth and simplicity: the eternal question of the reality of Evil is not dwarfed by the technical vastness of the Future; instead it reappears, stronger and more immediate than ever, writ large upon the very stars themselves. Not for a paragraph can the reader tell himself that the novella's action does not concern him personally, not only as an individual but as a member of the human race.



The second thing Blish could do to help sf "grow up" would be to write criticism treating it like a grown-up -- a project which, at the time, only Damon Knight had been thick-skinned enough to attempt. This was asking for trouble from fans, in a day when sf was still a spoiled child, used to "criticism" only in the form of plot summary, sales hype, and mindless popularity polls.

The choice of pen-name, "William Atheling, Jr.," was no more accidental than anything else Blish ever did. "William Atheling" was the pen-name under which one of Blish's idols, the poet Ezra Pound, wrote his musical criticism. The name showed that Blish intended to write close criticism of the most rigorous and passionate sort, reflecting the same high ideal of craftsmanship that Pound (or for that matter Blish himself) was known for.

Not that Blish intended to be unreasonable. In the early Fifties cries were beginning to be heard begging for sf to be given some degree of acceptance as a "respectable" part of literature, just as classical fantasy had already enjoyed for centuries. Blish felt, as had Knight, that if that was what sf readers, writers, and

editors wanted, then they'd have to take their critical lumps like everyone else. The first thing to be considered about an sf story, he felt, was whether or not it could meet the minimum technical standards applicable to a story of any kind. This decision could not be made arbitrarily or by majority vote. The concern was not the moot one of talent or vision, but one of mere technical competence, a classical concern.

"This is the easiest of ((the critic's)) jobs, since it requires nothing of him but the knowledge that such standards exist (a notion which nevertheless will come as a shock to most professionals in science fiction today). For the few antibiotic-resistant cases who insist that science fiction is too aberrant a medium to be judged by the standards of other kinds of fiction, we can reply flatly and without much desire to be polite that we are not interested in any form of fiction which cuts itself off from human life and human values -- and those are the only values which make technical competence meaningful."

-- The Issue at Hand, pp. 8-9

His battle cry sounded, Blish let them have it. One thing that classical study made him more than commonly aware of, was that there is such a thing as writing which is just plain bad by any standards, and that sf of the day was full of it. -Cheap and pointless mannerisms such as "phony realism," in which detailed descriptions of cigarette smoking, eating, and irrelevant background details substitute for characterization and plot development. -Pointlessly purple prose, such as in Merritt's Conquest of the Moon Pool: "...And weird, weird beyond all telling was that exquisite head and bust floating there in air -- and beautiful, sinisterly beautiful beyond all telling, too. So even might Lilith, the serpent woman, have shown herself tempting Adam!" (Gak!) -What Damon Knight called "translations:" soap operas, detective stories, and most notoriously Westerns, dressed up with ray-pistols, space ships, and "smeerps" in place of six-shooters, horses and rabbits. -Agglutinations of what Sturgeon once called "said-bookisms:" "You bet, baby," he smiled peevishly. "Get out!" she hissed (Have you ever wondered how someone can hiss something with no S's in it?).

But Blish was not without kind words. His praise for a good job, or even a noble failure, would be more rewarding than the gushiest superlatives from a "critic" with no standards other than his own personal preferences. Never was a story, however bad, dismissed without full appreciation for whatever small value it did have; Blish saw his job as not merely to show the nauseating effects of bad writing, but to point out good writing wherever he found it, and he did find a lot. (His More Issues chapters on Ayjay Budrys and "The Many Loves of Theodore Sturgeon" are enthusiastic and joyful -- though not uncritical -- plaudits to the skills and perceptions of genuinely good and special writers.)

If there is a special quality to Blish's critical writings which sets them apart from the only other work in the field, Damon Knight's In Search of Wonder (Advent, 1967) it is Blish's charming, deceptively informal tone. It is less the sound of an authority educating you in the eternal verities than it is of a friend and confidant chatting with you about his current interest. But Blish was not the least bit casual about either his interest or his attention. In both his reading and writing he was carefully watching every word.

Some quotes from Issue:

Why Is Asimov So Disappointing? "The tone of 'The Currents of Space' justified any reader in expecting that in the last installment Asimov would at the very least rend the heavens in twain. The plot provided no such

encouragement, but the style did...and we are left wondering why this very workmanlike novel 'somehow' didn't satisfy us, why it 'let us down at the end.'" (Issue, pp. 28-9)

What's Wrong With One-Punch Stories? "...almost always an unholy bore in any kind of fiction, and I do not exempt from this stricture the biggest bore of them all, O. Henry. ...science fiction readers have had new ideas pulled out of the hat routinely since before 1928, and that 'new' gimmick that the young writer plans to wow us with will turn out, nine chances to one, to have appeared at least five times before." (p.37)

How Important Is Scientific Accuracy? Blish was already in the minority, and knew it, but that didn't weaken his position. "This respect ((for facts)) is fundamental to fiction, not just science fiction alone, but all fiction. Once the observed fact goes -- whether it's an observation of the breatheability of the atmosphere of Mars, or an observation on what a human being (not a child, a robot, or an imaginary alien) might do in a given situation -- the writer can no longer be trusted; he is not looking at the universe around him, but simply into his liver." (pp. 48-9) (But Blish grudgingly defers to Bradbury: "The story's the thing; Bradbury writes stories, and usually remarkable ones; he is of course a scientific blindworm, but in the face of such artistry, it's difficult to care." (p. 48))

Even from these brief quotes, the message is clear: a romantic literature needs a classical criticism. Blish was not demanding that sf "go classical;" his classicism was not antipathetic but strengthening. It's the old Two-Party System; the "Loyal Opposition," crying for future work to be not just better, but broader. Blish's observations on the current magazine stories and novels are not only still entertaining and informative, but through them he demonstrated the principles behind the writing and reading of good fiction in general, in such a way as to help establish a model, for those of us later to come, for the beginnings of a thorough criticism for sf.

That's right. They're "Classic." (1. & 2.)

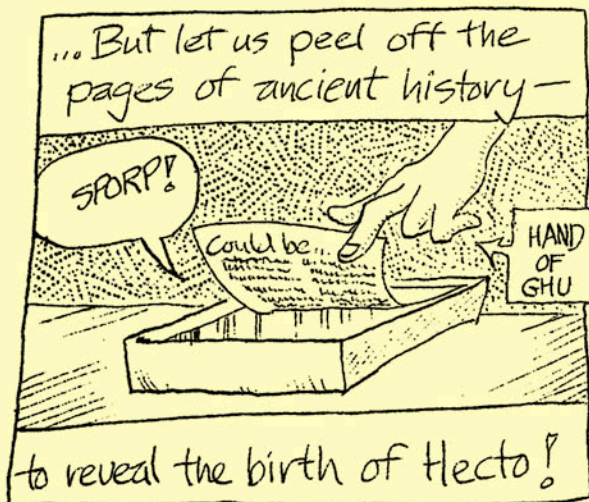
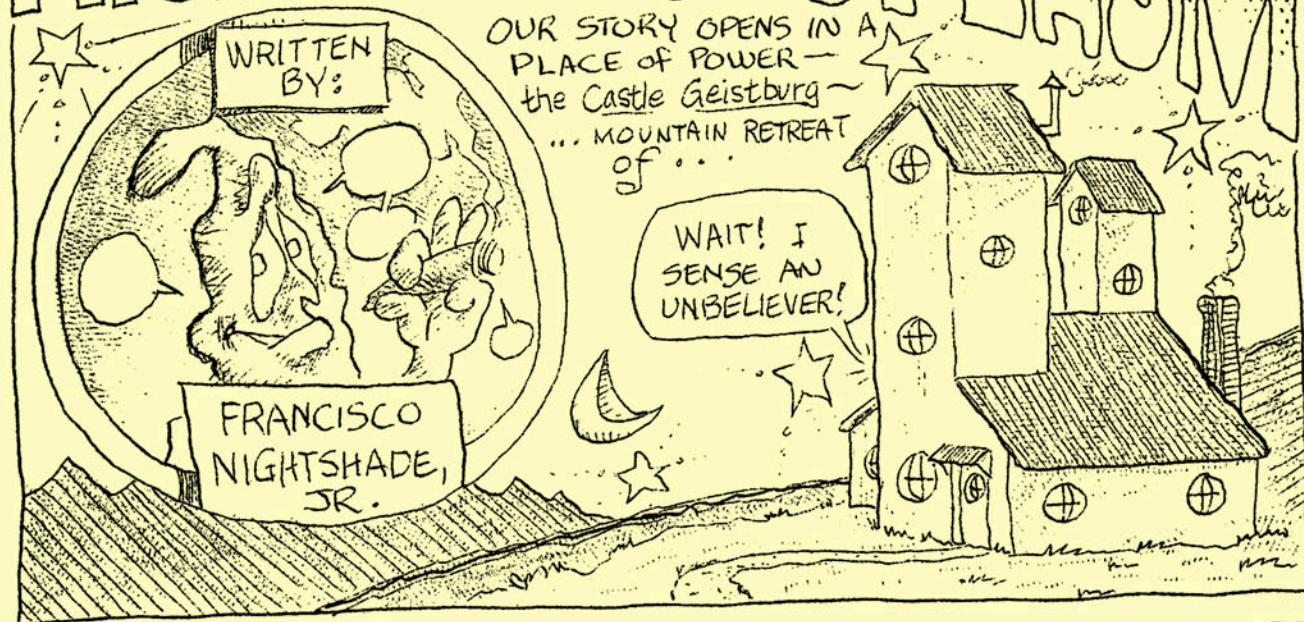
The essays still do what they were written to do: point the way toward an sf literature of lasting value. And if we do indeed want more sf to be classic work (which is not by any means a unanimous hope), then the Issues books are works of lasting value indeed -- educating us in those classical standards without which classic works cannot be produced or appreciated. Because if we want good books we have to demand good books, and we have to know them when we see them, and know when we don't see them -- in short, be critical. Demand that our literature be not merely clever, but actually about something.

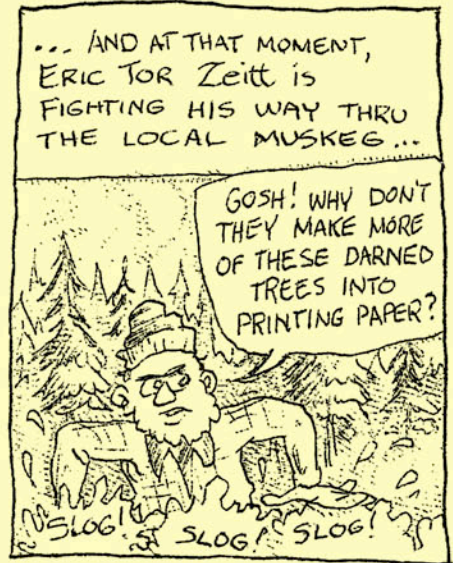
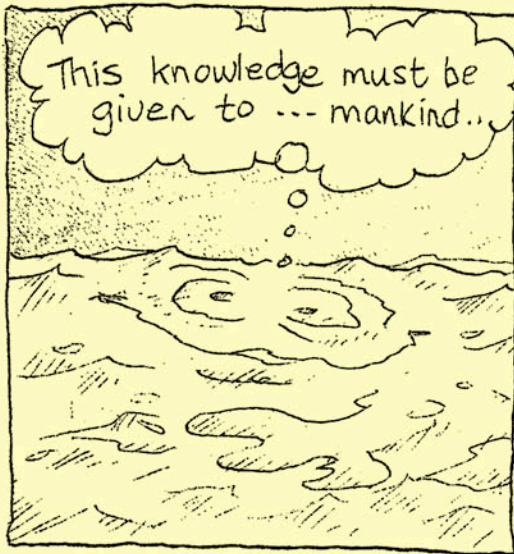
This need for more meaning in sf is a need which, thanks largely to the shoutings of Damon Knight and James Blish, is finally starting to be filled. And thanks to the slight increase in quality, sf is finally recognized as not merely a childish amusement, but also as a rather successful teaching tool.

Swell.

If this is enough, then we are already getting better writing than we deserve. But if it is not -- if sf really deserves a place in "grown-up" literature -- then we still need more criticism than we've got. And not just incestuous "New Criticism" ("The Influence of Spengler on the Early Fiction of A.E. van Vogt") or idiot dilettantism ("...really creative synthesis of Pinero and Shaw..."), but solid, stern, evaluative Old Criticism. And that takes more than enthusiasm. It takes knowledge, and classical knowledge at that. Knowledge enough to build on all that has gone before, and make real progress toward a classic literature -- a literature of the first class -- not just for fun, or just for now, but for all time.

TALES FROM THE HECTOPLASM

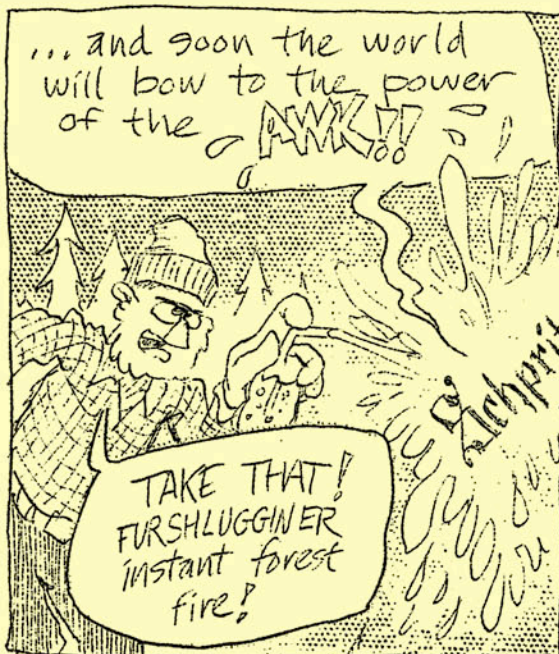




You, Eric Tor Zeitt, have been chosen to spread the Word Made Purple...

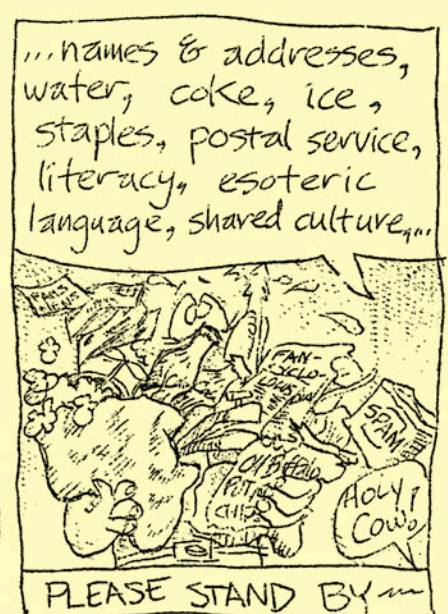


...to the unenlightened...





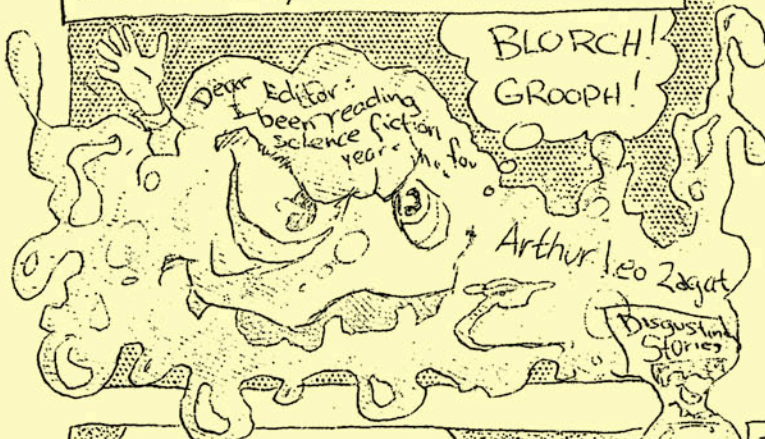
INTERMISSION



THE MIRACULOUS TRANSFORMATION TAKES PLACE!!!



The conglomeration of bizarre materials congeals to form a malevolent, conscious mass!



He's done it! ... called up the basic HECTOPLASM itself!



OOPS! what infernal blobbery is THIS!

The SPIRITMASTER—turned into multiple copies!



SCRIPTING & SCRATCHING for MINNEAPOLIS in 13 = R. Waller, K. Fletcher, S.J. Essay



BOOK REVIEWS

The Forever War, Joe Haldeman, Ballantine, 1976, \$1.50, 218 pages.

I mentioned this book in favorable terms several issues ago. Now that it is out in paperback, I'd like to reemphasize my recommendation. This is one you should read.

A man caught up in an interstellar war loses everything. When there is no faster-than-light travel, such a war must be fought at enormous distances of both space and time. Even if you return from the war, years will have passed while you traveled. William Mandella loses a thousand years while he travels and fights. He also loses a world and a lover.

You won't like this war, though. Some have called this book a reply to Heinlein's Starship Troopers, an opposing argument, a negation. I don't agree: the major difference is that Haldeman has successfully portrayed a seamier war than Heinlein was using. To me, either sort of war is possible.

Either way, this is a true picture of a war, and a true picture of the men and women who fight it. Haldeman's style is smooth, his story engrossing. This book should have won a Hugo -- that would have thrilled those of us who are fond of seeing Joe at the Minicon. We owe you one for this, Joe!

--- Dave Wixon

The Galactic Rejects, andrew j. offutt, Dell, 1974, 95¢, 158 pages.

One of these years andy offutt is going to write a decent novel. Understand now, this isn't that book. The primary flaw of this book is its juvenile rating, but it reads well and has some fairly decent ideas that young readers will enjoy.

It starts with the Earth-Azul war. Berneson (a teleporter), Rinegar (a psier) and Corisande (a telekinetic) are three human "rejects" being shipped home because their usefulness is ended. They share a lifeboat when their transport ship is shot by Azuli space cruisers, and set down on the planet Bor, a world akin to late nineteenth century earth. Afraid of being burned as

witches, the three join a traveling carnival and eventually become so successful that they break off and form their own troupe. Through this they learn tight control over their powers, which is crucial to the guerrilla warfare tactics they use once the Azuli land and make a base on Bor. These uses are not too surprising to seasoned sf readers, but a new fan might find them exciting.

offutt has obviously lent some thought to the book, for he has concocted a local language for the Boreans (a cow is a "worg," hay is "dalf," and so on) and evolved a proper name formula that is remindful of Burroughs' Mars books. The characters of Berneson, Rinegar and Corisande interplay fairly well, although offutt tends to blip over the one year they spend on Bor, which makes Corisande's growth and maturation appear too swift and awkward; the reader isn't very well prepared for it.

Galactic Rejects is a tightly written book. offutt shows that he can write an adventure-science fiction book that moves. And, he also coins a phrase that should be used by sfers the world over -- the martian slang that Berneson uses on page 111 to describe the Azuli: "The sparmy flainers!" In my mind, that belongs alongside "all fans are slans" and "Yngvi is a louse!"

-- John A. Purcell

The Twilight of Briareus, Richard Cowper, DAW #158, 1975, \$1.50, 208 pages.

The peculiar strain of rational mysticism which occasionally manifests itself in British SF here pops up once again. The theme of the book is also familiar to readers of British SF: one man's view of a worldwide disaster, and his struggle to remain civilized and all that....

The disaster in this case is the nova of a star near enough to earth to bombard it with energies sufficient to cause climatic changes. The plot is complicated by the sudden sterility of the human race, along with the appearance of semi-precognitive abilities in a small portion of the populace. Eventually, it begins to appear that these may be side-effects of a sort of invasion of the human soul by aliens.

The theory put forth is that there is a battle going on between the aliens and something else which may be the ancestral spirits or racial consciousness of mankind, for possession of humanity. The only proof of the theory lies in the climactic suicide which somehow, incomprehensibly, brings on a new golden age. Frankly, the idea is too unclear for one reading, and I'm not willing to try again right away.

The book is erudite but uninvolving: SF for speculators rather than spectators.

-- Dave Wixon

Total Eclipse, John Brunner, Doubleday, 1974, 187 pages.

This book is an enigma.

Its most obvious flaw is that it's outrageously padded. Each of the significant elements of the story might have been put without undue cramming into the framework of a novelette. Whole sections bear no relation to others. Something seems to be whispering "potboiler" into my left ear.

In view of this, it is puzzling to see that Brunner obviously put a huge amount of effort into the organization of the book on most levels. If one were to remove all the extranea, it might be a truly superior novelette. I can

almost see John scribbling endlessly into his notebook the involutions of logic necessary to make everything logically consistent. Something is whispering "notpotboiler" into my right ear.

And my right ear is always right. His padding may be a small mystery, but Mr. Brunner has very definitely written a superior novel: well-written, passable entertainment, pertinent message. He is very concerned about the blindness of the other fools. He sees the abyss the motorcade of the world is plunging into, and he is doing as much as humanly possible to halt the immolation of humanity. We, on the other hand, are content to sit back and enjoy what little we still have to enjoy in the little time we have left, hoping that if we ignore it long enough it will go away, pondering the nature of existence when one day soon there will be no more existence, when our combined effort might tip the scale in favor of a more permanent foothold in existence. So he sneers, rightfully. He lambastes the "let Frank do it" attitude by unsubtly telling us that Frank is busy.

From the climax -- the solving of the puzzle of the death of an alien race, which might be applied to the earthly situation, but unavoidably is not -- optimism wanes to absolute zero. We didn't make it. Damn. Typical, I gather, of Brunner.

But this is the way it might one day soon be, friends.

-- John Carl

Endless Voyage, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Ace 20660, 1975, \$1.25.

Exploring stories have long been popular in adventure fiction. The thrill of opening a new continent, or of discovering uncharted islands has stirred countless imaginations, and when science fiction developed into a separate field, it was not unnatural that the exploring story was extended to cover other planets and stellar systems. The thrill of discovery and conquest was still there, along with the new thrill of space travel and its attendant dangers.



This type of story has been around for some decades now, and each time one is written it becomes more difficult for the next writer attempting it to break new ground. One of the latest exploring stories is Marion Zimmer Bradley's new novel, Endless Voyage. The worlds in her galaxy-wide civilization are connected by a web of Transmitters which operate only within planetary magnetic fields, and which require a receiver to work. The job of the Explorers, who travel at near-lightspeed from star to star and never set down on an inhabited planet, is to brave the hardships of space and carry the first receivers to a new world. Within the framework of the traditional exploring-adventure story,

Bradley sets out to detail the Explorer's peculiar isolation from and dependence on the rest of society.

The Explorers are an isolated group for many reasons: they must undergo genetic surgery to survive the hard radiation of deep space; they must adopt, buy, or steal their children because of radiation-induced sterility; they become complete albinos after a few years in space; and, perhaps most important, they move at relativistic speeds, so a few years on ship between touchdowns is decades for the rest of the galaxy. All of these create an immense psychological gulf between the Explorers and the "ground-hogs." This gulf is one of the things which Bradley attempts to examine.

However, what Bradley attempts and what she accomplishes seem to be two different things. Her characters are not real enough to make it a problem of compelling interest. Even though a series of calamities befall the ship and decimate the crew, the real problem is the nearly complete isolation of the ship from civilization. A more cooperative atmosphere between the Explorers as a class and just one planet would solve many of the most serious problems. In fact, this is the solution that is finally arrived at in the end of the book, and it is brought about in part by the adventures of the central character, Gildoran, in the beginning chapters.

Still, one can hardly feel a great deal of concern for characters that are merely excuses for using quotation marks, and so, what could have been one of the subgenre's best books becomes just another adventure story with a reasonably good ecological puzzle in the middle. I have better things to spend my time on, like drinking beer on Saturday nights, and maybe reading The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.

-- Mark Digre

The Gray Prince, Jack Vance, Avon, 1975, \$1.25, 173 pages.

Vance's reputation as a dependably entertaining story-teller is upheld again. What he has produced here is an adventure story. The book is set on the planet Koryphon, and focuses on the conflicts between the native sentients and the human settlers, and within the two groups. Though outwardly a novel of political upheaval, personal conflict, and societal change, the book is really a sort of travelogue. It is an excuse for Vance to flourish his magic touch with alien worlds and creatures, which he manages always to make real, active and lively. If I could analogize this book to a movie, I would compare it to 2001: A Space Odyssey: fantastic camera work, so awesome as to make the plot seem secondary.

-- Dave Wixon

Caution! Inflammable!, Thomas N. Scortia, Doubleday, 1975, \$5.95.

This is a collection of short stories of the sort which has its entire point in the shock value of the last paragraph. Unfortunately, most of the endings are telegraphed. The book exudes tiredness, and feels amateurish.

-- Dave Wixon

The Hellhound Project, Ron Goulart, Doubleday, 1975, \$5.95, 156 pages.

It goes against this reviewer's tenets to judge a book by reference to the author's previous work; on the other hand, the most succinct way to convey the reality of this book to you is to say "another Goulart book." Goulart has developed a system for producing books which will at least sell, if not win awards. (I am tempted to call it the "Barnum System.") And he keeps using his

ideas over and over again -- in this book he has a character who stammers an entire word at a time; an identical stammer appeared in his last work (When the Sleeper Wakes, from DAW).

Goulart's name produces an image of his Barnum System stories, a series of wacky adventures full of eccentric androids, raunchy robots, and strange characters in such profusion that another reality is created. The Hellhound Project is not set in that reality, but retains many of the elements -- enough to be less than straight.

The story takes place sixty years from now, on an earth which is a jungle for the poor and powerless. Thad McIntosh, who had dropped out of the middle class, is recruited to impersonate Robert Walbrook, a wealthy industrialist who had been placed in suspended animation fifty years before. The Walbrook family, in collusion with the U.S. Government, is known to be working on a new weapon; Thad must find out what it is before it can be used against the opposition parties.

You can probably guess what a Hellhound is; it's nothing new. The story is really only a vehicle for the exhibition of a Goulart world, albeit a bit more subdued than usual. It's fast, lightweight reading, enjoyable but insubstantial.

-- Dave Wixon

Buy Jupiter and Other Stories, Isaac Asimov, Doubleday, 1975, \$5.95, 206 pages.

This is a collection of twenty-four very short stories, interconnected by autobiographical comment. Asimov explains that the similar collections Before the Golden Age and The Early Asimov form a sort of literary autobiography up to 1949, where this one takes off. The comments form a sketchy picture of the author's life and times, but their amusing qualities conceal a lack of depth. The same may be said for most of the fiction here, a collection of puns and shaggy dog stories. Only "Founding Father" stands out in sharp contrast to the rest, which are "gimmick" stories.

Asimov is an amusing, witty fellow, and this book entertains. However, it fails as an autobiography, except in the most superficial of senses.

I may be wrong. It may be that this really is the inner Asimov. But the feeling persists that I have only seen more of his amusing public face. But then, perhaps I have no right to expect more, and my concern should be literary alone. To that end, I can state that the book is full of entertainment and cleverness. This is not the Asimov of The Caves of Steel, but the party Asimov.

-- Dave Wixon

The Garments of Caan, Barrington J. Bayley, Doubleday, 1976, \$5.95, 189 pages.

Laying aside the temptation for the obvious puns, I must say that this is not really a very good novel. I cannot deny that Bayley has a certain amount of skill, or perhaps talent, but he certainly needs to learn his craft more thoroughly. And I would guess that he is not very familiar with the field of science fiction, as he seems to expect the reader to suspend disbelief far beyond reasonable bounds.

As the saying goes, belief should be suspended, not hung by the neck until dead. I am willing to "buy" plant intelligence, but Bayley does an inadequate job of selling me his brand of it, and in fact has his "miracle plant fibers" accomplishing feats which seem beyond even the unbelievable definition he has given us. I don't know if he's trying to be clever or mysterious, or just

trying to cheat by withholding his definition of the plant intelligence until the very last chapter, but by that time one really doesn't care anyway -- it's too late. Even the believable would be hard to take from him at that point.

Bayley does know that he should introduce devices well before they are needed instead of pulling them out of the air at a crucial moment, but he unfortunately doesn't justify their introduction very well. In fact, the only reason I can see for many of the actions of his characters is that Bayley needs to push them along in that direction so things will come together later in the way he already has planned. Nothing ever has that ring of inevitability that is so familiar in the writing of better authors.

Also, I am somewhat irritated by his habit of skipping recklessly from character to character and from scene to scene without so much as a tip of the hat toward their interrelation or importance. Certainly, all the plot threads come sloppily together at the end, but there is no sign in the early going that they will do so. Asimov will skip about with abandon, but he will convince you of the importance of everything that goes on -- Bayley simply assumes that you'll accept those jumps.

Barrington J. Bayley may have a future as a writer, but I wish I didn't have to read his apprentice work.

-- Fred Haskell

Missing Man, Katherine MacLean, Berkley, 1976, \$1.25.

Analog readers will probably remember with affection the sections of this book which, now revised, appeared there between 1968 and 1971. In fact, one of those sections, under the title "The Missing Man," won the author a Nebula. And the whole is definitely not less than the sum of the parts.

There are in fact several missing men in this novel, for missing persons are part of the job of the Rescue Squad of future New York City. That New York is a paradox of brownstones and walled enclaves, white collar workers and Arab gangs, festivities and terrorism. George Sanford grew up there and doesn't want to leave. But he is unable to pass exams or find a job, and may be forced to accept welfare -- for which he'll have to agree to relocation.

George is an amiable dimwit, but he has an unusual empathetic ability: he can psych himself into feeling the mind of another. Encouraged to use the talent, he ceases to suppress it. And he begins to grow, to locate himself intellectually.

This book is a minor work of art. It is a story of psychic powers, laid on top of a possible near future for our civilization. We get a series of enigmatic tidbits of a future history, and a glimpse of a community of mental adepts who take their image entirely too seriously. We get politico-philosophical argument, the raising of questions as to who is shaping our society, and to what ends -- questions we might be well-advised to consider today. But beyond all this, the character of George Sanford, and his growth, dominates the book.

George was an amiable dimwit, and MacLean loved him. So did I. There's always a sense of loss when a loved one grows up and walks off-stage. George wasn't Doc Savage: he couldn't stay exactly the same forever, nor has he solved every problem in view. But he's good people, and remains so in my mind.

-- Dave Wixon

CRUDZINE

Set the Controls for the Heart of the Fanzine!
A Column by David Emerson

This Issue, Presenting:



Announcer: THE STORY YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ IS TRUE. ONLY THE TYPEFACE HAS BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THE STENCIL.

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM!

Friday: This is The City. Los Fangeles. Eight thousand people live here. Some of them publish fanzines. I work in The City. My name's Friday.
((Pause)) I'm a cop.

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM DAAAH! ((Theme continues under.))

Sound: Office noises -- telephones ringing, chairs scuffling, low talking, papers shuffling.

Friday: Thursday, January 15, 1976. At 4:27 p.m., a call came in to the Fanzine Control Bureau, Division of Criminal Activities. I took it.

Sound: Theme out. Phone ringing nearby. Receiver being picked up.

Friday: Enforcement.....Yes.....Yes, ma'am.....What's the address, ma'am?.....We'll be right over, ma'am. ((Hangs up phone.))

Brannigan: What's up?

Friday: Routine complaint. Lady says she thought she saw a crudzine around. I told her we'd check it out. Get your hat.

Brannigan: Right.

Sound: Office noise fades. Theme, continuing under.

Friday: 4:51 p.m. We arrived at 8 Bozo Bus Plaza, the home of the caller, Mrs. Fred Haskell. Mrs. Haskell, a large framed, middle-aged Caucasian woman with medium-length brown hair, wire-rimmed glasses, and a walrus mustache, met us at the door.

Sound: Theme out. Doorbell. Door opening.

Friday: Mrs. Fred Haskell?

Fred: ((in falsetto)) Yes?

Friday: FCB officers, ma'am.

Fred: Oh, yes. Do come in.

Sound: Footsteps, door closing. Then footsteps and voices approaching.

Fred: ...you've come, officers. I wouldn't have called, except that my husband is so touchy about fanzines, and I thought, well, it never hurts to make sure. I mean, one can't be too careful these days, what with all those young hooligans and trekkies in the streets these days.

Brannigan: Yes, ma'am. That's what we're here for.

Fred: I never thought I'd live to see the day, though. A crudzine in this house.

Friday: Yes, ma'am. Want to tell us about it?

Fred: Yes. I was just sitting here in the study when Willis brought the mail in. Willis is the butler, you see--

Friday: Yes, ma'am.

Fred: Most of it was tradezines and letters of comment, of course, b--

Sound: TV click!

British housewife: --oody Bronowski knows everything.

2nd British housewife: Aow, oi wouldn't loik that. Take all the myst'ry out of loif.

Sound: Click!

Commercial voice: --can be yours at the luxurious Concord Motel, located near the very heart of beautiful downt--

Sound: Click! Static. Click! Audience laughter.

Talk-show host: ((lightly)) But seriously, folks, hahaha.....((barely audible comment from audience))...no-- no, keep your elephants.....((seriously)) But seriously now, really, our first-- our first ghost tonight.....we are proud to have with us here in the studio.....a man who was....directly responsible...for some of the...greatest.....crudzines ((laughter)).... of all time.....Fandom's own...GEORGE LEROY TIREBITER! ((Applause))

Sound: Click! Click! Click! Click!

Fred: ((in falsetto)) --en I dropped it on the coffee table and no one has seen it since.

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM!

Friday: 6:02 p.m. We started tracing the leads we'd gotten from Mrs. Haskell. The first was located on a back street in Canadatown.

Sound: Knocking. Door opening slightly.

Haybin: Who is it?

Friday: Mr. Haybin? Mr. Hatrick Haybin? We're FCB officers. We'd like to talk to you.

Haybin: Ya got nothin' on me, coppers. I'm clean.

Brannigan: It's all right, we just want to ask you a few questions.

Haybin: About what?

Friday: A few months ago, you filed for a Permit to Produce a Sub-Standard Fanzine....

Haybin: Oh, that. Yeah, I got a crudzine permit. Did this rag called ORODRUIN, a parody of THANGORODRIM. Used every cliché in the book -- lousy printing, bad corfluing, one page printed upside-down, crappy paper, terrible art badly stencilled, and the most obnoxious, juvenile editorial personality I could come up with. Pretty funny, if I do say so myself. Want to see a copy?

Friday: No thanks. We just want the facts.

Haybin: Such as?

Friday: How'd you get such bad repro?

Haybin: That's my secret, copper.

Brannigan: Come on Haybin, we know you've got underworld contacts. Make it easy on yourself. Who's your printer?

Haybin: I don't have to tell you that. I know my rights. I got my permit and it's all legit. Ya got nothin' on me.

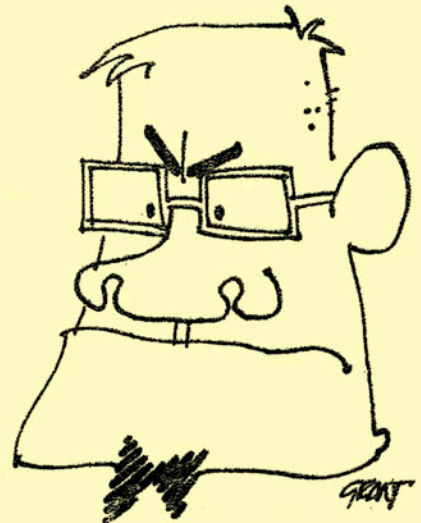
Friday: Okay, Haybin, if that's the way you want to play it. Just one thing.

Haybin: What's that?

Friday: Don't gafiate.

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM! DUM, DAH-DUM DUM DAAAH!

Sound: Change in background and sound quality,

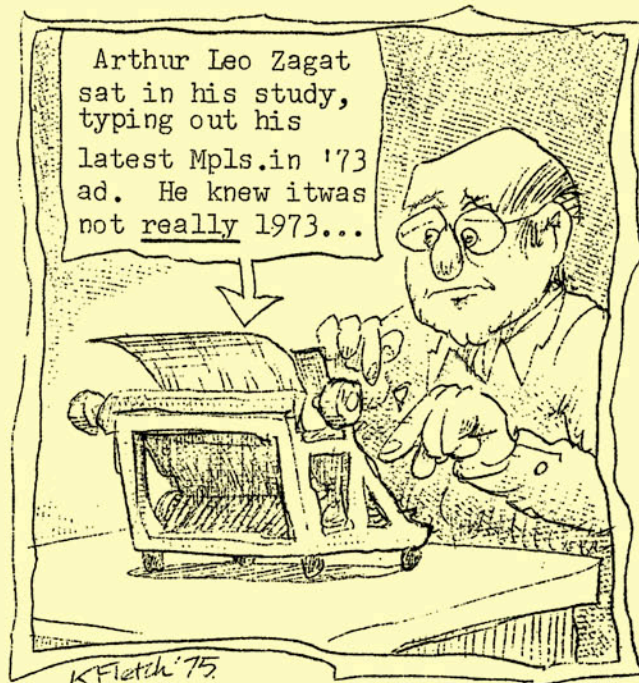


from film to videotape.

Don: BUY Star Trek blueprints at
Uncle--

Sound: Click!

Classroom instructor: --ember from
Lesson 12 last week. Let's go over
those points once again. First,
correct use of corflu. Step 1,
remove the pliofilm covering from
the stencil. Step 2, burnish the
incorrect area with a blunt object
such as the back end of a stylus.
Step 3, lift the stencil away from
the backing sheet. Step 4, apply
corflu. Step 5, let it dry
thoroughly. Step 6, replace
pliofilm and type in the correct
text. Also remember ((sound of
a page of a flip chart being turned
over)) to use a typing plate for crisp letters, pliofilm to keep the wax
off your typer and to avoid punched-out o's, and a backing sheet of
contrasting color so you can see what you're doing. We'll be back with the
next lesson of "Introductory Mimeography" after this message.



Announcer: Tired of being a well-paid computer programmer? Want to get out of the rat race of going to work every day and spending lots of money? Do you dream of leaving your luxury high-rise behind forever and living in a tenement? Now, for a limited time only, YOU can join the hundreds of STARVING MUSICIANS already unemployed here in Fannsville. Enjoy the thrill of wondering where your next meal is coming from! Learn to play creditors off against each other! Experience that magic moment when your amp blows all its tubes five minutes before your first gig! All this and more! Plus, you'll have plenty of time for fanac! Apply now and get our free booklet, TWELVE KEYS TO PRODUCTIVE POVERTY. For details, write to the Bucklin Vocational Institute, Box 1281, Fannsville, Ohio, 43210.

Staff announcer: This has been a Public Surplus Message brought to you by
KFAN-TV.

Instructor: Welcome back. This time, we're going to see what happens when a faned doesn't apply the lessons we've learned in this course. ((Aside)) (Are we ready?) Okay, here's the story of a crudzine editor and what happened to him. ((Pause.)) (Is it rolling, Bob?)

Music: Movie theme, starting suddenly in the middle of a note and slurring from slow to full speed.

Narrator: Educational Films, Incorporated, in conjunction with --

Sound: TV Click! Click! Click! Click! Click!

Talk-show host: -- other ways to acheive that true crud effect, am I right?

Tirebiter: Oh, sure, Jack. There's practically an unlimited number of ways. You can even have perfect repro and immaculate grammar and still produce a rag, if your content's bad enough. It makes or breaks a fanzine. You know

that HYPHEN was not known for its, uh, visual impact, shall we say, haha, but it had great stuff in it. A lot of people think it was the finest fanzine of all time. On the other hand, not even offset's going to save genuine crud.

Jack: You mean, the visual aspect is entirely unimportant?

Tirebiter: Oh, no, of course not. Nothing's ever that cut and dried. You gotta have some minimal readability or you'll turn the readers right off. They won't look twice at it. And even in a good zine, certain things can be detrimental.

Jack: What sort of things, George?

Tirebiter: Oh.....things like cramped layout; you know, not enough margins, text crowded around the art too tightly. Makes you feel claustrophobic, like you can't breathe. Or copy that runs off the bottom of the page. Another thing is continuations. Some faneds, I don't entirely agree with this, some faneds insist on never having continuations. Gotta have everything end at the bottom of a page, or at least fill up the rest of the a page with some art or something. That's neither here nor there, really, just personal taste, you know? But a real sign of crud is a forward-jump. That's when the continuation, or "jump" if you want to use the technical term, appears before the beginning of the article that it's continuing. No real excuse for that; it's just fuggheadedness. The faned ain't got it together enough to plan the layout before he starts typing stencils.

Jack: Would you say, then, that fuggheadedness is the key to it all?

Tirebiter: ((Pause)) Yeah; yeah, that's pretty much it. That, and not caring. You can be real sloppy if you don't much care about your zine. But if you don't care, why put it out at all?

Jack: A while back, you said that offset wouldn't save genuine crud. Can you give us an idea of what you mean by "genuine crud"?

Tirebiter: Well, hell, Jack, there's so much of it around, I'm surprised you even have to ask. ((Audience laughter)) But -- let's see -- well, amateur fiction would be one thing; most of that's pretty putrid. Especially the kind that re-does a trite theme for the umpteenth time without doing anything new with it. Raygun and spaceship stuff, for sure. Then there's book reviews that rattle on and on giving a run-down of the plot and never say anything about it other than "I liked it" or "I didn't like it." Ummmmmm.... Anything boring.

Jack: Sounds like it's easier to say what it isn't.

Tirebiter: Right, right. It's a negative thing. It's a lack of something. Lack of taste, lack of creativity, lack of talent, lack of knowledge about your subject, uh, and most of all, lack of anything to say. Being boring is just not being interesting. Nothing to say. Not that--

Jack: Excuse me, George, but we've got to break for a commercial just now. We'll be back with crudzine expert George Leroy Tirebiter after this word from Bassett Furni--

Sound: Click! Click! Click! Click! Office noises.

Brannigan: --esting.

Friday: What's that?

Brannigan: The Haskell dame. She's got a record herself.

Friday: Yeah?

Brannigan: Yeah. Convicted of second-degree crud for a zine named COMM'L,
back in sixty-f--

Sound: Click!

Upper-class British voice: Dear Sir: I object most strongly to previous
sketch. Not only was there no trace of humor or plot, but there were no
decent lines about albatrosses. And what about the Negro Question?
Sincerely, Brigadier General Dennis Bludnock (Deceased).

British announcer: And now, for something completely different. A man with a
Gestetner up his nose.

Sound: Ker-THUNK! Ker-THUNK! Ker-THUNK! Aaa-CHOOO! TV Click! Click!

Boy: Gee, Constable Rotary, wait till you hear about the award we're gonna win!

Rotary: Not with that zine, sonny.

Boy: Huh?!

Rotary: You're Wayne Jones, aren't you?

Wayne: Yes, sir. With two esses in "Joness". It's more science-fictional that
way.

Rotary: Let me give you a piece of advice, son. Don't mail your zine out. Put
it away in a drawer somewhere and take it out to look at it in a few years.

Wayne: ((Close to tears)) But why?

Rotary: Well, son, I know you're sincere, and I admire your enthusiasm. As a
matter of fact, when I was your age I wanted to publish a fanzine, too.
But frankly, son, you've just published a crudzine.

Wayne: ((Shocked)) Gol-lee!

Rotary: Oh, it's all right. I won't tell anybody. It'll be our secret, just
between you and me. And maybe someday, if you keep trying ((inspiring
music begins, under)) you'll produce a zine that Fandom will accept as
good. And then you'll produce a better one, and then one better than that,
((music swells)) and they'll keep getting better and better, until all the
great BNFs admire you, and you'll have the finest writers and artists
wanting to be published in your zine. And then you will get an award.
((Music at its gushy height)) And you will be.....a Trufan!

Wayne: ((Enthusiastic once more)) Wow!

Rotary: Now run along and study your English composition, son.

Wayne: Yes sir! Gee, thanks, sir!

Narrator: ((As music approaches a dramatic ending)) This has been a production of Educational Films, Incor--

Friday: All right, hold it right there! ((Music cuts off suddenly.))

Rotary: What? What what what what what? Who are you? What are you doing on this channel?

Friday: Friday, FCB Enforcement.

Rotary: Oh! Oh, terribly sorry, I didn't know--

Friday: You Jones?

Wayne: ((Frightened)) Yes, sir.

Friday: You publish this? ((Rustle of paper.))

Wayne: Y-yes, sir. You aren't gonna do nothin', are you? Constable Rotary said it was all right if I didn't send it out.

Friday: No, we won't do anything. We just want to know where you got the idea to do this.

Brannigan: Did somebody tell you to publish a fanzine like this? Somebody encourage you?

Wayne: N-no, sir!

Friday: You got the idea all on your own?

Wayne: Well, almost. My uncle showed me his fanzine and I thought it was real neat.

Friday: Your uncle?

Wayne: Yes, sir, my Uncle Garth. He lives in Canadatown.

Brannigan: Check!

Friday: Check!

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM!

Friday: ((Over march-like theme)) 10:43 a.m. As soon as we radioed in to the Bureau, an APB was sent out on Garth Danielson, using the description we'd gotten from the boy. 10:56 a.m. We arrived at the Danielson home with two squad cars. Two more arrived at the back and side of the house.

Sound: Sirens, ending as the sound of tires screeching is heard. Car doors opening and slamming.

Friday: ((Through bullhorn)) Danielson! This is the FCB! We've got the house surrounded! Come out with your hands up!

Sound: Gunshot. Several gunshots in rapid succession. Silence.

Friday: ((Normal voice)) Let's go, men.

Sound: They break down the door, stumble into the house.

Friday: Drop it, Danielson!

Sound: Gun drops on floor.

Danielson: How'd you find me? I thought I was covered.

Friday: You were. But your cover was the only good thing about your zine.

Danielson: But how-- ?

Brannigan: You made a fatal mistake, Danielson. Your kind always does.

Friday: You printed on the backs of crud sheets and scratch paper. We spotted it a mile away.

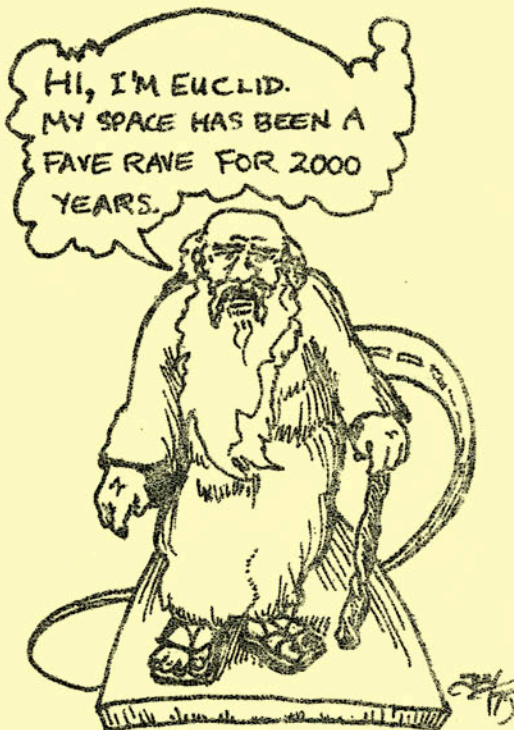
Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM!

Friday: All right, let's go, Mister.

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM DAAAAH!

Announcer: On January 22nd, the suspect Garth Danielson was arraigned in Los Fangeles Criminal Court. He was tried on February 9th for fourteen counts of first-degree crud, seventeen counts of illegible repro, and possession of an unlawful mimeograph. In a moment, the results of that trial.

* * *



The Crudzines: "ORODRUIN 46" by "Hatricks Haybin" came with Bob Webber's PANTEKHNICON 0 (see Personalzines), so I assume it's Bob's doing. THE OUTER LIMITS #2 (Wayne Jones, 1021 Halliahurst Ave, Vinton VA 24179; 35¢) is extremely neoish, containing terrible art, two pieces of atrocious fiction, confused layout, and a picture of Mister Spock. Two good things I can say about it, though: whoever is hand-stenciling the artwork is giving it a good try with shading plates; and all those responsible for the zine certainly have enthusiasm. Too bad the quality is so low. BOOWATT #1,2,3 (Garth Danielson, 616-415 Edison Ave, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2G 0M3, Canada; 25¢) is a monthly version of the earlier BOOWATT WEEKLY, and is not much different. Although he's managed to get some artwork, Garth's content, grammar, spelling, repro, and choice of paper are still as abysmal as before. Finally, there's COMM'L (Fred Haskell, 3450 Zarthan Ave, St. Louis Park MN 55416; 20¢ or the usual; no longer published), which had several disgusting issues back in 1964.

Clubzines: THE BCSFA NEWSLETTER #29,30,31 (BCSFA, PO Box 35577, Vancouver, B.C. V6M 4G9, Canada; ed. by Fran Skene; free to members (associate memberships are available)) is basically an intra-club newsletter, with club news, announcements, some reviews, miscellany. BSFAN (Mike Kurman, 2434-304 Chetwood Circle,

Timonium MD 21093; 20¢ in stamps (might be 24¢ by now) or the usual) is the zine of the Baltimore group; lively and readable, with a host of short con reports and other articles. ☐☐ DWARF #2,6 (KaCSFFS, 508 W. 75th St, Kansas City MO 64114; ed. by Sarah Sue Wilde and Joe Rhoads; membership or the usual) reflects the usual craziness of the Kansas City Krew. The star of these two issues is "The Clue of the Candlestick in the Conservatory", John Taylor's answer to Dungeon game descriptions. It appears in the issue which bears no number; neither of them are dated, making it hard to figure out what the number should be. ☐☐ KOIWR #3 (HOPSFA, SAC Offices, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore MD 21210; ed. by Tim Daniels; 6/\$1.50 or membership) is the zine of the Amber Society, a club of fantasy (not just Zelazny) enthusiasts; the zine is a little clumsily put together but could be of interest to fantasy fans. ☐☐ NTT WIT #1,2 (OSFiC, c/o Bakka, 282 Queen St. West, Toronto, Ont. M5V 2A1, Canada; ed. by Michael Harper; membership or the usual) is the new Ontario clubzine, replacing SYNAPSE after a shuffling of positions within OSFiC; usual newsletter stuff. ☐☐ NOCRES #3 (Cat Ocel, 343 E. 19th St, Apt 6B, Minneapolis MN 55404; 30¢) is the special Poor Taste issue, complete with feelthy peectures (snigger, snigger). ☐☐ SHADOW #48-51 (Eric Larsen, Box 16369, NCSU, Raleigh NC 27607; 35¢ or trade) contains locs, reviews, and (wince) fiction. ☐☐ SYNAPSE #12 (Taral Wayne MacDonald, 1284 York Mills Rd, Apt 410, Don Mills, Ont. M3A 1Z2, Canada; \$1 or the usual) is more Taral's personalzine than a clubzine. This is the final issue, coming after #13, explaining the events leading to its (and Taral's) termination. Taral has plans for other fanac, though.

Newszines: KARASS (Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave, Prospect Park PA 19076; the usual, one-for-one trade, news, or 3/\$1) and LOCUS (Charlie & Dena Brown, Box 3938, San Francisco CA 94119; 50¢ or 15/\$6) are both required reading. They overlap somewhat, but the former emphasizes fandom and the latter is more concerned with the professional side of science fiction.

Personalzines: BROWNIAN MOTION #5 (Brian Earl Brown, 55521 Elder Rd, Mishawaka IN 46544; the usual or five 10¢ stamps) looks like a genzine -- it's 42 pages, after all -- but everything but the lettercol is editor-written: articles, reviews of this and that, and a marvelous Lafferty pastiche. ☐☐ DON-O-SAUR #43 (Don C. Thompson, 7498 Canosa Court, Westminster CO 80030; the usual) is another fat one, taken up as it is by 29 pages of Aussiecon report and 16 pages of an article on the fanzine PHANTASMAGORIA. I can't see why Don was nominated for fanwriter Hugo and won the fanwriter FAAn award; I find his writing dull and flat, even though it is competent. ☐☐ DORK-PIZZLE #3,4,5 (C.E. Bennett, Box 8502, Portland OR 97207; 50¢ or maybe the usual) changed from the tiny format to regular-sized, and looks a lot better now. I'm actually beginning to like DP -- is there something wrong with me? It's a good example of what I mean by "graphics and layout should be attractive but not obtrusive"; it's offset but still friendly. ☐☐ DYNATRON #63,64 (Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Rd NW, Albuquerque NM 87107; 35¢ or trade) marks Roytac's 15th year of fan publishing. Let's hope for 15 more years of this entertaining and witty writing. ☐☐ MIDNIGHT RAMBLINGS #8 (Wayne Martin, 4623 E. Inyo, Apt. E, Fresno CA 93702; 25¢, response to E-STAR-IAN EXPLORER, or membership in APA-50) is an apazine with some personal nattering. ☐☐ NEW DIRECTIONS #24 (Mike Bailey, PO Box 48563 Station Bentall, Vancouver BC V7X 1A3, Canada) is the latest in a series of Mad Dog Publications with constantly-changing titles. Contents are nothing to get excited about. ☐☐ PANTEKHNIKON #0 (Bob Webber, 20 Graydon Hall Dr, Apt 204, Don Mills, Ont. M3A 2Z9; \$1 or the usual) is the second tryout issue (there was a #-1); one wonders when he'll be satisfied enough to start numbering from +1. This issue seems satisfactory to me. ☐☐ THE ROGUE RAVEN (Frank Denton, 14654 8th Ave SW, Seattle WA 98166; sub price uncertain) hasn't been seen since the postal increase; issues 15 through 20 are in hand, and are just as enjoyable as the previous 14. ☐☐ SCUZMOTHERE #3 (Gary Hubbard, 22215 Kinyon, Bldg 9, Taylor MI 48180; 8/\$1 or the usual) is published so Gary doesn't have to find other



fanzines to run his column, "The Cracked Eye." This issue contains an account of Gary's ramblings around Toronto. His writing is always interesting. Good lettercol, too. ¶¶ TANDSTIKKERZEITUNG #9 (Don Markstein, PO Box 53112, New Orleans LA 70153; 50¢ or the usual) is the fanzine of cigar roaches. Contains Don's tales of running a porno theater, and an indescribable piece by the indescribable Faruk Von Turk. ¶¶ THANGORODRIM #25 (Patrick Hayden, 206 St. George St, Toronto, Ont, M5R 2N6, Canada; 25¢ or the usual) proclaims itself: "This is metaphysically absurd, man!" Contains letters and fanzine reviews. ¶¶ TREPONEMA PALLIDUM #6 (Rich Bartucci, Box 369, KCCOM, 2105 Independence Ave, Kansas City MO 64124;

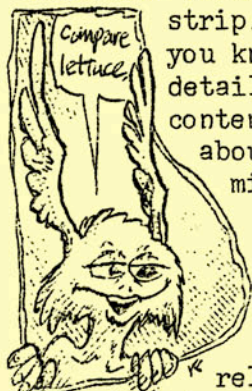
25¢ or "trades, LoCs, dancing girls, performing centipedes -- whatever you can cram into the envelope") is, besides everyone's favorite pathogen, a prime example of the boziness Rich displays frequently in the RUNE lettercolumn. ¶¶ WONDER GAB #20,21 (Lester Boutillier, somewhere in New Orleans; for George) is an apazine -- "George" is the name of the apa -- containing little of interest unless you're an apa member or resident of the N.O. area.

Aussiezines: Two items here. First, issues 17 and 18 of CHAO, from John Alderson, Havelock, Vic. 3465: \$1.25 or the usual. This zine tends to be sercon, with articles (footnoted) on art, language, and sometimes science fiction. But there's also reviews, locs, and an article on Ozcon. John's typer doesn't handle stencils too well; neither does his brand of corflu. I wish he'd put in more about his personal life, living as he does in sheep country, but I suppose he prints what he wants. ¶¶ Next up is GEGENSHEIN #23 and GEGENSHEIN REVIEW #25 (24 was before 23) from Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Ave, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776; 80¢ or the usual. Reviews and discussion-letters. GR may be a personalzine soon.

British zines: We got a year-old EGG from Peter Roberts (6 Westbourne Park Villas, London W2; for the usual, but net cash) in response to the RUNE we sent him. This delicacy is nice and white, well-rounded and smooth, if a little cracked. From the remarkable cover by Gray & Pat Charnock to the Great Science Fiction About Pigs, EGG serves up a tasty treat. The yolk of this issue is a reprint of a flyer published by the infamous Claude Degler's organization, the Cosmic Circle; it is surrounded by Peter's article on the same. John Brosnan's column has a dull taste (maybe that's just British humour that we Yanks can't possibly hope to understand), but it's not a bad EGG. Parts of it are excellent. ¶¶ FANZINE FANATIQUE #12,14 (Keith Walker, 2 Daisy Bank, Quernmore Rd, Lancaster, Lancs.; 10p or the usual) continues the much-needed coverage of the British fanzine scene with lots of reviews and an occasional article about the production of fanzines. ¶¶ Then there are INFERNO #9 (Paul and Cas Skelton, 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5NW; probably for the usual) and KNOCKERS FROM NEPTUNE #2 (not a device for removing stones from throats' nostrils) (Mike and Pat Meara, 61 Borrowash Rd, Spondon, Derby DE2 7QH; \$1 or the usual). Some say the latter was inspired by the former. They are both personalzines, both fun to read; KfN, like Crackerjacks, has a surprise in the middle. Both of these zines make one want to meet the editors, sit down, have a drink, and chat for an evening. I hope they make it to Orlando in '77, where they can bid on England in '79 and explain Monty Python to us.

Genzines: ALTAIR #1 (Terry Whittier, 3809 Meramonte Way, North Highlands CA 95660; 50¢ or the usual): in a way, a continuation of SF:38. Small size and offset, it contains fanzine reviews, profiles of a couple of fan organizations, a column of odds and ends by Donn Brazier, and a nice lettercol. The con report by Tom Digby is interesting and unusual. ¶¶ DIEHARD #7 (Tony Cvetko, 29415 Parkwood Drive, Wickliffe OH 44092; 60¢ or the usual): the usual D'Amassa

article, the usual art, the usual letters; also a Mae Strelkov article and a cover by Taral Wayne MacDonald. ☐☐ THE E-STAR-IAN EXPLORER #3 (Wayne W. Martin, 4623 Inyo, Apt E, Fresno CA 93702; 25¢ or the usual): yet another Don D'Amassa article, a Jodie Offutt article, letters, and a piece called "A Totally Unreal Completely Made-up Fannish Correspondence" that should have been titled "A Totally Pointless Completely Unfunny Fannish Correspondence." ☐☐ GUARD THE NORTH October 1975 (Daniel Say, Box 65583, Vancouver B.C. V5N 5K5, Canada; some amount of money, or the usual): two pages of letters, one page of anti-Vancouver-for-Westercon ranting, and 20 pages of reviews. Can you stand it? ☐☐ GUNPUTTY #1 (Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, FL 32925; "A quarter or two, or the equivalent in US stamps" or the usual): a very British fannish zine. Lots of dry humor; it's a wonder how Sam can talk with his tongue stuck permanently in his cheek like that. Lots of material by Sam including several con reports; humorous material by other people; letters on the final issue of Sam's QWERTYUIOP; and a fannish skit based on The Wizard of Oz, which was performed at the 1974 British Eastercon, TYNECON. Also an insert consisting of four pages of photomontage of the 1975 Eastercon, SEACON. Amusing and often edifying. Where else would you learn how to hunt minces and haggises? ☐☐ KNIGHTS #14 (Mike Bracken, 3918 N. 30th, Tacoma WA 98407; \$1 or the usual): no longer a crudzine. The star of the issue is Al Sirois with three pieces: the cover, a wraparound that shows a lot of Wally Wood influence; a comic-strip interview with Don D'Amassa (he gets around); and another very funny fannish strip. Phil Foglio is close behind, with the inside front cover ("Now you know why we ask you not to kick the spaceships") and a strip detailing the problem of ego-mania among fanartists. The written contents are mediocre and include neo-pro C.L. Grant's soapbox tirade about SFWA. Mike tries hard with his layout but sometimes bombs miserably, such as putting an illo sideways. One article is either a failed attempt at typesetting or was electrostencilled from some uncredited source. A zine of very uneven quality.



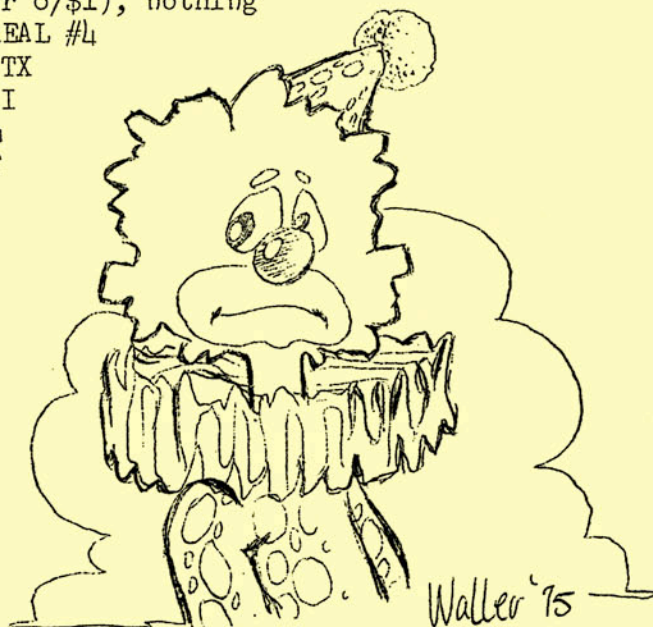
MYTHOLOGIES #7 (Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Drive, East Providence RI 02914; 75¢ or the usual): a couple or three light pieces relieve the seriousness this issue, but the zine as a whole centers around Don's serious articles and the letterhacks' replies to them, and to each other. ☐☐ NEW VENTURE #2 (Steve Fahnstalk, Rt. 2 Box 135, Pullman WA 99163; \$1 or the usual): Don D'Amassa does not appear at all in this fanzine. What does appear in the issue is an interview with Roger Elwood (all too common these days); also a transcript of David Gerrold's Westercon speech (also a common sight in current fanzines); the usual reviews, editorial and letters. The unusual piece is a 3½-page fragment of an Avram Davidson story supposedly to be continued next issue. Serializing a novel may be a good idea, but serializing a short story? There's not enough there to tell whether the story's even worth reading. ☐☐ NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT #13,14 (Denis Quane, Box CC, East Texas Sta, Commerce TX 75428; 30¢ or the usual): mostly concerned with science fiction and with science; mostly serious, but odd bits of fun are stuck in every once in a while. Issue 13 has a Donn Brazier parody of an academic look at SF: "The Falling-Down Mania of Ray Bradbury," which would be funny except that it imitates the academic style too well and comes out just as dull. ☐☐ OUTWORLDS #26 (Bill Bowers, PO Box 2521, North Canton OH 44720; \$1.25 or the usual): yep, that's an OUTWORLDS, all right. ☐☐ PAN #21,22 (Steve & Binker Hughes, 5831 Hillside Drive, Doraville GA 30340; 35¢ or trade): a fanzine with quite a varied appearance -- within each issue, even. Material is also varied, ranging from fiction and poetry to con reports that contain transcripts of some of the panels. Sometimes an interesting look at Southern fandom. ☐☐ SF ECHO #23+24 (Ed Connor, 1805 N. Gale Ave, Peoria IL 61604; \$2 for this double issue, 5/\$4, presumably for the usual): a mixture of serious and light, sercon



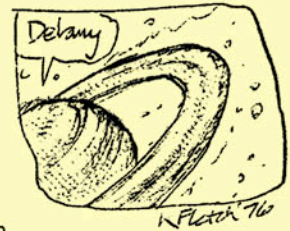
and fannish, although the balance leans toward serious/sercon. Includes 51 pages of 64 fans answering 21 questions on their reading habits and memories; also a fannish poem by Walt Liebscher; the "Golden Trout Awards" for hackwork in SF; and an appetizer for Mae Strelkov's trip report. Plus, of course, the usual reviews, letters, etc. ¶¶ SIMULACRUM #2 (Victoria Vayne, PO Box 156, Stn D, Toronto, Ont. M6P 3J8, Canada; \$1 or, preferably, the usual): visually impressive; graphics and repro are nearly the best that can be done on mimeo. The content is well-balanced, running from fanzine reviews and a three-eyed view of FanFair III, to a D'Amassa article (again?) and Mae Strelkov's interview with God. Art is mostly good, but nothing superb, and there are occasional lapses. One of the more interesting zines around.

STARFIRE #6 (Bill Breiding, 151 Arkansas St, San Francisco CA 94107; 75¢ or the usual): Bill says in his editorial, "I sometimes get the feeling that I won't ever publish a neat fanzine," and he may be right. Unfortunately, he's trying to publish a neat fanzine and failing. He has the pieces -- Selectric typer with changeable typeface, Letraset or Prestype or whatever, sometimes good art, and the willingness to be inventive. But he can't seem to put them together right. The Prestype is crooked; the electrostencils are often poor quality; his "inventive" layout is sometimes pleasant but often clumsy; the mimeography is careless and, in one or two instances, downright ugly; and the table of contents is on page five. The content, aside from the fiction and poetry, is mostly good, with rare contributions from Aljo Svoboda and Chris Sherman. But Bill should either get the graphics done right or give them up entirely; as it is, the reader is too busy saying, "Ghod, that's ugly," to notice the contents at all. ¶¶ TANGENT #3 (David Truesdale, 611-A Division St, Oshkosh WI 54901; 65¢ or the usual): the striking feature here is the trio of interviews, with Harry Harrison, William Tenn, and Lester & Judy-Lynn del Rey. I found these to be quite fascinating; these people are not often interviewed, do not often appear in fanzines, and they have things to say that I was interested in hearing. The other noteworthy thing about TANGENT is the pair of covers which contain as many SF illustration cliches as the artist, Mark Gruenwald, could find and pack into them; the back cover is especially amusing, with its role-reversed hero and heroine figures. ¶¶ WINDING NUMBERS #1,2 (Randy Reichardt, 58 Penrose Place, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2J 1S1, Canada; 50¢ or the usual): small, chatty and informal, with columns, minor articles (musings, actually) on science fiction, a good lettercol in #2, and an interesting approach in the table of contents.

Limited Interest: Comics: THE FANDOM MARKET NEWSLETTER #4 (Tom Mason, 705 Draper Road, Blacksburg VA 24060; 20¢ or 6/\$1), nothing but ads for other comics fanzines. UNREAL #4 (Rod Snyder, 3600 Ripple Creek, Austin TX 78746; 35¢), a comics fandom genzine. I think it's so quaint that comics fandom refers to itself as "fandom" -- sort of like calling the planet you live on "Earth." ¶¶ Movies: THE GALACTIC REVIEW #2 (Stanley Greene, 740 Sycamore St, #6, Red Bluff CA 96080; 30¢), monster flicks and stuff, not too well done. ¶¶ Pulps: WHIZZARD #8 (Marty Klug, 5730 Chatport Road, St. Louis MO 63129; \$1.25 or the usual), material about The Shadow, Doc Savage; reviews of similar items; an amateur superhero comic strip; neatly done, but you have to be interested in the subject. ¶¶ Weird: IBID #12 (Ben Indick, 428



Sagamore Ave, Teaneck NJ 07666; for THE ESOTERIC ORDER OF DRAGON, an apa), concentrating on Lovecraft and related subjects, including amateur fiction and some of the most hideous "art" I've seen in fanzines. ¶¶ Paganism: GREEN EGG #75 (Church of All Worlds, PO Box 2953, St. Louis MO 63130; \$1), also for Stranger in a Strange Land freaks, but mostly for those interested in neo-pagan ideologies and lifestyles. ¶¶ Tolkien: SOUTH OF HARAD, EAST OF RHUN (Jon Noble, 9 Avenue Rd, Glebe, NSW 2037, Australia; for the usual), the expected Tolkien articles, plus fanzine reviews of mainstream fandom zines. Repro is by spirit duplicator, and the print is fading fast.



Oddments and Curios: DESTINY SCIENCE FICTION FFANZINE #3 (Bob Sourk, 2050 Ulric St, #6, San Diego CA 92111; 35¢, but this is the last issue): this looks at first glance like a comics fanzine -- ads, art, format, repro -- but there's almost no comics content and some amount of SF and SF-fandom related material. So I don't know what it is, really. ¶¶ EMU TRACKS OVER AMERICA by Leigh Edmonds, being a summary with stories of the 1974 DUFF trip undertaken by Leigh Edmonds accompanied by Valma Brown (A\$2.50 from Leigh or US\$3.00 from Rusty Hevelin, 3023 Old Troy Pike, Dayton OH 45404). If you've never won DUFF and seen the US and US fandom through the eyes of an Aussie, reading this is the next best thing. Starts with OZCON the weekend before Leigh & Valma leave Australia, goes through the flight to the States, a LASFS meeting, Bubonicon, Discon, and visits with fans in NYC, Rhode Island, Madison, Minneapolis/St. Paul, Seattle, and San Francisco. Really a delight to read. Four pages of photos, many fannish illos, and a marvelous Steve Stiles cover. ¶¶ FILM INDEX #30 (John Howard Reid, Mosmans Bay, NSW, Australia): no colophon, no publishing information at all -- in fact, I got the address from the postmark, since there was not even a return address on the envelope. Nothing but an alphabetic listing of films with lots of technical information and short plot summaries. Starts in the middle of a listing and ends in the middle of a sentence. Odd way to publish, don't you think? ¶¶ IT COMES IN THE MAIL #18 (Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St, Newport News VA 23605; no info as to availability, but I'm pretty sure it's available for trade): unclassifiable. Is it a reviewzine? A newszine? A personalzine? It is a listing, most of the time accompanied by Ned's reaction, of everything of even marginal interest to fandom that shows up in his mail. You can get out of it what you want: fanzine reviews, people news, addresses of mail-order book services, etc., etc., etc. Also great for satisfying that secret urge to paw through somebody else's mail.

LE VIOL #4, "A Journal of Dislocation" (Bruce Townley, 2323 Sibley St, Alexandria VA 22311): the most oddly put together fanzine I've ever seen. Hard to tell which end is up. My head feels funny. ¶¶ LE ZOMBIE #67, Koala & Kangaroo Edition (Bob Tucker, 34 Greenbriar Drive, Jacksonville IL 62650): this is Tucker's Aussiecon trip report, and a fine one it is. If you only read one Aussiecon report other than Denny Lien's, it has to be Tucker's. Now I know why LE ZOMBIE is a legendary fanzine; I wish I'd been around in its heyday. But then, the first issue was born nine years before I was. ¶¶ MUSHROOM STEW "numero uno, from Jessica Amanda Salmonson at Box 89517, Zenith WA 98188. Available for a kiss." Other quotes: "Last June I chronicled a very important week in my life, a week that very likely saved me from suicide, a week that set me on a road to a greater love for myself and others and the world. In giving you that week now, for christmas, I give you a cherished part of myself." "What this is, partly, is a fleeting glimpse of my jam-packed life and an emotional survey of my Self during this week to be highlighted by surgery. This week I want to remember, and share." Thank you for your gift, Jessica; I was touched. ¶¶ PHILLY-CON SURVEY RESULTS (Lou Wolkoff, 243 MacLay St, Harrisburg PA 17110): results of an opinion poll concerning the size of worldcons, in connection with the now-defunct Philadelphia in '77 bid. There were 218 responses to the poll,

of whom 25 were classed as Neofen and 39 as Old Timers. The statistics are moderately interesting but there were no real surprises. ☺☺ REQUIEM #6,7 (Norbert Spehner, 455 Saint-Jean, Longueuil P.Q. J4H 2Z3, Canada; 75¢ or the usual, I think): all in French, but quite attractive. The beginning in #7 of an article on SF rock music makes me wish I could read French. ☺☺ SOUTH OF THE MOON #11 (Tim Marion and David Ortman, 614 72nd St, Newport News VA 23605; 25¢, trades, artwork, or apa information): if you're at all interested in apas, you



should see this. ☺☺ THE SPANG BLAH VIII n4 (Jan Howard Finder, PSC Box 614, APO NY 09293; for the usual): a truly international fanzine, with news from three continents. Hey, that's right -- fandom really is a world-wide organization. ☺☺ TABEBUIAN #24/25 (Dave & Mardee Jenrette, Box 374-Grove, Miami FL 33133; 12/\$3 or the usual): small-sized but packed full. Crazy. Accompanied by FLAMENCO, the clubzine of the Miami area branch of MENSEA. ☺☺ WALTER'S (R.F.D. 4, Waseca MN 56093): not a fanzine, but a catalog for a place that carries all sorts of goodies of interest to fans -- mimeo stencils, ink, lettering guides, styli, spirit-duplicator materials, folders, joggers, electrostencil and thermostencil machines, mimeos, lots of office equipment. Makes me drool just leafing through. ☺☺ WILD FENNEL #11 (P.W. Frames, 105 Grand Avenue, Bellingham WA 98225, and Pauline Palmer, 2510 48th St, Bellingham WA 98225; 50¢ or the usual): a potpourri of short articles, some personal, some funny, some just different. It has a feel all its own, like no other fanzine.

Fanzines I Receive Personally (Some of which RENE also receives in trade): HITCHHIKE (John D. Berry, basement, 1000 15th Ave. E., Seattle WA 98112; 25¢ in cash or US stamps, or the usual): a journal of alternate lifestyles, and

the personal odyssey of John Berry in and outside of fandom. The lettercolumn is a group of very real people talking with each other. One of the zines I am most delighted to find in the mailbox. ☺☺ KRATOPHANY (Eli Cohen, 2920 Victoria Ave, #12, Regina, Sask. S4T 1K7, Canada; 50¢ or the usual): having roomed with Eli for two years, having seen this fanzine born on my dining room table, having contributed to it myself, not to mention help collate, I may be a bit biased; but I like KRAT a whole lot. Especially when it's got an installment of "Wendy and the Yellow King," by Mike Mason and Judy Mitchell. ☺☺ STARLING (Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell, 525 W. Main, Madison WI 53703; 50¢ or the usual): from Raymond Chandler movies to funny animal comics, from popular music to the incomparable Jim Turner, this is another delight to receive. ☺☺ SYNDROME (Frank Lunney, 715 11th Ave, Bethlehem PA 18018; \$1 or the usual): several years ago, when this zine and its predecessor BEABCHEMA were appearing with more frequency, they featured such diverse personalities as Gary Hubbard and Justin St. John (to say nothing of R. Meltzer). The only recent issue has work by Grant Canfield, Jay Kinney (both written articles), and Alexi & Cory Panshin, plus the fannish regulars in the lettercol. Also a fascinating first-hand description by Frank of Silva Mind Control. ☺☺ XENIUM (Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave, Toronto, Ont. M6P 2S3, Canada; available to people Mike wants to send it to): the fanzine of snakes and turtles. Mike Glicksohn's personalzine, need I say more? ☺☺ And the star of the show, MOTA (Terry Hughes, 866 N. Frederick St, Arlington VA 22205; for the usual). We have on hand issues #12

and 13. When 12 arrived I found it to be the best single issue of any fanzine I'd seen all year, containing as it did a Harry Bell cover, a hilarious speech Bob Shaw made at Eastercon '75, a parody of fanhistory articles by the rarely-seen Gary Deindorfer, and a lettercol that's made of finer material than can be found anywhere in other fanzines. Then #13 arrived, and I beheld within a faaanish piece by James White, reuniting (for a while) Irish Fandom and giving us some idea of what that whole scene, that IF gestalt, was like, and what it was all about. It's the first fanzine article I've read in a long time that I've cried at the end of. I don't know how Terry does it. He just sits in Falls Church all day and fabulous material somehow appears in his mailbox, without any apparent effort at all. The faned's dream.

One last point I should make: the characters in "Crudnet" have no intentional resemblance to their fannish namesakes. They bear no relationship at all. They are fictional characters. Completely made up. Out of whole cloth. All mere figments of my imagination. For all I know, "Joness" may be the guy's real name!

* * *

Announcer: The defendant was convicted of all counts and was sentenced to not less than six months and not more than ten years in Fannish Penitentiary. He is now serving that sentence in Filk Sing Sing.

Music: Tympani roll.

Sound: ((Hammer on metal)) Clank! Clank!

Announcer: A Mark VII Production.

Music: DUM, DAH-DUM DUM DAAAAAH!

* * * * *

* A LOOP, A SWIRL, A VERTICAL CLIMB *
* AND ONCE AGAIN YOU KNOW IT'S TIME *
* FOR MINICON (AND ITS FRIENDS) *
* * * * *

* This year with Edmond Hamilton and Leigh Brackett, Pro Guests of Honor; *
* Leigh and Norbert Couch, Fan Guests of Honor; and Jackie Franke and Rusty *
* Hevelin, Toastmasters! Also expecting Cliff Simak, Jack Williamson, Ben *
* Bova, Lester and Judy-Lynn del Rey, Gordon Dickson, Wilson Tucker, and Tom *
* Clareson, to name but a few! And all your favorite Midwest Fans! Don't *
* miss this eleventh installment of the Original Crazy Minneapolis Convention, *
* featuring the Justly Famous Minneapolis in '73 Parties! At the hotel *
* Leamington in Beautiful Downtown Minneapolis, April 16-18; only \$4 in *
* advance and \$7 at the door! Don't delay! Act today! Write: MINICON, *
* PO Box 2128, Loop Station, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 for registration! *
* (Brought to you by the Minnesota Science Fiction Society, Inc. (Minn-stf), *
* the Minneapolis in '73 Bidding Committee, and other assorted crazies!) *
* * * * *

LETTERS OF COMMENT



++Good evening, gentlepeople. Before introducing this evening's column, I'd like to call your attention to the fillo to my right. Unless it's already called your attention, in which case I'll see your attention and raise you one. As you have now noticed, it is by Jay Kinney. What you cannot see by casual inspection is that it arrived in an envelope with a bunch of other strange fragments which I assume were also part of his letter of comment, but which unfortunately will not translate into lettercolese, and so the entire envelopeful, though much appreciated, must settle for being represented by the aforementioned fillo. Thanks, Jay.

++And now, a column which needs no introduction....++

Elliot Shorter
Box 309 Jerome Ave Sta.
Bronx, NY 10468

To: Fred Haskell; Editor in Chief, Chief Bottlewasher, Head Slave Driver, and Resident Slave of the RUNE.

From: Elliot Shorter; Toastmaster and Fan Guest of Honor - Minneapolis in '73.

Re: RUNE #45.

Slowly, with trembling hands I reached for the knob. Two turns right, turn back past start, right again to the mark. With a soft almost inaudible click, Box 309 opened. Warily, I looked both right and left, then reaching in I withdrew.....a card saying go to inquiry window - Package too large for Box.

Finally I reached the inquiry window. There has been a line of inquirers before me, no people just inquirers; and as usual the inquiree was somewhere in the bowels of Jerome Avenue Station. Box 309, Shorter, I said quaveringly. Pausing only until the VHF band radio finished broadcasting the day's episode of General Hospital or some such "soap," the attendant vanished into the cavernous reaches of the station, to shortly reappear with a bundle of mail.

Brookstone, JC Whitney, American Home, Scientific American, Apartment Life, A Plain Brown Wrapper, Sears Tool, WorldCon 35, Publishers Clearing House,

Tournaments Illuminated, SM (Sales Meeting, a professional convention mag), Popular Science,A Plain Brown Wrapper?? What could be in a plain Brown Wrapper? I don't remember ordering anything from one of the publications offering "socially redeeming" material. Wait a minute....there were those pastel shade, decorator colored prophylactics.... Dummy -- you ordered six, and there's no way to pack them in an 8½x11x½ Plain Brown....Good Grief that's not a Plain Brown Wrapper, that's a #9 9x12 Brown Striped Notions Bag! What the hell is that doing in my mail?

Now a #9 9x12 Notions Bag is not good for much. It's too big to hold paperbacks, doesn't expand enough to hold hard covers, and is therefore of no use in recycling to hold garbage. It will hold 8½x11 comic books badly, you see it melts in your hand. The only thing you can say for it is it's cheap.

I removed the rubber band from around the bundle of mail, pulled out the paper bag, and found.....It was RUNE. Well there's one more thing to say against #9 9x12 Notions Bags, "They're Not Yellow!"

Otherwise their use is a great idea. The Bag survived Uncle's Minions' gentle handling, in almost perfect condition (though next time you might tape down the excess on the side). And RUNE arrived in mint condition. Why didn't I think of this?

ELLIOT SHORTER

Andrew Porter
PO Box 4175
New York, NY 10017

Dear Fred:

Thanks for the new issue. Doesn't Woolworths get suspicious when you go in, buy a hundred and fifty pieces of bubble gum, and then ask for individual bags? The issue got here today. Dunno when you mailed 'em, but all us entrusters-to-the-mails have that sneaky suspicion that the uspod has thrown 'em away, rather than waste their time delivering the stuff. It's only mail, after all, and if you never get it how you gonna know it's overdue?....

Reed Waller and Ken Fletcher (or maybe Ken Fletcher and Reed Waller) are True Geniuses of the pen. Also the stencil. The issue was a joy to skim over, quickly; it'll be a joy to read (but not rite now: dinner's in the oven, and I gotta make a salad to go with it).

I hope to see you at Minicon.

ANDY PORTER

Dear Fred:

Clifford D. Simak
Mound, Minnesota

I have written Harry Warner to make my disclaimer as to being the oldest practitioner of the science fiction art and I suppose I had better set the matter right with other RUNE readers. Both Edmond Hamilton and Jack Williamson were in the field for quite some time before I entered it. Jack still is writing rather extensively and while I have seen nothing of his recently, perhaps Ed is as well.

You are right about Squanchfoot. He was a member of the Simak household, living to the ripe old age of 15. His name was Scootie and CITY is dedicated to him. Never able to replace him with another dog, we now are a cat family.

A short answer to Laurine White: I have mislaid the copy of RUNE that contained the interview with me and thus can't recall exactly what I had said. However, I do believe that in the future our energy needs will be less because I expect that we may adopt a somewhat less flamboyant life style. I think some signs of it now are showing up. Facing the problem, on our own, without all the silly propaganda that now is assailing us, we'll after a time adapt to the situation and will pattern our lives accordingly. Man, a singularly adaptable animal, has historically shaped himself to his environment and I think he will do so in this regard.

I don't believe, however, that over the long range, we'll need to worry too much about energy. I see some real promise in solar energy. With energy farms (acres of solar collectors) placed in the deserts of the Southwest, we can produce in another 20 or 25 years all the energy we need. The problem, of course, will be to channel this energy, without too great a loss to the rest of

the country. Work on cryogenic methods by which this can be done is going forward at the moment and while it will be an extremely difficult job, the state of the art does seem hopeful.

CLIFF SIMAK

Allan J. Wilde
508 West 75 Street
Kansas City, MO 64114

Dear Fred and Friends:

Just finished reading RUNE 45 and enjoyed it very much. I firmly believe that it deserves to be entered in the annual "BEST MIMMO FANZINE ON YELLOW PAPER PRINTED IN THE SEMI-FROZEN NORTH COUNTRY BY A MAN WHO ONCE WORE A BEARD" category for the coveted Heavy Paper Award. I'll give you my vote.

Here I sit amidst the debris left over from holiday wrapping the abandoned brick school house that I am giving Bob Tucker for X-mas, wondering just what non-commercial brand of insanity you people in Minneapolis hold court to. RUNE 45 elicited the gamut of my emotions from out-and-out amusement at Denny Lien's AUSSIECON REPORT, fortunately for him, to the flow of tears prompted by the sadness of the Official MINN-STF Business Page.

Considering the talent, albeit fledgling, of your reviewers for the printed tome, I personally would like to see an increase in the reviews of said items. While we are on the subject of reviews, I also feel that you could be more selective with the fanzine reviews, quality rather than quantity, as I think something is basically wrong with reviews in which the address is longer than the commentary. I know that this format is typical, but RUNE is obviously striving not to be typical.

A word (or more) to David Emerson. An article about fanzines is OK, but why must they be centered on zines no longer available to 90% of the public. The only legendary zines seem to be those which have long since passed into oblivion, perhaps well deserved? Or does the term legendary mean simply "It ain't being made anymore"? David, you're a name dropper. (A gasp is appropriate here.)

Words directed to Mr. Kusske: Have you ever seen a true copy of THE BOOK OF EUCALYPTUS? YOU CAN'T READ IT!!! Spiders simply have no concept of how to write. They have no idea of grammar or parse. Whenever you are in KC long enough for the necessary purification rites I'll be more than happy to show you my copy. Although I also have several translations, which is what you obviously had as source material for your scholarly article, none even approach the original. The "First Ed" as it is referred to, when referred to at all, contains many strange references to mice who throw bricks, an insane feline, and the remarkable reference that a certain Howard Kruse would make a suitable prophet (also profit) if only he would change his preference in insects. Magic frogs indeed!

Reed Waller and Ken Fletch (or you sure he knows his name) are adequate illustrators for RUNE. They could be more than adequate, but both are arrears in their dues to the Fraternal Order of Neo-Letterhacks, Inc. Send remittances to Grand Master Warner, care of his cave. I'll receive my share at the yearly Groveling.

By the flickering light of my Winnie-the-Pooh nitelights I see that the clock on my wrist says that it is time to bid adieu. Keep up the fine work, and may RUNE always whip its readers into a frenzy.

ALLAN J. WILDE

((I can sympathize with your desire to see greater depth in fanzine reviews, and David and I are trying to come up with some way of doing that. However, I feel an obligation to list every fanzine that comes in trade, and up until now David has been trying to say at least something about everything. And I think that his column about or inspired by fanzines is too valuable and too much fun to drop in favor of in-depth reviews on a few fanzines. So I don't know yet. We might decide to stop listing all fanzines received, so that a few can be more thoroughly reviewed. Or we might not. Stay tuned and see....))

Eli Cohen
2920 Victoria Ave, #12
Regina, Sask. S4T 1K7 Canada

Dear Fred,

Thank you for RUNE 45, a thoroughly entertaining and enjoyable issue.

Denny Lien's very funny Aussiecon report and the equally hysterical illos



There's a comic book out from Marvel called HOWARD THE DUCK which just might appeal to David Emerson's appreciation of the bizarre. It has some of the best writing I've seen in a comic.

I have a tract from The First Arachnid Church -- bound yet. So I enjoyed getting some more info about the Great Spider in "A History and Commentary on THE BOOK OF EUCLYPTUS" by John Kusske. The article was pretty good, especially the paragraph about Greenwald and God. Great moat picture by Ken Fletcher.

You made some comment about reaction to "Larf Riot" and its being innovative, so I re-read Maizipopl to see what I'd missed. First time through, my mind went to sleep and parts of it reminded me of ILLUMINATUS. It was enjoyable the second time around ("When it rains...It drains").

The people at NESFA finally sent me those issues of PROPER BOSKONIAN, so I can't complain about it now.

Rich Bartucci says the pancreas is shaped like South America. Quick! What organ looks like Africa and used to be joined to the pancreas?

Dainis Bisenieks invents a title game involving changing one letter. How about RUNE to DUNE?

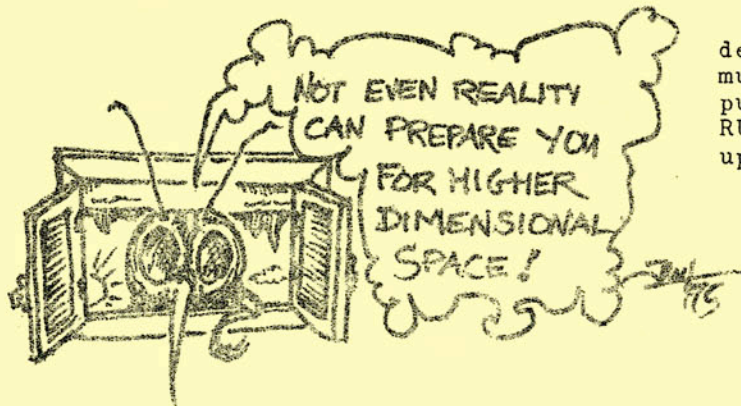
LAURINE WHITE

Rich Bartucci
Box 369, KCCOM
2105 Independence Ave
Kansas City, MO 64124

Goodfan Haskell:

Picture my wanderings if you will; from August through May, I reside in sunny, picturesque Kansas City. BYOBCon is held in July. From May until August, I live in South Jersey, not forty miles from Philadelphia. Philcon is held in December.

Capisce? When I'm here, the con isn't, and when I'm there, the con isn't either. Or...



Anyway, I doubt I'll make the deadline for RUNE 46 (mea maxima mundania!), so this LoC isn't pubbable on topic alone. Nonetheless, RUNE 45 was so good that I can't pass up commenting on it. Avaunt!

Denny Lien's "Marsupial Fandom" was superb. His ability to write in stream-of-subconsciousness style, coupled with the brilliant graphic abilities of your pet artist, Reed Waller, made the tale a conrep that pleased me muchly and enabled me to savor the spirit of Aussiecon. You don't know what a boon it is to read something like

Goodfan Lien's account of how miserable it was Down Thar in the Outback; I sprained an arm patting myself on the back for staying in K.C. and attending classes.

"Maizipopl --- Dread Mayan Harvest God," was a bit of anthropological antic hey to my liking. A number of minor items caught my eye, though -- the CIBA "occult sign" by the Priests of Maizipopl, the fact that the "Divine Right" was actually a Left, and the recollection that the research into Popcorn Addiction is being pursued at the University of Pennsylvania, not U.C.L.A. (where funds are being channeled into an investigation of Brett Cox as the cause of cancer). On the whole, however, I found the Fletcher/Waller/Young effort to be a salty tale that popped with excitement and burst with nutritional goodness. I sopped a little melted butter on it and it was delicious.

I liked Goodfan Dickson's speech, especially his recognition of fandom as an arena in which an SF writer can trot out his brain children and receive helpful criticism on their gait and style. I've had a number of bitch sessions with

other filk on the "critical function" of fandom, how fen provide authors with a semi-expert panel of reviewers and readers. Do fans of western novels battle stridently over the virtues of a new book the way we do over Dhalgren? Are readers of gothics driven to congregate in droves and masses the way we do? Can a spy-novel writer get the same amount of feedback that Poul Anderson does? Uh-uh. SF is what it is at least partly because of fandom. The ranks of the pros are swollen by fen-turned-pros, the prozines are read most avidly and criticized most zealously by fen, and the speculative engineering that enables so many SF works to function properly is largely the work of fen. Thank Ghu that some pros recognize this, and revel in the "ghetto;" here's to Goodfan Dickson -- may there be many more like him!

"A History and Commentary on The Book of Eucalyptus" was... Well, it struck me as... Uh, I kind of went blank for a moment and started snatching flies. And eating them. You don't think this is permanent, do you?

OB Note Quote: "Once the patient is definitely in labor, she may feel the need to go to the toilet. DO NOT LET HER. Newborn babies are lousy swimmers."

P.S. Your cover photo was excellent. C'est diabolique! Why not try a nude? L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace....

RICH BARTUCCI

{(But Rich, BYOBCon is not in July this year. It is May 14-16, and I think it'll be a pretty good con. The Guest of Honor is C.L. Moore, Teastperson Jodie Offutt, and the Fan Guest of Honor is somebody whose name you'd immediatly recognize if I were to mention his name....)}

Mike Kring
PSC #1 Box 3147
Kirtland AFB, NM 87115

Dear Fred,

I can't see that your objection that some parent is going to go apeshit over the fact their little darling got a fmz with a nude on the cover. C'mon, if the parents didn't object to that cover on RUNE 43, they sure as hell aren't going to object to a nude picture cover.

And if you're really worried about it (and I can't believe you are), just ask the readership who doesn't want a nude cover, and just ship them a RUNE without a cover. Of course, I'm not a nice guy, and I would think of something like that.

I must say, at this point in time (and let me make this perfectly clear), I thought the cover for RUNE 45 was--uh--weird enough to be eye-catching, but at the same time, not so god damn arty that it threw the viewer off in disgust. I must say the model had an interesting face and expression. Very fascinating and intriguing.

David Emerson's column bored me. I gave up about half-way through it. It's an okay idea to try and explain your views if you're a reviewer, but he went on far too long, in my opinion. Better luck next time. Opinion is opinion, and it should be stated, not explained.

Leigh Edmonds little thingie was fun. Now, if I just knew someone with a Jag, and where I could find some mud and not sand around here....

John F. Kusske's revelation about the Great Spider and the ultimate truth about the true whereabouts of the Great Prophet was a tremendous shock, I must say. I had thought the Great Prophet would not reveal his true whereabouts until the Great Spider had eaten its eighty billionth soul and belched in His inspired way. At least, that was the prophecy as given in THE HOLY WRIT AND UNDERWEAR OF SPIDERS by the Reverend Augustus Yancey-Hycynith III (1783-1790). A truly precocious genius cut down in his youth by a run-away badger. It is an interesting book Mr. Kusske should look into.

So we come to the end of another loc, and the reason I'm not commenting on the lettercol is simple. I either disagreed so strongly I was afraid of putting anything down lest I get sued for libel, or I agreed, or I just didn't care about what was being discussed. But, I must take exception with one thing you mentioned, Fred, in the lettercol. I don't like Brad Parks' artwork either, but to say he doesn't have talent is a mistake. You might not like what he does, or how he goes about it, but Parks is pretty young and he's already improving

muchly. It seems as if you're taking the stance: if I don't like what he's doing, it's shit. You complained about how many people thought the comic strips in RUNE were shit, and you took great exception to that. I admit, I think the comic strips in RUNE are worthless (to me), but to say the people involved don't have talent is a lie. It seems to me you're being a little inconsistent. Which is your right, since you're human like the rest of us, but it's my right, too, to disagree with you. If you re-read what you put down, you'll realize it was more than a little nasty. If you meant to be nasty, you succeeded. But if you didn't, you did. Watch that. It can get you into trouble if you're not careful. I know, believe me. Making flip comments in print is sometimes dangerous to your health. And it's awfully hard to remove the foot from your mouth when you've stuck it all the way in up to the knee.

MIKE KRING

((The problem, as I see it, is that many people don't understand the photograph as art, and are more likely to think that a nude photograph is "obscene" than they are to think a similar drawing is. You might be right that we don't have to worry because nobody objected to Odbert's cover, but I decided that it is a decision for the publisher (Minn-stf) rather than the editor (me), and am therefore awaiting the Board's decision on the matter.

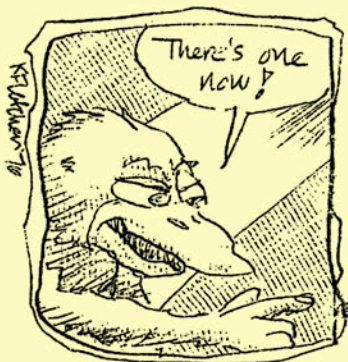
Okay. Let's start the discussion of Brad Parks with some quotes from last issue. Bruce Arthur said "Myself, I think Brad is loaded with talent..." to which I replied "Brad Parks may be loaded with something, but if it's talent, I must admit that I haven't seen him use any of it yet...." (Emphasis in the original.) Now a certain amount of clarity may have been sacrificed for humorous effect, but you will notice that I did not say that Parks lacks talent. Which may be a nitpick, but misquoting me is a sure way to get a discussion off on the wrong foot. In any case, the whole thing revolves not around Parks' age, or whether he's "improving," but whether there are any minimum standards in art at all, and whether he meets them. In my opinion, yes there are minimum standards in art, and nothing I've seen of Brad's work yet meets those standards. Which isn't to say he isn't capable of creating art, or even that he hasn't yet -- only that I haven't seen any of it yet. And until I do, I am not going to be silent or say that something is good when it isn't, merely because he is young or inexperienced. It may seem more kind to "protect the fragile egos of apprentice-artists," but if there is no criticism, then the poor fellow might never find out that what he's doing is less than satisfactory, and may never do work up to his full potential. And that would be a real shame.))

Don D'Amassa
19 Angell Drive
East Providence, RI 02914

Fred:

RUNE arrived this week in a stack of fanzines that would choke a horse. I have this feeling that everyone timed their current issues to get in the mail before the postal increase originally scheduled for right after Xmas. Four hundred pages of fanzines in two days is more than I can cope with.

But I did find time to read RUNE, which was up to its usual standards. As usual, I find the book reviews to be predominantly too brief, though. Reed Waller's criticism of STARSHIP, for example, falls flat on its face. To criticize a writer now for writing a closed environment story has some validity, since it has been done so often, but even there you're treading dangerous ground. After all, almost any plot has been done before, usually many times over. But there are two reasons why Reed's criticism is misplaced here. First of all, Aldiss' novel is one of the first novel length treatments of this idea. It was published in 1959. Second, Aldiss developed a fascinating civilization in STARSHIP, one well worth imitating for that matter, and peopled it plausibly. As it happens, I've read STARSHIP three times, and I enjoy it more each time. Roy Compain's quest for Forwards is one of the best in the field. I realize that Reed might not be familiar with the history of various plots in SF, but he might at least check the publication and copyright dates before he criticizes a book for being derivative of something published later.



Dave Wixon's piece on HERITAGE OF HASTUR was much better done. I had begun to despair that Bradley would ever write another fine book after SWORD OF ALDONES, and HASTUR was quite a surprise to me, easily her best novel, probably one of the top half dozen titles of 1975.

Kusske's piece on the Great Spider was quite amusing. I wish you people would stir him into more activity. I miss the good old days of ATHEISM AND FREE LOVE.

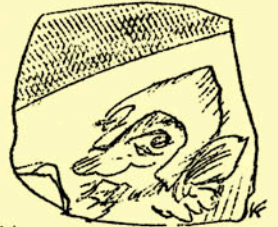
DON D'AMMASSA

(the Rt. Hon.) Robert Field Tredray
1662 W. Juneway
Chicago, Ill. 60626

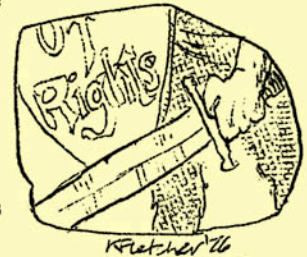
Dear Fred,

A habitual lassitude developed while a student at the University of Chicago, and a fine instinct for self-preservation developed while a student at a public High School, have combined to produce in me a habit of not writing the letters to the editor which I frequently compose; and this habit I carried over to fanzines when I discovered fandom. Some time ago, however, it occurred to me that since I had been receiving and enjoying RUNE for a couple of years now without doing anything for it but attending a couple of Minicons, the gentlemanly thing to do would be to send at least a thank-you note. This resolve was not sufficient to overcome the afore-mentioned habit, however, until the recent arrival of RUNE #45, which not only gave me much enjoyment, but presented me with intellectual issues upon which I cannot forbear to comment.

First, please accept my thanks for RUNE's past, present, and (hopefully) future, and especially for #45. Special thanks for "A History and Commentary on the Book of Eucalyptus" (which answers all the questions I was too busy filk-singing or terrorizing the costume ball at Windycon to ask Dick Tatge) and which is an excellent example of the kind of good writing of which I'd like to see more, in RUNE and elsewhere.



Now, taking up the cudgels of controversy, I must disagree with Harry Warner's comment on "these stupid dolts who inspired Kornbluth's fiction so often." While Kornbluth's characters may not be the sort of people Harry (or I) would like to live with, it does not seem to me that the ability to "survive a galactic catastrophe" is an indication of stupidity. On the contrary, intelligence -- which is not the same thing as intellect (or culture) -- is a major component of the ability to survive. Those of us who are intellectually inclined often get the feeling we can't compete out there in the cruel world, but really, it ain't necessarily so. In any case, surely one of the values of fiction such as Kornbluth's (aside from entertainment, which is the primary value of all fiction) is to point out such unloveable traits of the human personality as ruthlessness and insensitivity (which even we intellectuals may discover, if we look, in ourselves).



I must also take issue with David Emerson's notion of a good fanzine. I agree strongly that a zine should be a means for a fan to participate in the community which is fandom -- or at least to feel that he or she is participating -- and that a sense of the history of fandom is necessary to the preservation of the fannish community. But I part company with David when he equates this sense of community with a love of "fannish gossip." I do not find "a fanzine full of fans talking about other fans" necessarily "a lot more fun to read than one that talks about science fiction all the time." For me, one of the greatest joys of life is being with congenial people, which is why I would rather go to a con than read a dozen fanzines, or even a good novel. Indeed, this is what I find most attractive about fandom.

I first became a fan when I started to attend the Tuesday Night Meetings held by Mike Bradley and Roland Green in order to talk to my fellow Creative Anachronists -- most of whom were members of the Chicago Science Fiction Society (CSFS, pronounced "cuss-fuss"). I was only an occasional reader of SF, and many Tuesday Night fans had no interest in SCA, but I immediately felt I was part of a community -- I was among congenial people, where I was accepted as myself, where I belonged.

When I am with such people, we tend to talk about interests we have in common, whether those interests are activities, ideas, or people. But whether this talk is fun (as it usually is) or a dead bore (as, alas, it sometimes becomes) depends not so much on the subject as on whether the talk itself is good (i.e., on the conversational skills of the talkers). This is even more true of print than of talk: whether a given page is fun to read depends more on the

Onward to the zine itself. It seems as though Reed Waller has given me a new nickname. Actually, I prefer "Plucky" more than "Hey you!" I do answer to both, however. It was only this morning that I managed to finish off RUNE on the ever-bouncing MTC bus while heading down to the U for the last day of classes. (It's about time, too.) You should have seen the looks old ladies were giving me as I snickered nearly the entire ride. Try it sometime; it's a wonderful feeling to really freak out these mundanes.

Ah, me. I might as well state that I hope Part II of "Marsupial Fandom" is as much fun as Part I. Sounds like a great con. Mudcon reminds me of the only con the SF club at Concordia, Moorhead held (I was prez and founding fanther); it poured all day long, and we wound up an otherwise miserable day by going over to Fargo to see Sleeper. The Fargo Theatre will never be the same. As for "The Book of Eucalyptus" I can only say a resounding "Wha...??" Rather spaced out, as the bard says. The lettercol was typical; the biggest bunch of raving loonies that make Minneapolis Fandom what it is -- WEIRD!!!

"PLUCKY" PURCELL

{{And you thought RUNE 45 was late....Hoo Hah!}}

Leah A. Zeldes
21961 Parklawn
Oak Park, MI 48237

Dear Fred,

I rarely loc zines that I get anyway (i.e. for subscriptions, etc.) but I wanted to write and tell you how much I enjoyed RUNE 45.

Denny Lien's is the best Aussiecon Report I've seen (or heard, as I have a couple). It is interesting and descriptive without being boring. I look forward to its continuation.

David Emerson's column says a lot of things I've always felt about fandom. Err, amend that -- it says a lot of things I feel about fandom and fannishness now. I didn't feel quite that way as a neo (and if this were a regular loc I might go into a long, involved analysis of all that, but being as it's just a note you are spared that).

So now we know that ditto fluid tastes like turpentine. What does turpentine taste like?

The term "sci-fi" should only be used in catagorizing a movie like The 20,000 lb. Microbe from 45 Million BC that Ate Albuquerque and Threw Up Afterwards.

Many fans who don't have a lot of personal contact with other fans (by phone or at cons) tend to spell out things like "loc," "goh," "stf," etc. I did -- until Discon, when it took me a while to figure out what people were talking about.

LEAH A. ZELDES

Steve Beatty
1662 College Ter Dr
Murray, KY 42071

Dear Fred,

A good issue of RUNE (#45), as usual.

Great Ken Fletcher cartoons and illoes. When's he gonna get a Hugo?

The phrase "Sydney or the bush!" attracted my attention. I knew I'd heard it before, but couldn't for the life of me remember where. It sounded just like the faanish phrases about Courtney's boat and "Yngvi is a louse." But it wasn't in Weinstein's Fillostrated Fan Dictionary. Then I remembered -- it was from the Peanuts comic strip! Sure enough, I found it in You Need Help, Charlie Brown, which has reprints from strips of 1964 and 1965. It still sounds faanish. Do you think Schulz would make a glood fan? Just think -- you might be able to get him to do a cover for your fanzine!

This also suggests the possibility of characters in the comix being fans. A year or two ago in Mary Worth, there was a sensitive intelligent boy who was an only child and alienated from his age group -- lots of fen started with such a background. He is interested in astronomy. One strip showed a mailman bringing the mail, and I hoped the boy would get an ANALOG, but it was just some astronomy

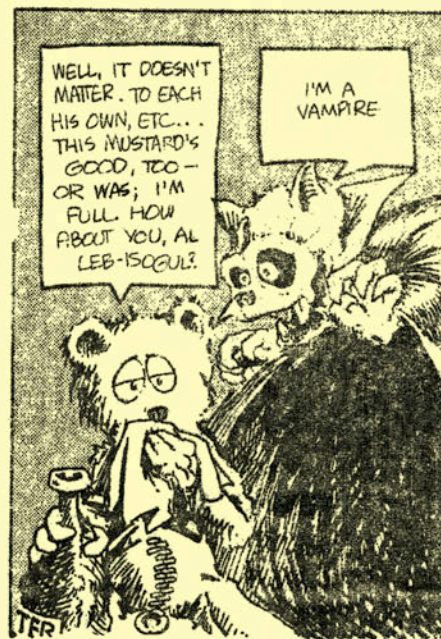
magazines. Oh well, the boy was only 12 or 13; give him a few years and he might become Tony Cvetko.

Then there was a character in Steve Canyon named Gaanbay Garrison; with a name spelled like that, he has to be a fan. He worked for a government agency in some African country; made me think of Dick Eney.

Good meaty con reports here, best of all I've seen except Tucker's. Somehow many of the Aussiecon reports I've read haven't said much about what went on at the con itself, but these covered everything -- fannish, sercon, of great import, irrelevant but fun....

STEVE BEATTY

((To tell you the truth, I too have been wondering when KenFletch will get a Hugo. After all, he's been doing a lot of mighty fine work for lots of fanzines for quite a few years now. I suppose the first thing is that he has to get nominated, which is something we can all do something about. And after that, I think it'd just be a matter of time. (Glad you asked....))



Samuel S. Long
Box 4946
Patrick AFB, Fla. 32925

Dear Fredh

Thanks for RUNE 45, an excellent ish. Nice, if somewhat mysterious cover...

Needless to say, Denny Lien's Aussieconrep was the foremost attraction of the zine. Well and wittily written, and beautifully illustrated by Reed Waller, it is without doubt one of the best (Aussie)conreps I've read. In some ways it's better even than Tucker's, and that, as you know, is high praise. I think, tho, that Denny's pulling our leg about bellybuttons turning out when crossing the equator. It doesn't work that way. Neither do people change handedness. What does happen is that pig's tails, which are curled counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere, gradually straighten out as the animal approaches the equator, because the Coriolis force gets less. The exact moment that the tail is perfectly straight is the time of crossing the equator (a useful navigational aid for pilots on interhemispheric livestock flights); and as the plane proceeds south, the tail curls up clockwise. Hair curls do not exhibit this phenomenon, so there's no visible change in a human being as the equator is crossed. I don't know whether the Courage beer Denny mentions on page 9 is the same as the Courage beer they sell in Britain (where its trademark is a rooster -- kinda strange to see an inn-sign with a rooster on it saying The Swan), but I know that it takes courage to drink Courage in Britain, because tho there are many (tho alas fewer than there used to be) good British beers, Courage ain't one of them. Rush part two of Denny's conrep into print; it's excellent.

I also enjoyed Gordy's Minicon GoH speech. Gee, it must be nice to have a Big Name Pro right in town for whenever you want to have a con. There's one down here at the Cape too (Joe Green), but we don't have an SF club or a bunch of con-putters-on. In fact there are only about half a dozen fans in the whole area, and so instead of cons we just have small get-togethers. But anyhow....Back to Gordy's speech (nice illo p.17 by the way -- good likeness). He's right -- one of the chief advantages an SF writer has over writers in other genres is that he can get reasonably well-informed and friendly feedback on his work quickly -- from fans who read SF. (I'm aware that a fair amount of comment that pros get on their work from fans is neither well-informed nor particularly friendly, but still....) (And by "friendly," I mean both pan and praise, delivered in a friendly fashion.) Another useful aspect of fans to pros is that fans can serve as repositories of information. For example, you think of a story idea that sounds good. Has it been done before? Ask Don D'Amassa. Is the story concerned in any way with aviation? Consult a fan with a pilot licence. Concerned with a city on another planet? A fannish architect can help design the buildings of your



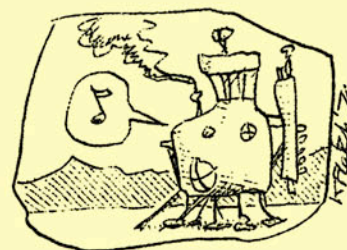
setting. Fans represent a wide pool of experience and knowledge that pros can tap at will; for true fans are interested in the furtherance of SF and are not only pleased to help the writers if they can, but flattered to be asked to do so.

David Emerson's zine column was right good; I enjoyed it and the good word he gave to the British fanzines he mentioned, which are published by close friends of mine. What with Britain almost sure to get the '79 Worldcon, it's a good idea for fen to learn more about British fandom thru its zines -- and, I might add, for British fanzines to improve thru contact with the much larger and more cosmopolitan North American fans. (I don't mean that British fanzines are bad, especially not MAYA and KfN, or that NA fanzines are necessarily good, but merely that it'll improve the zines of both fandoms if there were more interchange -- and not just trading of zines -- between them.)

The Eucalyptus bit -- the Great Spider -- left me unmoved. I mean, I've just read about Herbangelism in a Glycerzine, and now here's another unfannish heresy in print. All trufen know that the One True Ghod is Ghu, and that His sacred animal is the Mince. Anyhow, as all Australians know, the title of the article refers to the time when Tarzan visited the continent and went into a bar and got drunk and was found propping up a tree to which he was woozily saying, "Me Tarzan, You Calyptus."

J. Maxwell Young in his letter on page 47 forgot that best-known of all calculus equations: $\int e^x = f(u^n)$

"And Now for Something Completely Different" was playing not long ago down here in Florida, and I took my English fiancée to see it. Alas, she and I disgraced ourselves by laughing at a lot of the jokes that met with silence from the rest of the audience -- the peculiarly British jokes. I was living in England when MPFC first came out -- I remember it, in fact, even before it was on TV, as the radio series "I'm Sorry, I'll Read That Again," the first full-frontal radio program on the BBC -- and I somewhat pitied the audience at the theatre we were at, because altho they were laughing heartily at the jokes, they got only about half of them.



Rich Bartucci claims that the pulp-pies of Ficken's fiendish assault were made of sweet potato. Not a bad thing to throw at Yamonry.

Peter Egg Roberts is right when he says that BSFA is pronounced in four letters, and not "Bisfa," but there are counterexamples too. OMPA, the (now practically defunct) Offtrails Magazine Press Association, was called "Ompa." Also, altho the word may be "S-T-F," three letters, the adjective is "stfnal," pronounced "st'fnal," or "stefnal."

All in all, I agree with Terry Hughes's first sentence, page 59. Keep up the ghood work.

P.S. Say, when is Mary Tyler Moore going to meet MSP fandom?

SAM LONG

Dear Fred,

Malcolm J. Kudra
2931 Blossom St.
Columbia, SC 29205

I finally dug out my typewriter (which still cannot spell). The smeary splotches on this letter are the signs of frequent and prolonged disuse. I will use this letter to clean the machine, and perhaps oil and adjust. Telling me not to write until I had a typer was cruel.

I had pulled out my remaining sheets and fragments of previous RUNES, culling out straight SHORT staples when Ray Bradbury appeared on the local "best of Groucho," and honored the audience with a plug for several of his novels and stories. He and she won \$170. He looked much younger than I would have expected had I expected to have seen him.

While we are on the subject of typewriters, and mine is not dammit electric, I note that the MAR-REL key might be replaced by an automatic function since it is required at the end of each line anyway. Also to be included in the all new LOCwriter would be a BACKSPACE-SLASH key labelled WIT.

Since you last greeted any letter of mine with small whimpers of joy, I have attended three cons but that news is all old so skip it. I did travel with Doug Faunt to all three, and am sad to report that Doug is no longer with us. He has moved to Sunnyvale, CA, where his navel is turning orange. I will miss him greatly; he was my chauffeur to all cons and many other places and times of interest, and between us we usually found enough sleeping-bag fans to carpet the floor of our other-wise expensive hotel rooms.

(I find the typer limits my otherwise limitless creativity; I cannot spiral around the edge of the paper and all that other good "format" stuff.)

During my period of inactivity Sci-Fi-Wise, I have done nothing. I certainly hope this changes. I plan to type many of the fans I have met at cons but never contacted further. (Might need a free bed and banquet when in Westbrook, Maine or Richland, Washington.) I also plan to write three consecutive sentences without an "I." Equal Probability. Will definitely build up intake of fanzines and other such dross.

On RUNE. Keep the lettercol. All of it. More. It might help to think of RUNE as the Minneapolis in '73 International Fuckless Orgy. I want letters. Print them. Encourage them. Pay for them. Bang.

Appreciated Emerson's column in #45 and found him to be fairly accurate in his assessments of quality and quantity in fanzines, but I do note one error he made in downplaying repro and layout as interfering with reading if too poor or too spectacular. One needs only don shades to lessen "spectacular" visual considerations until perusal is complete, at which time proper perception of optical phenomena may be effected sans filter, as it were. (Or one can look at the pretty pictures first, I suppose.)

Ignore all comments pertaining to non-clubbliness of your editing unless tendered by yours barely.

Please find enclosed a signed, blank check in order that I may continue to receive RUNE in a plain brown wrapper.

Typer is smoking so must close for ventilation.

MALCOLM J. KUDRA

Mark Sharpe
2721 Black Knight Bv.
Indianapolis, Indiana 46229

Dear Editor Emertus,

Being editor is honorary, is it not? Surely it isn't a duty.

Many thanks to Dave Wixon for transcribing Dickson's speech. Fans know we are great, but it is nice to be reassured occasionally. Hmmm. There were two things, no, three things that I noticed from the speech. 1. Harlan stuck his foot in his mouth again. Typical. 2. Tucker was in the bar. Very typical. and 3. Gordon Dickson is a very nice person. Perhaps not so typical. I hope I can attend a convention where he is also attending and tell him so. May his royalties and contracts multiply like Nivelle's Brownies from the Mote.

David Emerson writes an excellent article. My tastes run about the same as his --- in fanzines at least --- but I have to disagree with him when he said RANDOM was the faaanish fanzine. Possibly my personal distaste for that obnoxious ba...well, there's no need to be obnoxious myself now is there?

Oops! I'm running out of time and have to get this letter off before the mailperson arrives...about ten minutes...and leaves little postmarked presents in my box. Let it suffice that you publish two things: 1. the best club zine I have ever seen or published myself. and 2. a literate general fanzine suitable for framing. Good luck and happy holidays. Later.

MARK SHARPE

{{If you are really looking for a convention where you can greet Gordon Dickson and tell him what a nice person he is, you've found it in the Minicon. It will be held here in Minneapolis (of course) April 16-18, and it promises to be the very best in a long series of very fine Minicons. So in addition to greeting Gordy, you can have yourself one heck of a good con. See you there!}}

David Dyer-Bennet
Carleton College
Northfield, MN 55057

Dear Fred,

The cover is nice. The position of the model's arms combined with the tree just behind her lead me to think of the Great Spider (may the rain never wash him out) and John Kusske's article on the Book of Eucalyptus. At first it seemed to be simply an interesting cover photo with no relevance at all to anything. Even if my present theory is not correct, I trust that there is something there. As a photographer I feel that interesting photos are very nice things, but I also feel that the cover of a magazine should relate in some way, however complex, to the contents and purpose of that magazine.

I found this to be one of the very best issues I can recall. The aforementioned article by John Kusske was good, and worth waiting for (I'd heard discussions about some such article off and on for about six months). Denny Lien's con report was the star of the issue, I think. Since Denny dropped Minneapa, I've neither seen him nor read anything by him. This article makes up for a good portion of that time. The accompanying illos are also good, and fit well with the article.

This issue's comic strip was perhaps a little corny, but overall enjoyable, despite several sections of rather salty dialogue. Perhaps a little spreading of the good old oil could influence its creators to pop some more of their creations into our eager fists.

David Emerson's fanzine columns are very valuable for us fringe or neo types who have not yet arranged for our mailboxes to be stuffed with fanzines every

week. I'm going to be taking some of his advice and writing some of the addresses so thoughtfully included. Since he or someone also saw fit to mention my zine GRAY LENS MAN when I sent in #4 for review, I will also be sending along #5 when it comes out. In the foreseeable future, I believe. I've only had one response from the first mention, but it came all the way from England.

The review given to Mike Bracken's KNIGHTS is in interesting contrast to what Gil Gaier had to say in VERT 1. Frankly, while I can condone describing something as a crudzine even in a review column, saying "Once a crudzine, always a crudzine" as your reviewer did seems inexcusable.

Book reviews, book reviews. Then another longer book review. Fred, you dig out some good reviewers. Good book reviews are an

important service to both the readers and the authors (not to mention the publishers).

The question of the propriety of a nude photocover for RUNE degenerates quickly into the question of why RUNE is published. Unfortunately, I don't know why RUNE is published, but I do know that I would enjoy a good nude photocover. Also, I don't see that a nude photo is any more offensive than the Odbert cover on RUNE 43.

The offsetting was rather bad in places in my issue. Still, I'm glad you're trying to get away from that Godawful twilltone. Better luck next time.

I'm not qualified to debate Dhalgren, and my opinion isn't firmly formed yet anyway; but could somebody tell me what the hell a "general field theory of communication" might be, or be about?

Perhaps, Fred, your estimate of the readership is wrong, but I think that your main problem is in assuming that everyone should like the same things. More and more, I am meeting people who love certain books which I believe to be deep and important...and later discover that they cannot stand other books I consider just as deep and important.

DAVID DYER-BENNET

{{Essentially, I agree with you that magazine covers (and illustrations) should have some connection with other content, though I do not believe that any artistic quality should be sacrificed for the sake of making things strictly illustrative. So any art I use in RENE is chosen with the same criteria I use for the written material: "Is it good, and does it 'feel like' RENE?" The cover on #45 is no exception. I think it had the proper mood, feeling, gestalt, or whathaveyou to be a RENE cover; it was appropriate. It was not specifically related to anything else in the issue, but in that respect it is no different than any of the other covers I've used.

I think David is at most guilty of falling prey to glibness and underestimating how seriously he might be taken. And I'd rather see him err in that direction than to succumb to chronic over-caution. (And by the way, you will undoubtedly find David's column this time to be very interesting, as he deals with his criteria for calling zines "crud.")}}

Jessica Amanda Salmonson
Post Office Box 89517
Zenith, Washington 98188

Oh dear.

I rather like your photography, I think. There is something more to the woman on the cover of RENE than most male photographers can capture in a woman. I work with a fashion photographer who is fairly good at making women look like people, sometimes exciting people, sometimes sensuous people, with personality and depth. He says a photographer can only photograph what he sees, and unfortunately most of them see sex objects before their eyes. They capture the soulless plastic image on film as easily as they capture it on retina. I'd have to see your nudes to know if you are really capable of photographing women (as this clothed example suggests) or whether you're mostly capable of photographing "nekkid ladies."

Quite an odd thing happened to me at a Nameless meeting (remember the Nameless Ones who used to publish the olubzine CRY?) when I was introduced to a couple of fans I'd never seen nor heard of. I'm quite used to everyone knowing who I am (egoboo, egoboo, little star) but it seemed odd that this couple knew me only from letters in RENE. "Oh, you write letters to RENE, don't you." (Dim, star, dim.)

RENE has given me a sudden craving for pop corn. Soon I'll have to stop and make some, lest my head explode. The Emerson column on fanzines seems a very nice idea, rambling on about the ones he has read quietly distinguishes the fanzines column from the usual/common collection of mini-reviews. Dave Wixon's articles are steadily improving; the last two I could actually follow. Entirely too much about conventions this; I want to hold a Non-Con which has no programming and no hotel and no hucksters and no attendees. In fact, I may hold my Non-Con tonight, and send you a Non-Con report when it is over. ...Okay, it's over. Here's my report: -----

JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSON



Mike Glicksohn
141 High Park Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M6P 2S3
Canada

Dear Fred,

With only six days left before the deadline for contributions to your next issue I doubt I'll even have time to read this mammoth fanzine, let alone loc it and get that loc to you away out there in frigid Minneapolis. But it is in the nature of the fannish spirit (twelve year old Chivas, at that age it shouldn't even be allowed to fanac) to at least attempt these seemingly hopeless tasks. Besides, if I force myself to read enough Aussiecon reports I just might remember enough of what took place to get down to writing my own.

I've not even started reading the issue yet (this is going to be one of those loc-as-you-read exercises) but I must comment on the marvellous illustrations that accompany Denny's first installment. Reed has not only reproduced Denny perfectly (something not even his mother was able to do) but provided a delightful complement to the written report as well. I'm totally envious of people who can get manuscripts illustrated by tame local artists: it's almost enough to make me try writing a first draft of my own report and sending it out to some artistically talented friend who can be convinced he owes me a favour. But such a radical and reasonable departure from my normal writing style would probably prove too great a shock to my system...sigh....

The report itself is an excellent example of fine fannish writing. Denny has a deft humorous touch that I envy and has created a report that conveys the necessary information in an entertaining and enjoyable way. In fact, it's discouraging to read a report that well written! Other than honestly felt compliments, though, there is little I can say about what Denny has written. His facts are correct and his impressions gel with my own: I hope I can write my own report even half as well as this one. (But what else might we have expected from someone trained by making meeting minutes minor comic masterpieces?)

Interesting to compare Gordy's positive reaction to fan reviews with the more generally held opinion that the vast majority of fan press reaction is worthless. Doubly interesting when one thinks that, popular as he may be as a person, Gordy gets more than his fair share of shallow pans from so-called fannish reviewers. (I'm a mite embarrassed by the admission that while I recall the exchange between Lester and Harlan that Gordy mentions I thought it took place in Pittsburg, or certainly somewhere here in the east. A common fannish affliction, I know, but unsettling nevertheless.)

Yet more kudos (I got a special on them this week so they're cheaper than usual) for Reed's splendid cartoon of Gordy. Again he caught his subject perfectly and really added to the article.

David's Primer on Fannishness is a fine piece of exposition and shows a real feel for the subject. It's pretty basic, of course, and won't hold any revelations for Terry Hughes or Arnie Katz (or even Fred Haskell for that matter) but for club members who aren't familiar with that area of fandom it's a fine introduction. It isn't exactly your typical fanzine review column but David does manage to convey the feel of some of the fanzines he mentions. (Others will be recognizeable to fans who've already read them but won't really have much reality to newcomers, but I don't think David was all that worried about that.) (Those TAB trading cards are sf fans, not authors, though.)

It doesn't surprise me that wedging Ken Ford under the back wheels of a bogged down auto was a last ditch effort. I'm sure it turned out to be the last ditch poor old Ken ever knew. (I know Ford has a better idea but that certainly wasn't it.) Having met Ken at the Aussiecon, and shared a few litres of wine with him, I can understand the confusion in his besotted brain that led to this unlikely experiment. Ken probably had vague memories of once having heard something like "give me a fool, crumb, and I shall move the world" and so he volunteered.

What's this? What? What? The ghastly spectre of editorial intervention rearing its ugly head over the lettercolumn? Put extra thought and care into our letters?! When we haven't even put any in at all yet? That's positively unfannish. Discuss the proper pronunciation of Dullgrin in an entertaining manner? Hell's bells! Fred Haskell's been deposed and an imposter has taken his place!

Hey! A fine and friendly fannish thing has just occurred which I will share with you. I just got a call from Ed Cagle and Dave Locke from the inebriated wilds of darkest Oklahoma and we toasted each other in Chivas and tequila while exchanging fabulous fannish chitchat. This is a nice feeling and I shall now attack both RENE and my Chivas with renewed fannish enthusiasm. It isn't every fan who doesn't get to talk to Ed Cagle because he's busy being felt up. Dave Locke fills in nicely though...in the short run....

It is inspirational to discover that in addition to his fecund facility to faithfully render fannish foibles and freaks Reed Waller also writes like a madman. If I ever have the time I'll have to go back to the last RENE and read the bit he's talking about...oops...er...well...you understand...sometimes we don't have time to read every page...heh, heh....

It is a damn good thing Jim Young doesn't live in the same universe as the rest of us. If he did he might well be contagious.

Your juxtapositioning of the locs from Paul and Doug shows sound editorial judgement (or pure shit luck, whichever comes first) and it's hard to argue with either of them. The question of the degree of intelligence and imagination and tolerance possessed by sf fans is one that gets a fair amount of paper time and I



happen to be of the impression that the slogan "Fans are slans" is about as inaccurate a description as it's possible to come up with. Perhaps the percentage of tolerant and intelligent people in fandom is five times what it is in the so-called mundane world but that still leaves three out of four of us fuggheads, fascists or fools. (Luckily I'm on my own here but it doesn't say much for you, Reed and Jim I'm afraid.) It shouldn't ever surprise a fan to discover examples of blatant stupidity in fandom, but for some odd reason it often does. Of course, we all like to think that our circle is that superior quarter but....

I'm impressed as hell by your clever reproduction of my postcard complete with what I assume to be original typos. Very droll. However, I've an offer for either Reed or Ken, whoever performed the graphic augmentation: if he'll draw me up a sheet of those little stamps, suitable for electrostencilling, I'll happily pay a moderate honorarium!

Sigh...listen Roytac, ol' burrito, I didn't say men dressed as women were funny. I took Ben Indepph to task for assuming that was so, and pointed out that what they were saying was the funny part. It's appalling to learn that a TAFF delegate can't even read yet! (Have fun in England, though, mon ami, and keep Bowers out of trouble for me, okay?)

While I've never seen "Tuckus" spelt with an "n" before, Rich's analysis is otherwise exquisite in its scholarship and insight. For his information concerning the sweet potato construction of the Ficken pies naturally I yam grateful.

Reed is a man of remarkable abilities. For his poem I'm most grateful. He says it all, and beautifully.

The full circle interconnectedness of fandom is a wondrous thing. Earlier tonight, in a loc to Sam Long relating marginally to the pronunciation of the word "loc," I related an incident that occurred between me and Peter Roberts many months ago in England. And here in RENE several hours and a few glasses later I find that very same vegetable relating, albeit poorly, the same incident. If this doesn't establish the existance of Atlantis, the astral plane, poltergeists and Bill Bowers' medusa oblong garter I don't know what would.

The unfortunate part of it all, of course, is that the fan fiction by Hector

Jonse is probably one of the better peices to see print this year.

My brain seethes with nasty ways of agreeing with you in re the artistic ability of Brad Parks (there is a National Hockey League defenseman named Brad Park and many of the patterns he traces on the ice while back-checking might well be the inspiration for our Brad's artistic endeavors) but I shall refrain from doing so because someone once told me it isn't nice to say nasty things about people, you should just say nothing. I don't necessarily agree with that but it couldn't hurt just this once. Ouch...owwww...eeek...!!!

Terry Hughes isn't fooling anyone with that phoney amnesia schtick. That naked lady next to him is Dan Steffan as we all well know! (Come to think of it, that might well be a sight to induce amnesia after all....)

Anyway, don't let the insensitive Philistines wear you down, Fred. Keep publishing exactly the sort of material that you like, and let the buffalo chips fall where they may. RUNE is one of the best, most entertaining and most worthwhile values around and you've evry right o be pleased with it. (Not that there isn't slight room for an improvement cr two, but that's part of the fun of publishing.)

Another good issue, and I'm happy to have shared in it!

MIKE GLICKSOHN

Dear Fred,

Donald Bailey
16811 San Bernardino Road
Covina, CA 91722

I read with interest James Styles' letter in RUNE 45 and decided your readers should have the whole story of my undiplomatic behavior. This incident took place shortly after the Aussiecon Committee realized the true importance of the Minneapolis in '73 bid and abdicated the Con Suite in our favour (Ken Keller please note). During the course of the party, I recognized Mr. Styles as a Klingon agent (who else would eat a tribble pie?)! I was about to handle the matter in the grand tradition of Capt. Kirk, delegate it and go chase women, when a vision appeared before me. Hovering three feet off the ground was Fred Haskell wearing yellow robes and a propeller beanie with a typewriter under one arm and a stack of RUNEs in the other. "Go forth and distribute," said the vision as it placed the RUNEs in my hands.

I began distributing RUNEs in a fog of fannish frenzy. Before I knew what was happening, I was offering a RUNE to Jim Styles. Our eyes met and he knew I had uncovered his secret. In desperation he attacked me with what looked like a description of the Star Trek game but in reality was a dastardly Klingon weapon. Somehow, I parried his initial attack. He drove me backward but much to my astonishment, he couldn't penetrate my guard. With blinding speed I feinted, disengaged into his bellybutton and fainted. I awoke almost immediately to discover the battle won. Only then did I realize I had accomplished the impossible. My own skill could not have defeated such a dangerous foe. The entire battle was controlled by my RUNE sword. It had left James Styles alive but it had eaten his Klingonish soul and his bellybutton.

And that's the way it was.

DONALD (formerly of Minneapolis) BAILEY

Dear Fred,

Dennis Lien
2408 S. Dupont Ave., Apt. 1
Minneapolis, MN 55405

Please add somewhere in 46 if not too late: Announcement That I Almost Forgot to Announce -- Sydney Cove in '88 bid is headed up by Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. As I recall, pre-supporting memberships are in US funds \$1.50. I don't know if Eric has a US treasurer yet or not but in any case if local fen and/or RUNE readers would like to join they can send the money with their address to me and as soon as I've acquired enough to make a bank draft convenient I'll forward it on. Help Australian fandom make 1988 the greatest 46th Worldcon ever....

DENNY LIEN

{{We Also Heard From: Susan Wood ("who wishes she could write like Denny Lien. His Aussiecon report is a superb blend of reporting and humour...."), Stanley Greene, Coug barbour, Ben Indick, KJ Dillon, H.J.N. Andruschak, Kim Bulot, R.A. Simms, and Tim Marion. Thanks everyone....}}

EDITORIAL

by Fred Haskell

You know this issue is late. You may have presumed that this was for all, or at least most, of the usual reasons. If so, you were correct in your presumption. Nothing spectacular, just that fine blend of procrastination and glitches with which most fans are so familiar, with a dash of the flu thrown in to keep it interesting. But not that interesting, so I must now move on to another topic.

And that topic is: "What about the Job Displacement Program in the City of the Future?" According to Philip Proctor, there are some very startling new developments in both the Job Displacement Program and the City of the Future; however the broad scope of this issue really needn't concern us here. What concerns us here is the regional, and even local, repercussions of the State of Affairs. After all, the crux of any issue is really how it affects us. And the crux of this issue is that next issue will be my last issue. Yes dear friends, my RUNE-editor job will soon be displaced. The circle will have turned, and I, the citizen-editor, having fought the Good Fight, shall be able to return to my gardening as Official Happy Deadwood of Minn-stf. This is obviously a profound effect upon me; how then will this affect you?

Well, for one thing, if you've been thinking of contributing something to appear in Volume Seven -- the Haskell Years -- of RUNE, next issue will be your last chance to do so. And if you hadn't been thinking of contributing something, you might want to think about it now -- I'm hoping that RUNE 47 can be a very festive issue with goodies galore, and I can only do that with your help.

And of course, after I leave, RUNE shall continue on. I took the job knowing that I would eventually quit and give somebody else a chance to edit, just as Beverly Swanson did before me. It is quite possible that the next editor will continue to put out a RUNE very much like mine, but it is even more likely that heshe will put it out in hiser own special way. Right now, of course, it is impossible to say who will be the next editor, or what direction the zine will take -- after all, the new Board of Directors hasn't even been elected yet. But whatever the outcome, I'm sure that the RUNE will be quite enjoyable, and I certainly hope that you'll give as much support and enthusiasm to the next editor as you've given me.

* * *

Since I became editor of RUNE, I've received a number of letters from fans starting up local clubs, usually asking advice on how to attract members, how to get things going, what sorts of activities to persue, and the like. Even though I am one of the Foundling Fathers of Minn-stf, I am always at a loss to suggest anything. Minn-stf was born in happy anarchy, met because the five of us liked each other (more or less) and enjoyed getting together, and initially grew by personal contacts rather than concerted efforts for recruitment. And of the bunch of us, only Frank Stodolka really tried to hustle up new members. I guess the major growth spurts in our early years came from the Minicons -- where the publicity attracted local science fiction readers and exposed them to fans. But unfortunately I cannot break any of this down into advice to new groups on how to do it; and in fact I have passed all the letters of this nature on to other

people in the club to answer. The most recent of these letters was from Stanley Greene, 740 Sycamore St #6, Red Bluff CA 96080. He says he is part of a new fan group in Northern California with 23 members, and would like to have any interested fans in the area contact him. Or, if somebody out there in RUNELand has any advice, or just wants to write, there you go....

* * *

Well, it's Hugo nominating time again, and as Steve Beatty mentions in his letter this it seems like it's about time that Ken Fletcher get a Hugo. Now I've known Ken for about ten years, and he's always been a fine artist, but it seems like in the past year or so he's really come on. He has become one of the few true masters of on stencil art around (which, let's face it, is about as fannish as you can get -- how much commercial work is there done on stencil?), and his ability and perception in general have increased greatly. You quite probably know all this from seeing his work in RENE and other fanzines. What you may not fully realize is how delightfully twisted he is. I'll come to him with a concept, or a caption, and ask him if he can do it. He'll blink at me from those thick glasses of his, brush his hair out of his eyes, and nod. Or quite admit that he might be able to come up with something like that. And then he'll sit down and do something that is totally off the wall and unusual, totally bizarre, and which fits the concept or caption I've given him perfectly, even though coming at it from a completely unexpected direction. Or on the other hand, he can do perfectly good "straight" art. Or most anything in between. And does, and gives it to fanzines. I really must say that even if I didn't know Ken Fletcher personally, and even if I didn't know what a very fine fellow he is, I'd still want to see him get a Hugo for the superb work he's been doing lately. And I really hope that enough of you agree to make it so this year.

* * *

Well. Yes. Ah, before I toddle off, I just want to remind you that Minicon 11 is coming up in a month or so, and we'd just love to see you there. Minicons are traditionally very fun conventions, with lots of interesting things to do. And if you don't know quite what you can do there, you might want to contact the committee about doing some work for the con. There is, after all, few better ways to get involved and meet people than working with others in a joint effort such as a convention. Or just come and enjoy. Whatever. I'll be looking forward to seeing you there.

FRED HASKELL



Fred goes over proofsheets
3:45am 21 May '74
Ken Fletcher

OFFICIAL MINN-STF BUSINESS PAGE

UPCOMING MINN-STF MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS (all Saturday - 1:00pm)

March 13 -Caryl and Alison Bucklin, 3812 Elliot Ave S, Mpls (825-0018)
Last date for nominations for the next election of Minn-stf
Board of Directors; it is hoped that ballots will then be
available to be passed out.

March 27 -Denny Lien, 2408 Dupont Ave S, Apt 1, Mpls (374-9021)

April 10 -New Hobbitat, 2633 Dupont Ave S, Mpls (377-7387)

April 16-18 -MINICON 11

May 1 -Bill and Shelby Prock, 1109 14th Ave SE, Mpls (331-6391)

May 15 -Erica Simon, 2230 Hillside, St. Paul (647-0784)

MINNESOTA SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY, INC.

Vacancies on the Board and Officers were filled as follows:

Board of Directors - Don Bailey

President - Frank Stodolka

Vice-President - Ken Hoyne

Secretary - Gerry Wassenaar

THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION was approved by the Board of Directors and upon
publication in RUNE shall become a BY-LAW:

The Minicon Committee is delegated the authority to contract for all
reasonable convention expenses, and to pay for them out of Minicon monies.
Extraordinary expenses of the Minicon must be examined and approved by the
Board of Directors in advance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

With Minicon only weeks away, the concommittee again solicits aid from
interested Minn-stfers. In addition to gophers, the committee could use help
with registration, art auction, art show, programming, audio-visual, and party
activities. As with previous Minicons, interest and enthusiasm, rather than
experience, are all that you need. For further information, please contact any
committee member, or write: Minicon, PO Box 2128, Loop Station, Mpls, MN 55402.

There are some back issues of RUNE available from our Circulation Manager,
Dave Wixon (343 East 19th St, #5B, Mpls, MN 55404). We have a few copies of #44
and a good supply of #45 available. The cost is 75¢ each.

