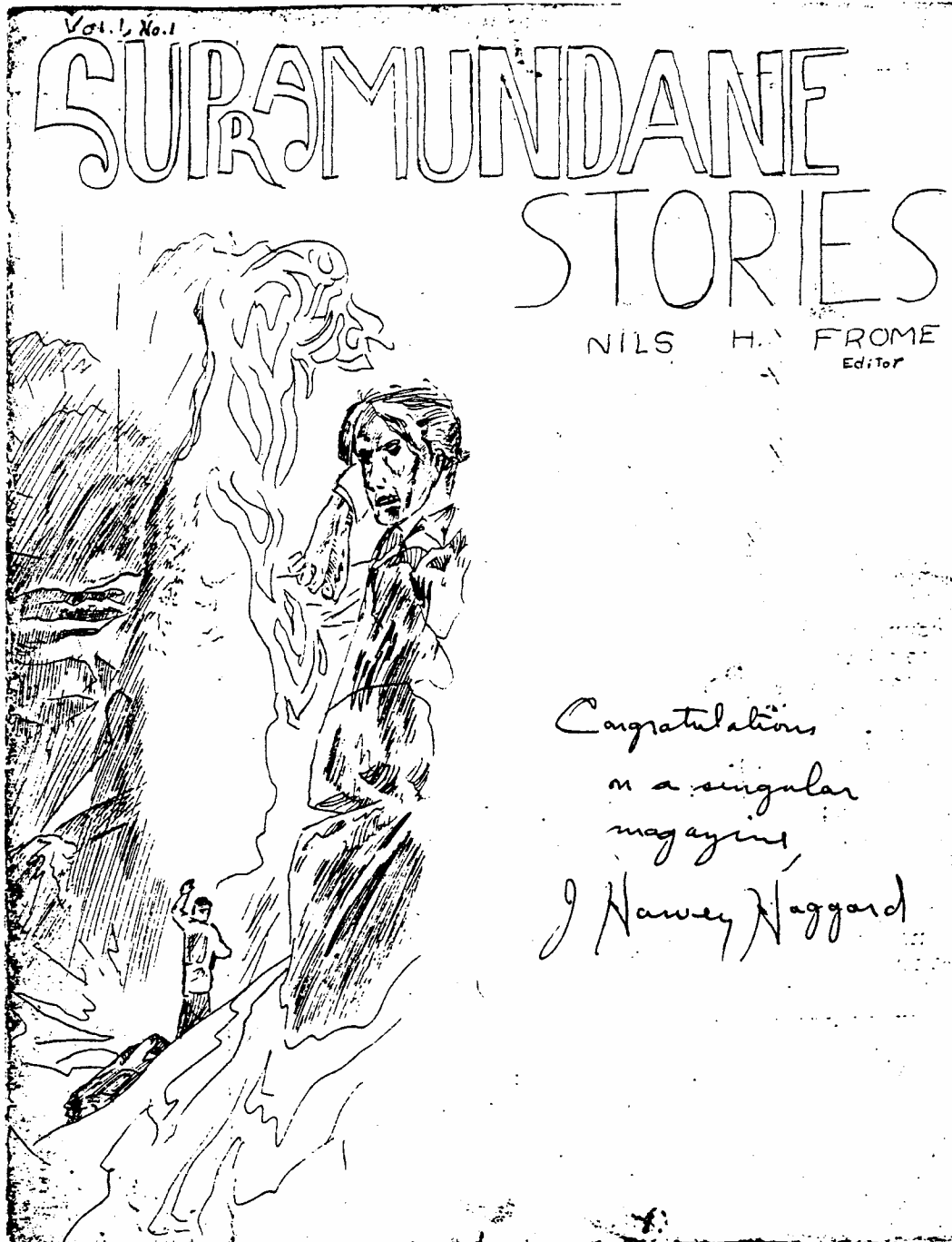


WCSFAzine

The Fannish E-zine of the West Coast Science Fiction Association
Dedicated to Promoting the West Coast Science Fiction Community

#5

Jan 2008



*Congratulations
on a singular
magazine,
J. Harvey Haggard*

THE FIRST CANADIAN SCI-FI FANZINE TO IMPACT FANDOM WORLDWIDE

SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES #1, OCTOBER 1936. FAN-EDITOR: NILS HELMER FROME.

IMPORTANT STUFF YOU CAN SAFELY IGNORE

WCSFAzine Issue # 5, Jan 2008, Volume 2, Number 1, Whole number 5, is the monthly E-zine of the West Coast Science Fiction Association (founded 1993), a registered society with the general mandate of promoting Science Fiction and the specific focus of sponsoring the annual VCON Science Fiction Convention (founded 1971).

Anyone who attends VCON is automatically a member of WCSFA, as is anyone who belongs to the British Columbia Science Fiction Association, a social organization (founded 1970) which is the proud owner of the VCON trademark. Said memberships involve voting privileges at WCSFA meetings.

Current Executive of WCSFA:

President: Palle Hoffstein.
Vice-President/VCON Hotel Liaison: Keith Lim.
Treasurer: Tatina Osokin.
Secretary, & Archivist: R. Graeme Cameron.
Member-At-Large: Danielle Stephens (VCON 33 Chair).
Member-At-Large: Deej Barens.
Member-At-Large: Christina Carr.

Since WCSFAzine is *NOT* the official organ of WCSFA, the act of reading WCSFAzine does not constitute membership in WCSFA or grant voting privileges in WCSFA. Therefore you don't have to worry about WCSFA policies, debates, finances, decisions, etc. Unless you want to. Active volunteers always welcome. WCSFA Website:

< <http://www.user.dcnnet.com/clintbudd/WCSFA/> >

IMPORTANT STUFF THAT IS VERY COOL

Your membership fee: Nothing!
Send your subscription fee to: Nobody!
Your responsibilities: None!
Your obligations: None!
Membership requirements: None!
Got something better to do: No problem!

WCSFAzine *IS* a fannish E-zine publication sponsored by WCSFA to promote and celebrate every and all aspects of the Science Fiction Community on the West Coast of Canada.

You can download the latest issue (and past issues) from < <http://efanzines.com> > or contact the Editor at: < rgraeme@shaw.ca > and ask me to email you a PDF version of each issue as soon as it is ready.

WCSFAzine is not intended to be an information newswire service, or an industry promotional outlet, but rather an eclectic ongoing anthology of bits and pieces of nifty rumours and misinformation as viewed through a fannish lens. You can expect the focus to be on the West Coast, but with a peripheral vision including the entire world of fandom. Anticipate info on upcoming books, fannish events, local clubs and conventions, film reviews, short essays, weird cover art, spin doctor publicity announcements, peculiar speculations and astounding bits of trivia to put you in touch with your fannish heritage.

WCSFAzine is not intended to be the perzine of the editor, though I will filter everything through my alleged wry sense of ~~imbecility~~ humour.

You, and I mean YOU (!) are invited to submit short (VERY short – say 2 to 3 paragraph) articles, mini-essays, letters of comment, art fillers (small pieces of art) and/or cover art to the Editor at:

R.G. Cameron, Apt 72G – 13315 104th Ave, Surrey, B.C., V3T 1V5.

Or submissions in both electronic text and B & W line drawing in jpg form to: < rgraeme@shaw.ca >

Particularly interested in personal experience/view/opinion/review articles, preferably light in tone. Also any interesting news.

No pay, but plenty of egoboo. Cheers all! The Graeme

CONTENTS:

- 01..... Cover art: Nils Helmer Frome (Cover of Supramundane Stories, Oct 1936. Faned: N.H. Frome.)
- 02..... Important Stuff.
- 03..... Contents & Editorial.
- 04..... Hidden History of VCON 1: Part Five.
- 06..... VCON 32 Now Retro! - Part Two.
- 10..... Retro Fanzines: Faned Bio: Nils Helmer Frome.
- 12..... Retro Fanzines: Supramundane Stories #1
- 14..... Sad News For Fanzineophiles..
- 15..... Good News For Fanzineophiles!
- 16..... DUFF 2008 Ballot Now Available.
- 17..... Latest Canadian Fancyclopedia Updates / Latest Zines Added to efanzines.com.
- 18..... Ask Mr. Science / Retro 1975 Elron awards.
- 19..... ‘Stardance Happening Now’ by Jeanne Robinson.
- 20..... ‘Stardance As It Happened’ By Spider & Jeanne Robinson / Author Happenings.
- 22..... Metalocalypse Review by Alyx J. Shaw.
- 24..... Retro Film Review: The Giant Claw.
- 27..... Upcoming Nifty Film Projects.
- 28..... ‘The iDol’ & ‘Some Thoughts On Beowulf The Film’ by Stan G. Hyde.
- 29..... Retro Classics Trivia: The Studio of Augustus.
- 31..... Local Events / Local Clubs.
- 32..... Non Local Clubs.
- 34..... Canadian Facebook Sites.
- 35..... Canadian Sci-Fi Web Sites of Interest / Upcoming Conventions.
- 37..... Locs: Lee Ann Lavell, John Purcell, Dave Haren, Lloyd Penney.
- 40..... Adverts.

Note: All uncredited articles are by the Ghod-Editor.

ART CREDITS:

Clip Art: 3, 18.
Sheryl Birkhead: 17.
Brad Foster: 19.
Barry Kent MacKay: 6, 12.
William Rotsler: 8, 10, 15, 16.

EDITORIAL



Well, this is a fairly hefty issue, and I'm quite pleased about that. Only a couple of days past my self-imposed deadline. Still, what with the busy holiday season and all, I never did get around to doing any fanzine reviews (I promise plenty for next issue!), but at least I finally figured out how to place pictures and text wrap around them. So now I'm definitely in the market for fillos such as you see in this issue. All the art was originally sent to me for use in my now defunct **Space Cadet** zine, so I hope the artists don't mind their work finally seeing the light of day in this new zine published on behalf of WCSFA.

Actually, I believe I purchased the 50 or so assorted pieces of Barry Kent Mackay art in my possession from Taral Wayne originally, think it was part of his effort to raise money for CUFF, if memory serves.

And the clip art of a Space Cadet you see beside this editorial was part of a package of nifty Sci-Fi clip art Clint Budd gave me years ago. It and several variations used to appear in my old **Space Cadet** editorials. Happy to have them back. Evocative of the Sci-Fi era of my youth.

I'd be interested in hearing from readers what they think of WCSFAzine, its contents, whether it's living up to the mandate of promoting WCSFA, VCON & the West Coast SF Community. I is doing my best by myself, but am always eager for contributions, especially if dealing with some aspect of Canadian SF&F. It's a fun task, a bit wearing at times, but my policy of doing at least a little bit almost every day seems to be working. I hope you agree.

I should have the next issue finished by February 1st. Many thanks to Bill Burns at < <http://www.efanzines.com> > for hosting. Please send me feedback! < rgraeme@shaw.ca > Cheers! Ghod-Editor The Graeme

CONVENTION STUFF

THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF VCON 1: Part Five

THE VANCOUVER SF CONVENTION - APRIL 9-10, 1971:

by The Graeme

SATURDAY, 10TH APRIL, 1971:

((Last issue I covered the earlier part of the day: a talk on Lovecraft by Professor Mason Harris, Ursula K. LeGuin's keynote speech, & Professor lecture "Sf, INSULATION OR ILLUMINATION?"))

Following were two panels titled 'SF AND SOCIAL REALISM' and 'SF AND SERIOUS STUDIES' of which I saw only one (or possibly the two were combined due to time considerations?). At any rate my diary comment was:

"The panel was extremely well done. All in all, a very intellectual-type convention, as most American cons tend toward the mindless adulation type I'm told."

By whom? I may have been listening when Michael Walsh talked with Frank Denton, to judge by this quote from Michael's Province article:

"The Vancouver gathering tended towards the highly educated end of the spectrum, Denton said, and he agreed with Leland Sapiro that this convention was one of the better ones he'd been to. 'It's certainly a lot more scholarly than a lot of the American conventions,' he said." And then Michael added: "The tone of the convention, one of literate appreciation rather than fascinated adulation, was set from the beginning by the science fiction sophisticates from the sponsoring clubs."

Science fiction sophisticates!!!Gee, it sure helps when the media is one of us, eh? Lesson number one: infiltrate the media! Thanks, Michael.

There followed a supper break, and 29 of us went down to the Ho Inn in Chinatown, including Ursula and her husband Charles LeGuin, a Professor of history at Portland State.

Back at the convention, beneath the crystal chandeliers of the York room, took place the much-touted 'mystery event', nothing less than the momentous occasion of the first awarding of the ELRON AWARDS! (Fiendishly conceived by the fiendish minds of Mike Bailey and Brent MClean.) This was reported in the Province Newspaper by Michael Walsh thusly:

"Following two days of panel discussions and carefully considered lectures, the convention established the Science Fiction Worst Awards, presenting trophies in four newly-created categories."

Mike Bailey, member of the UBC SF Society and a computer programmer for the federal government, introduced the idea explaining that "99 percent of all science fiction is crud."

In order to recognize "the vast majority" the convention had decided to award an Elron, a bronzed lemon on a plywood base, to the year's least outstanding efforts in the science fiction field.

(The name "Elron", Bailey said later, should really not be confused with L. Ron Hubbard [Founder of Scientology].... the Elron doesn't take its name from L. Ron, say its creators.)

Voted LEAST PROMISING NEW WRITER was Robert Moore Williams, author of '21st Century Vigilante whose "unremembered Zanthar easily made the famed Lancer Easy Eye series."

Arrgh! In WCSFAzine #3 I speculated that "This Elron was probably awarded for his 'Jongor' fantasy series, first published in the 1940s and reissued in 1970." But in fact it was for his Zanthar series: 'Zanthar of the Many Worlds' (1967), 'Zanthar at the Edge of Never' (1968), 'Zanthar at Moon's Madness' (1968), and 'Zanthar at Trip's End' (1969). Apparently Zanthar was a (sword-wielding?) Professor of some sort. The mind boggles.

Williams beat out Canadian-born A.E. Van Vogt for the award although Van Vogt, an author who sometimes works on 30 books simultaneously, was described by Bailey as "the penultimate hack."

WORST NOVEL OF THE YEAR award went to the former "dean of science fiction," Robert Heinlein, proving, said Bailey, that "an author who really tries can reach the pinnacle of failure." [Heinlein undoubtedly received the award because of his novel "I Will Fear No Evil" which was published in 1970.]

Selected passages from the nominated novels were read, to hilarious advantage, by Paul Green, a UBC creative writing graduate and freelance broadcaster who recently completed a series of radio shows exploring cycles in science fiction for CBC-FM.

The film, 'Beneath The Planet Of The Apes', scored as WORST MELODRAMATIC PRESENTATION and Lin Carter, writer of painfully derivative sword and sorcery novels, was voted the ELRON HALL OF FAME for his "consistent standard of poor writing."

I can add that a clip from one of my 8mm animation experiments was shown (somewhat unfairly) as an example of the quality of special effects to be found in the winning film. My clip depicted a Godzilloid creature stumbling across a tabletop. People laughed. Good. They were supposed to.

After the awards the convention partied into the night, its members dispersing the following Sunday morning.

Of late there has been some controversy as to who actually put on the convention. Michael Walsh, in his article, stated that the convention was jointly sponsored by the UBC and SFU Science Fiction Societies, which is true. At the same time, the UBC people (and some of the SFU people, Daniel Say, for instance) belonged to BCSFA. However BCSFA did not yet

exist as an entity separate from UBC SFFEN. For the record, the sponsoring organizations are listed on the first page of the program book as follows:

- B.C. Science Fiction Association.
- Simon Fraser University Science Fiction Society (SF3).
- University of B.C. Science Fiction Society (UBC SFFEN).

In reality, the lion's share of the credit goes to Daniel Say and Mike Bailey who functioned as Co-Chairmen. Writing in BCSFAzine #100, Mike Bailey comments:

"I should point out we never had any official positions. In retrospect, based on the way we acted, Daniel Say and I were the two who did things. Dan ran around, got things done. I handled operations during the execution of the convention, moderated the talks, introduced the GoH, and I sort of controlled the money because I was signing officer for the BC club (later known as BCSFA)."

The last is an interesting memory slip on Mike's part, for the club was already known as BCSFA BEFORE THE CONVENTION! As per my membership receipt, for instance.

The convention lacked certain amenities normally associated with SF cons. There was no banquet, no art show, and no dealers' room. Attempts had been made to bring these about, but not enough people were interested. But the convention did have a program book, a rather interesting first effort. Enclosed within a folded card-photo of the city (probably provided by the city or the Chamber of Commerce or some such) was a brief 3 page booklet outlining the convention events and some of the attractions the city had to offer. Gastown and Chinatown are mentioned as locations of interest, with the advice: *"Ask locals at the convention for their opinions on these and other places."* That certainly saves a lot of space from being wasted on descriptions of restaurants and such, doesn't it? A model of brevity.

In addition a number of suitably fannish ads were placed:

- *"FOR SALE OR TRADE: One used scout-ship. Must sell or for what have you, due to death of owner. Slightly damaged but a bargain for the mechanically adept. Contact M. Walsh."*

This a reference to a story written by Michael about an ant alien from ANTares who is unfortunately stepped on before he can accomplish his mission on Earth, leaving a teeny tiny spaceship bereft of owner.

- *"WANTED: Skeleton of child less than one year old. It doesn't have to be wired together. Write to Brent Maclean."*

- *"FOR SALE: Souls bought and sold. Good prices paid. One of this areas largest dealers. Also buy lifes blood for fan cocktails of Gestetner ink and blood. Ask for Devil Sayton."*

And lastly:

- *"WANTED: Money. Additional donations are gratefully accepted by Rob Scott and Daniel Say. Help the Con break even."*

Well, it didn't, sad to say. The Con lost about \$100, a loss split evenly between the two university clubs. Despite this, the Vancouver Science Fiction Convention of 1971 was considered a roaring success. I know. I was there.

JUNE 1971:

Mike Bailey put out a newsletter (another Gestetner effort, 3 pages of faint lettering) in which he mused:

"We went to a Con, April 9 & 10. Do you remember it?... We were troubled by feelings of doubt. Did we have as good a con as we could have and on such short notice? Did we blow it?... I think we did okay, and best of all, the experience was priceless...."

He then went on to comment on the possibility of doing another convention sometime, and bemoaned the fact that at least 100 members of UBC SFFEN failed to show up for the first one (Gads! UBC SFFEN must have had a HUGE membership roll for 1970/1971!). He then suggested a possible guest for next year's convention: *"Does Philip K. Dick sound like a good Guest of Honour? Sigh...if only...."*

(His wish came true!)

Mike also asked: *"Did you read that review of our convention printed in LOCUS by Charles Brown? He had some not-too-nice things to say...Locus probably goes to about 1500 fans all over the world, so it's fame of sorts."* I wonder who wrote the review?

As a result of the review, or perhaps Editor Charlie Brown's editorial comments, or both, it was decided *not* to present the ELRONS come the next VCON, since they had evidently earned local fandom a negative reputation. Apparently the concept of 'spooF' awards was not yet acceptable. (The ELRONS are fandom's oldest ongoing spooF awards, predating the 'HOGUS' by one year and the 'BLACKHOLES' by two.) Fortunately the ELRONS returned for VCON 3.

On an impulse I just checked my index to the WCSFA/BCSFA archive. Alas the earliest issue of LOCUS in the archive is #126 November 4th, 1972, so no chance to read what Bailey saw. If anyone out there has the issue with the VCON 1 (called 'Vancouver SF Convention' at the time) review I'd appreciate being emailed the text at < rgraeme@shaw.ca >.

Next issue I will begin recounting the tale of P.K. Dick's life in Vancouver during and after VCON 2.

TO BE CONTINUED

VCON 32 -- OCTOBER 19, FRIDAY, 2007.

This being the continuing story of my activity at VCON 32. There are many schools of thought on how to write a conreport. There's the 'make it all up' school, which can be loads of fun to read, but is anathema to fan historians like myself; the 'document the programming' school, which is only as good or bad as the programming is; the 'insert witty in-joke party-on' school regaling puzzled readers with tales of old-time fans and Smofs (Secret Masters of Fandom) at play, so obtuse it might as well be in code; and the 'and then I did this and then I did that' school whose readability depends on the wit and powers of observation of the writer. I come down firmly on the side of the latter school because I believe it offers, at the risk of being boring, the best chance of reporting what went on, who said what, who did what to whom, and also the best chance of being accurate albeit solely within the confines of one fan's personal experience. To put it another way, I like a con report which includes everything you wish you had remembered twenty years down the road but had long since forgotten. A moment captured in time. Instant history. But that's just me.

I wake up freezing my ass off. Seems I wound up sleeping on top of the covers AND had forgotten to turn the heat on. I'm an idiot. 'IceFan Found Frozen in Freezer Hotel Room' scream the headlines (as nearly happened to Truman Capote in a Moscow hotel decades ago, though in his case snow drifted in through the open window and covered his bed, whereas I merely *felt* as if that had happened to me... besides, my room was nowhere near as cold, but I'm a sensitive lad I am...).

One blood warming bath later I am one frisky fan bouncing about excitedly at 8:00 and eager for the con to begin. But since it won't start till 2:00 pm I bounce out the door (past started hotel staff – I am 56 years old after all) looking to top up my grocery supplies by exploring Richmond, good old sub-sea-level 'sure hope the dykes hold out' Richmond.

I check out the Aberdeen Mall across the street but they are well and truly Canadian and won't open till 11:00 pm. Fortunately a Starbucks is awake where I slurp up some coffee and inhale a wrap. (Which reminds me of a hand-lettered sign I saw once promoting a genuine family-owned local restaurant as "not your usual squat & gobble"... rather liked that...)

Bounce back across the street to explore the T&T Supermarket next to the hotel. The one in Surrey near where I live carries a mixture of Asian and Western goods, but this Richmond T&T contains hardly any Western brands. I am amazed. And confused. I grab hotdogs, some Pocky candy, and a whole bunch of Hong Kong Coffee 'sticks' with premixed portions of instant coffee, silicate-based creamer and sugar. Very handy this. (I should like to try some 'squid-on-a-stick' such as Stan G. Hyde purchased on a beach in Japan during the Osaka World's Fair, but they don't seem to have any. Oh well.)

Having determined that I can't use my room's TV for showing videos (the wiring is deeply imbedded, like brain surgery gone awry) I head to Con-ops to see what they can do. Turns out Trapa had left an Email on my computer (which is back home) saying I can have the extra TV from Con-ops, but that I would need one of those coloured triple prong cables to connect. I have none such. Panic! Con-ops tells me to see Susan Walsh in Hospitality since she was soon to go home for more VCON equipment. Run into Hospitality and babble excitedly at Susan. No, she wasn't going home. But her husband Michael was there preparing to bring stuff, so she whips out her cell phone and I get to babble excitedly to him about what I need. I tend to panic easily, being one of those people who can't truly relax until everything is 100% set up and ready to go. This is why I prefer to set up hours in advance. Looming deadlines tend to discombobulate me. Michael says he'll see what he can do.

I borrow a hotel luggage cart and take the proffered TV up to my room and set it on the traditional hotel writing desk opposite the traditional hotel bed. Lo and behold, my single prong cable connects my VCR to the TV and everything works perfectly. I feel a bit silly.

Con-ops has given me a giant fifty-pound two-century old walkie talkie (or such is my impression) named 'Sable' to keep in touch. I try using it to let them know the video room is up and running. Nothing. Not even static.

I go back to Con-ops and complain. "Your battery is dead", they explain. They give me another walkie talkie, this one named 'Bat' (Trapa's gang normally do operations for 'Furry' conventions, hence the critter names). Back up to my room to try it out. Nothing but static. Back down to Con-ops. "You're pressing the wrong button." Back up to my room. Hey, it works! Cool!

Every member of the Con-com is given a walkie talkie to keep in touch with Con-ops and each other. Excellent idea. Wonderful idea. After the 20th message in as many minutes inquiring "Where is treasurer/art boards/rare type of screw/paperwork/cash box/name tags/treasurer/key to hospitality/hotel contract/hotel liaison/rented truck/treasurer/etc?" I turn mine off but cart it around with me throughout the convention to give people the impression I have some kind of authority, occasionally turning it on, especially in elevators, to release a blast of static to reinforce the impression. I figure if



I have a problem I can always turn it on to request assistance, and if someone has a problem with me, I don't want to know about it, so keep it turned off.

Actually, what I really want is one of those WWII backpack radios with the big antennae to impress the mundanes, but none are available, alas.

Next my first Con event! Standing in line to get my name tag, program book, goodie bag, etc. Ah yes, the traditional long slowly-moving line because registration was still in the process of setting up. I take a deep breath and suck in the tradition-laden air with great satisfaction. Even better, the program book contains no programming, and the pocket program, which does, is still being printed. Registered fans are told to come back later, much later, since the pocket program will 'probably' be available, depending, eventually...Aha! A brand new tradition! I feel giddy at the prospect. Them as are into fannish traditions know how important it is for things to go wrong to make a convention memorable and much talked about.

Unfortunately it's only a matter of minutes before the pocket programs arrive and the registration process revs up just in time for the first large group of eager congoers to flood in. Keith Lim and helpers turn out to be far too hardworking and efficient for any legends to arise. Oh well.

The program book – put together by Pauline Walsh – has a gorgeous medieval/fantasy cover by Artist GoH Martin Springett, clear and precise policy rules, GoH bios, a brief history of Canvention, a complete listing of all Aurora Awards nominees (onsite voting is allowed up to 6:00 pm Saturday), a LARGE 2-page spread map of the convention space CLEARLY labelled, detailed costuming and masquerade rules, art show auction rules, a page of gaming info re activities in the gaming room, an article on Filking by Cindy Turner pointing out that not only are Filk Gohs Michelle Dockery and Tony Fabris talented musicians, but so too are Artist GoH Martin Springett and Author GoH Peter Beagle -- a filker's dream lineup! – plus a brief article on Cuff Winner Peter Jarvis by myself, assorted program participant bios, Con-com list, and several listings of significant events in SF&F history. Not bad for 24 pages! Great job, Pauline!

2:00 Pm. Time for the first movie to get underway in the video room. I slip an old fifties flick into play, check the closet safe one last time to make sure my valueless valuables are secure, and nervously leave the 'video' room unlatched so that people can come and go as they please, hopefully without taking anything. I'll be checking back from time to time to change videos, to see if anyone is actually watching the films on view, and to put an end to any looting that might be going on. Fortunately my fears will prove groundless.

In hospitality I run into CUFF (Canadian Unity Fan Fund) winner Peter Jarvis. Being the only candidate nominated, he had been acclaimed this year's winner by an ad hoc committee of 11 former CUFF winners. His credentials are impressive. He chaired the Torcon 3 Worldcon in 2003 and had worked on many other Canadian conventions, most notably numerous Sf cons in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. I keep meaning to ask him about Maritime fandom, a subject I know little about, but never do at any time during the convention. Easily distracted I am.

Cumberland fanartist Scott 'Honcho' Patri is also present with his trademark long dark beard and Beanie Propeller cap. He offers to do some illustrations for Peter's trip report (which he has previously done – to hilarious effect – for 2001 CUFF winner Murray Moore's 'A Trip Report Found In A Plain Manila Envelope'). I hope Peter takes him up on it.

On a whim I check out the Dealer's room, though I don't have any spare money. The Starlit Citadel people have the 'Call of Cthulhu Arkham House' board game on sale for half price! Can't resist. Have faunched for it for years. I snap it up and hurry back to my room to stash it away. Means I'll have less money to spend on provisions though.

Back in Hospitality I run into VCON Treasurer Tatina Osokin. Figure it's time to hand over my share of the cost of the video room (I pay full amount for Thursday, 50% the following 3 days). Great Ghu! I've miscalculated. I owe LESS than I had budgeted for. I've got some 'extra' money! Do I spend it wisely? Hah!

Back in the Dealer's room I snarf up the 'Call of Cthulhu Dunwich Horror' board game expansion pack. I is very pleased, then am stricken with guilt, since my wife Alyx isn't feeling well enough to attend the convention, and I have yet to purchase anything for her. After due wanderings among the tables I select a copper tiara hung with green garnet and dark hematite stones from Celtic Designs. It resembles a bronze age artifact and should go rather fetchingly with her woven-feather shoulder-cloak, I'm hoping. (Turns out, she liked it, much to my relief. Probably a bronze-age sword would have been deemed more acceptable (being an SCA enthusiast & all) but none were on offer.)

Deej Barens, functioning as an onsite public relations chief, grabs me in the hall and ~~tells~~ asks me to be interviewed for Simon Fraser University FM radio. I've been interviewed on CBC radio & TV a few times about Sci-Fi over the years, so why not?

I barge into the hotel room specified and freeze in place as Irma Arkus is in the middle of taping an interview with Eileen Kernaghan, who as a prominent author is an old hand at dealing with media people. I listen admiringly, not moving, scarcely daring to breathe (I know how sensitive those microphones can be!), as Eileen steers each question into the realm of personal experience and telling detail. It may be olde hat for her, but she makes each response fresh and lively, as if thinking of the answers for the very first time. This constitutes a good, meaty interview from the media point of view. Then it's my turn.

"Who and what are you?" asks Irma as I sit on the bed facing her.

I go into nonstop babble mode. Her eyes light up. I know she's thinking, "We got a runaway talker!", one of those people for whom dead air time does not exist, who talk off the top of their head, unleash their subconscious, reveal all, blow the lid off the industry, and so on. Who knows what scandals I'm about to expose? Or create, for that matter?

But I'm no dummy, after running through my fannish credentials I offer a series of topic hooks, like the first VCON, the first Elron Awards, the first Canadian fanzine, WCSFAzine, etc. Of course she ignores this, smiles sweetly, turns on the recorder, and asks me how Sci-Fi fandom first got started.

WELL!! I'm off and running. Fortunately, what with my Canfancyyclopedia research & all, I know quite a bit about the history of fandom. Plus I'm a firm believer in sounding like I know what I'm talking about. And if I don't know the actual facts I figure the approximate gist will do. Besides, you can get away with generalities if you throw in amusing anecdotes frequently, even if they have nothing to do with the topic at hand. But the main thing is, keep talking. Don't stop!

Somehow the topic drifts into the concept that today's present is yesterday's future, and that 'the future' turned out to be rather different from what the earliest fans anticipated. For instance: "When I was a kid in the fifties I thought for sure I'd have a summer cabin on Mars by now." For sure some people are disappointed how things turned out...at which point we both realize the conversation is threatening to be less than humorous, so immediately turn to the Elrons (which have yet to be announced).

The show is taped, not live, so I do not hesitate to unveil a number of Elrons to Irma's delight. (See WCSFAzine 3 for the complete list), such as the "Not only Green but Tidy Too!" Elron awarded to the Russian's new environmentally sensitive bomb which, according to an official spokesman, "does not contaminate the environment... it merely evaporates every living thing."

And of course I have to throw in the Elron's continuing obsession with John Norman of Gor Fame and how Ursula K. Leguin got the ball rolling on that (See WCSFAzine # 4 for the Retro 1974 Elron Awards article telling this story).

Irma finally stops recording and settles back in her chair with a smile. "That was great. We could use you as a regular on our show. It's called 'High Sci-Fi' and is broadcast every Friday at 6:00 PM (I think she said 6:00, forgot to write it down). Maybe you could do phone-in segments? Here's my card."



I have yet to take up her offer, being busy with other things, and often so tired coming home on Fridays that I can barely see, much less think. Still, could be fun. As long as I know the topic in advance so I could do a little research, enough to make me sound as if I know what I'm talking about. I do like being a shill for Sci-Fi! So why not for High Sci-Fi? Maybe in the new year...

I immediately rush off to see Don Debrandt give a reading. He is always enthusiastic and entertaining, and besides, I haven't been in touch for a while, so I am keen on finding out what he is up to these days.

Turns out, having started his career writing Sci-Fi novels like 'Quicksilver Screen' and 'Timberjak', and then mysteries like 'The Closer' and 'The Man Burns Tonight' (under the name Donn Cortez), Don is now working on a trilogy *combining* the two genres. The first book, due to be published in 2009, is titled 'Lucidity', and concerns two 'Ectives' (emotive detectives) in the near future when emotions can be read, implanted, bought, sold, or stolen.

However, he does not read from his working MS, but chooses instead to read four short (only a thousand words each) stories which are prequels of a sort. I gather he wrote them to demonstrate the potential of the underlying concept and probably used them to convince the publisher to accept the trilogy. He tells us he has a number of other stories in the same vein. Immediately friends in the audience call out to him to publish them in an anthology. He agrees it is something to consider. And why not? The four he reads are precise, satisfying, extremely interesting (Don seems to have no problem coming up with original concepts), and wryly witty. A collection should do well.

The room is packed, you see. Don is a very popular local writer, not least because he started out as a fan (indeed, he used to contribute a monthly column to BCSFAzine when I was editor in the early nineties) and, more importantly, *continues* to be a fan. And then there's his off-the-wall humour, which enlivens both his writings and his conversation.

To sum up, Don's reading is most entertaining and loads of fun. But now I'm feeling a bit tired and go up to my room to rest. Yes, a couple of people are watching the video currently being shown, but I manage to lie down on the bed and grab a quick nap. Fortunately not as much screaming in the old fifties films as there are in modern films, so the soundtrack doesn't affect my slumber.

After about an hour, refreshed, I head off to the reception which Fran Skene (a VERY prominent local fan, Chair of many conventions, frequent Faned, and originator of VCON's beloved Turkey readings) is throwing for Cuff winner Peter Jarvis. As I enter Murray Moore says "Welcome to Fran's prayer meeting" and I think, is this affair *that* dull? Then I remember. The hotel has forbidden room parties.

It is to arrgh!

However, word-of-mouth invitations to assorted prayer meetings, planning sessions and business conferences do the trick. As per usual everyone at VCON is well behaved and low-profile in their rooms (compared to say, the annual Police Chiefs convention in the States, which is notorious beyond comprehension) and the hotel has no cause for complaint.

Kudos to all attendees for exercising excellent common-sense restraint yet still managing to have good old-fashioned fannish fun.

(Note: VCON 33 *will* have a party wing. This the Concom promises.)

At the 'reception' Peter Jarvis is also present (which makes sense – Fran is throwing it in his honour after all) and I promise to give him copies of both my CUFF history (printed in Space Cadet #9 Feb 98) and my CUFF trip report (Space Cadet #10 Oct 98) but not just yet, since I want to reread them to refresh my memory for the CUFF panel we're doing come Sunday.

Next I talk to my old friend Clint Budd, currently Chair of the Canadian SF&F Awards Committee and web-master for its new website, about his recently acquired Grandfather status courtesy of his daughter Adria and son-in-law Eric. I too, am a Grandfather, at the age of 56. We congratulate and console each other, march of time and all that. I allow as to how I'm looking forward to becoming a great-great-great-great-grandfather.

Suddenly Clint gives me the ole hairy eyeball and asks: "So where is it?"

"Where's what?" I reply nervously.

"The Book of VCON."

Gholy Ghu! The Book of VCON! I had forgotten completely. Gosh darn it!

The Book of VCON is a large, hardbound scrapbook kept in the WCSFA archives (ie: in my apartment storage closet, since I'm the WCSFA archivist) which gets hauled out once a year and proffered to VCON attendees (usually by Clint, as he has volunteered to be the Book of VCON wrangler these past many years) to scribble impressions of the con, even draw illos if they wish. And of course the Guests of Honour in particular are sought after to record their opinion.

AND I FORGOT TO BRING IT! It didn't even enter my thoughts. Escaped my mind completely. Indeed I must be getting old.

I mumble something about somebody giving me a ride to go and get it, or going off by bus and Skytrain by myself, but Clint points out the weather is still bad, the video room needs tending, it's late, and besides, there's always next year. I is embarrassed I is.

Then I strike up a conversation with Gaming GoH Lisa Smedman, another popular local author, whom I've known since our university days back in the late 70s.

"They have a joke about me at Imperial Hobbies" she says brightly. (Imperial Hobbies being a major Hobby & Gaming store located in Richmond only a few blocks from the hotel) "How do you interest Lisa in a game?"

I stare blankly and shrug.

"Show it to her", she laughs. "I love all games: table top, board games, role playing, everything."

I take the opportunity to ask her about some of the books of hers I had noticed on her website, 'Valhalla's Gate' and 'Scrap yard 500'. "They're books about gaming?"

"No. They're not 'about' games. They *are* games."

"Ah", I say intelligently, making a mental note I really *must* get a new pair of glasses. Easier to make sense of what I read on screen that way, I'm sure.

Somehow the conversation drifts into a comparison of kindergarten experiences. To this day Lisa remembers vividly the trouble she stirred when she insisted on playing with the toys reserved for the boys. And that puts me in mind of the time all the boys on my block were frantically scheming to kidnap one of the new Barbie dolls from the local girls. Not that we wanted to play with Barbie, we just wanted to see what lay under Barbie's costume. T was an age of innocence... or ignorance... way back when...

Robert J. Sawyer strides into the room. I go up to him and start babbling about WCSFAzine and its mission to promote the West Coast SF community. "That includes you," I say, "you are out here so often I feel you are one of us."

He seems appreciative, if wary. Not say I blame him. Fans do the oddest things...

Next I congratulate him on receiving China's GALAXY award at the Chengdu International SF&F Festival last August. "How big a fan base have they got anyway?"

"Oh, it's only a tiny percentage of their population, less than one percent." Then his face lights up. "That's still more than a million people. And their SCIENCE FICTION WORLD magazine, which publishes my stories in translation, is the world's largest circulation SF magazine."

"That's a great market," I say.

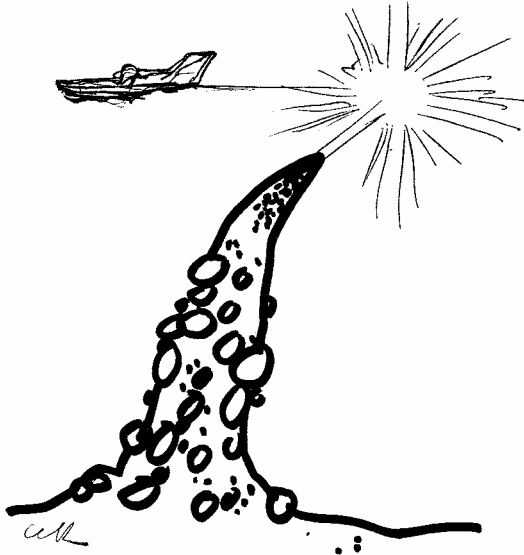
"Yes," he replies with a smile. "It is."

I'm off to change video tapes, then ensconce myself in the Hospitality suite till two in the morning. Many conversations with many people, but all pretty much a blur what with my sampling the cream ale and the pale ale and....

I do remember someone throwing various conspiracy theories at me, everything from UFOs to 911 to the Fourth Reich and any combination of the above, with me shooting them all down in flames, at least to my own satisfaction. I have little patience with conspiracy theories, having long believed that governments are way too incompetent to accomplish anything 100% successfully, let alone keep a lid on things. I suspect the fan I was talking too was not so much a believer as someone fascinated with my mindless ability to extemporize 'logical' objections and counter-arguments when fueled by alcohol. Have no idea what I said. Nothing worth recording I'm sure.

Then Robert J. Sawyer, seated nearby on a couch with several fen, waves me over and says, "Graeme! Tell this guy who I am. I'm having trouble convincing him I'm me."

Sure enough, the fan in question, while willing to accept Sawyer might possibly be *who* he says he is, refuses to believe Sawyer is *what* he says he is. Aha! Yet another opportunity to go into full babble mode. I'm off and running, citing Sawyer's multiple awards, publications, popularity, convention appearances, etc from memory, and possibly making up some of it as I go. Laying it on a bit thick no doubt, possibly to Sawyer's growing discomfort, but by rocket-wash (an old Space Cadet expletive), I find this fan's hard shell of disbelief more and more challenging and desperately want to crack it wide open. I fail.



Finally it dawns on me that the main reason this guy refuses to believe Sawyer is a prominent SF author is because he doesn't believe *any* SF author would lower himself to mingle with mere fans in a consuite. Real, *professional* authors don't do that. They only appear at book signings in book stores. Or give lectures. They *don't* mingle. Not if they're *real* authors.

Evidently this guy is a newbie unfamiliar with the fact that one of the great things about the SF&F genres is that writers and readers *do* mingle, that professional SF authors like Sawyer *do* go out of their way to be approachable. Fact is SF&F conventions are a wonderful opportunity for authors and fen to schmooze with each other. Few other genres offer writers and readers this opportunity for close contact. It's one of the advantages of the Sci-Fi world. One of the virtues. One of the features of fandom we can boast about and be proud of. And one of the primary reasons SF&F cons like VCON are worth attending.

(And, I might add, VCON being traditionally a 'friendly' con no matter how big the attendance, artists and media GoHs tend to be just as low-key approachable as the authors. It's one of the features VCON is noted for.)

Well, it's late, I'm tired, half-sozzled, and I have to start the next day's video program in six hours time. So off to bed I go.

I guess you can say I'm a typical old timer. I've attended hardly any programming. I missed the majority of author readings, missed 'Where the Heck is my Hovercraft?', the 'Buffy Sing-Along', the Flash Gordon retrospective, the 'Advice to New Writers', 'Frankenfoods' and all the other assorted panels, lectures, demonstrations & events this year's VCON offered this Friday, but I carried out my duties as the Video Room guy and managed to have lots of fun as well. Great times. Great convention.

TO BE CONTINUED

PREREG NOW FOR VCON 33 in 2008!

VCON 33 -- (Oct 3-5, 2008) Vancouver, BC. Canada's oldest ongoing Sci-Fi convention (VCON 1 was held in 1971). Author GoH: Patrick Rothfuss (author of 'Name of the Wind'), Artist GoH: Lisa Snellings-Clark. Current pre-registration membership price: \$45 Cdn. Make out cheques to 'VCON' and mail to VCON, c/o Box 78069, Grandview RPO, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V5N 5W1. 85 members pre-registered so far. Details re hotel, rates, dates, more GoHs, etc to be announced. If you'd like to help write: < vconchair@gmail.com > For updated info: < www.vcon.ca >

FANATICAL FANAC FABLES

RETRO FANZINES: SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES #1

OCTOBER 1936. Faned: NILS HELMER FROME

FANED BIO: NILS HELMER FROME.

Canada's second SF faned, first leading fan, and quite possibly, earliest fan whose name is known. Published SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES & FANTASY PICTORIAL out of Fraser Mills, B.C. in the late 1930s.

To quote Harry Warner Jr.:

"Frome was the first Canadian to publish a general circulation fanzine to make himself prominent."

Sam Moskowitz called Frome:

"the leading Canadian fan of the day."

Frome was born in Ratanabyrn, Jamtland, Sweden on July 10th, 1918. After his mother died, he was given by his father to another family to raise. At the age of 4, he refused to go back to living with his father! Eventually he was adopted by a foster family, who moved to Canada, ultimately settling in Fraser Mills, B.C., on the North side of the Fraser River just East of New Westminster (and about 40 minutes walk from where I used to live in Coquitlam).

Michael Dann wrote:

"Helmer was very much a loner as a child and throughout his life. He seems to have had few, if any, close friends, spending most of his time collecting science fiction, reading history, drawing and writing."

After high school he attended Vocational Art School in Vancouver.

His first issue of SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES came out in Oct 1936. He would have been 18 years old, a relatively mature age for a fan of that era. The point is, he was already an established fan well known North America-wide and considered Canada's leading fan. He had, for instance, been in touch with C. Hamilton Bloomer, a prominent San Francisco fan, and purchased a multigraph mimeo from him. He established regular correspondence with James Blish and H. P. Lovecraft, among others. Sam Moskowitz began corresponding with him in 1937 and acted as an unpaid agent, distributing Frome's articles, art & fiction to numerous fanzines.

Commenting on this in 1985, Moskowitz wrote:

"I still have unpublished fiction by Frome in my files, since from 1937 on I conducted a manuscript bureau, placing material written by fans in fan magazines. I placed quite a number of Frome's, though his Lovecraftian-style script was devilishly hard to read -- he didn't own a typewriter."

Here is Moskowitz's list of publications he agented Frome's work to and saw published in the late 1930s & during the 1940s: Moskowitz's own HELIOS & FANTASY ARTISTS, Alex Osheroff's THE SCIENCE FICTION SCOUT, Robert Madle's FANTASCIENCE DIGEST, John V. Baltadonis' SCIENCE FICTION COLLECTOR, Litterio Farsci's GOLDEN ATOM, John Giunta's SCIENTITALES, Louis Kuslan's COSMIC TALES, Beak Taylor's 8-BALL/CANADIAN FANDOM, Francis Paro's FANFARE, Bob Studley's SCIENTAL, Oswald Train's SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES, J.J. Fortier's STUNNING SCIENTIFAN, Walter Marconette's SCIENTI-SNAPS, Olon F. Wiggin's SCIENCE FICTION FAN, & James V. Tauri's VADJONG. In addition, Harry Warner Jr. contacted Frome direct for material to use in his zine SPACEWAYS, as did Les Crouch for LIGHT (#115 April 1942 for example, its cover a line drawing of four nymphs or driads). Those searching for Frome's work should note that he sometimes used the pen name 'Herkanos', especially in his letters of comment.

After graduating school Frome found work in various lumber camps and mills, which may explain why he stopped publishing SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES. He did, however, maintain a high level of fanac, as Moskowitz's activity on his behalf attests. This may have been in compensation for being continually trapped in a working environment where his interests in art & SF were not held in high esteem.

According to Michael Dann:

"He seems to have been unhappy with his life.... had emotional problems dealing with people... seems to have resulted from his being a loner and from a creative mind that quickly became bored.... due to his above average intelligence and his inability to communicate on the more mundane level."

The war must have been particularly frustrating. Being a skilled lumberjack, considered a strategically important job, he was not allowed to change jobs or enlist. So he spent most of the war, and some years after, in lumber camps. For a long time his address was 'Camp 5, Bloedel, B.C.'

Still, he found time to send out a stream of art, commentary, fiction & articles. One example of his fiction is 'THE MIRROR', published in CANFAN #10 in May 1946. The first paragraph reads:

"As the car gasped its last and finally expired, John Sloan cursed the fate which had stranded him there on that lonely road, with night coming on, and an uncertain storm muttering to itself in the distance."

And the last paragraph:

"The curious mirror cast back the reflection of the figure of an old man, his ruthless countenance painted by the fire, now slack in death. He was sitting crumpled there in the midst of the house he had stolen....Alone."

A common theme in his life it seems, being alone.

Of his art, Michael Dann wrote:

"Throughout his drawings the eyes were somber, dark, brooding, and somehow frightening. Perhaps his inability to understand people expressed itself in the eyes of his portraits. The only portraits which did not suffer from the 'strange' eyes were those of a few relatives & close friends."

Taral wrote:

"Frome himself continued as an active fan into the 40s, drawing and writing for CANADIAN FANDOM. He was one of two artists" (Al Betts the other) "who alternated covers for CANFAN for all the copies I've seen of the first dozen issues. Of the two, Frome was the better, in my opinion, having a better grasp of anatomy and exhibiting better draughtsman ship.... Like most fan art of the 40s, it was derivative of the pulp illustrators, and particularly of the fantasy illustrators. The style was dramatic and brooding, effects achieved by crosshatching, and the art showed good understanding of light. Of the three covers in my possession, two are dominated by huge, moody faces that have some real power as art. Generally less claustrophobic than most fantasy art of the time, and more surreal than illustrations for most adventure of SF stories, too, Frome had a real talent and may well have gone on to some professional career. Somewhere, but not in science fiction."

Moskowitz wrote:

"Frome was head and shoulders above most fan (graphic) artists, and with a little training his work would have been of professional quality. His style was patterned after J. Clement Coll & Austin Briggs -- entirely line work with some cross-hatching in the background."

In the summer of 1953 a nearly fatal bowel obstruction dictated a hospital stay lasting 76 days. Frome spent much of the time drawing, expanding his artistic skills. Afterwards, among other jobs all over B.C. working for various companies, he did design work for the Dept of Recreation & Conservation. Then he came back to the Lower Mainland and tried to survive as a commercial artist. Despite selling illustrations of B.C. "buildings, ships, trains & places" to newspapers, success eluded him. A drinking habit begun in his early twenties was now a major problem. As if desiring to begin anew and find his roots, he left for Sweden to visit his relatives circa 1960/1961. He never came back.

In the words of Michael Dann:

"Nils Helmer Frome was found dead in the Hydro Hotel in Llandudno, Caernarvonshire, Wales. He had been working on odd jobs and as a part-time boilerman for the hotel. His diary reveals he had considered suicide for some time. The date was the 27th of March, 1962. He was less than 44 years old. He had one three-penny piece in his possession."

Sad. But at least in his early adult years his fanac provided the sense of accomplishment and community which evaded him in the mundane 'real' world. And he's not forgotten. His memory lives on for at least as long as Canadian fandom itself survives.

SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES #1

1936 - (#1 - Oct) - 70 copies of 32 pages printed on a multigraph mimeo Frome had earlier purchased from San Francisco fan C. Hamilton Bloomer (who had used it to print the first American multigraphed zine TESSERACT). A multigraph has moveable type which has to be set by hand, which is very time consuming. Any illustrations have to be hand drawn for each copy, which in the case of SUPRAMUNDANE led to an unusual situation...

According to Sam Moskowitz:

"Another high quality periodical of the time... Frome illustrated it by hand, and although he possessed no little artistic ability, he showed a disquieting dislike for uniformity by illustrating every copy of the magazine differently. For the particular fan collector it would have been necessary to obtain every copy of the periodical in existence in order to own all the variations."

Moskowitz acquired no less than 6 copies!

As Moskowitz later wrote:

"I checked my files of SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES. There were two issues but I kept two copies of the first and at one time I had six in the files at the same time. Why? Because every copy was different. Different illustrations, different textual arrangements, even different text. I wanted to record proof that such was the case..."

The R. D. Swisher checklist confirmed it wasn't just the art that was different with every issue:

"Probably one of the most unusual fanzines ever issued was the first issue of SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES... No two copies were identical. Each and every one contained different illustrations, articles, ads, set up of stories. Cover and illustrations done by hand. No two copies of this issue are identical. Some pages dated Oct, some Dec-Jan."

Quoting Harry Warner:

"The best Swisher could do was to publish two separate descriptions of it, from varying descriptions given by Dick Wilson & Donald Wollheim."

In a 1937 letter to Moskowitz Frome wrote:

"The explanation to why the variety of illustrations is I got bored doing the same drawing over many, many times, almost line for line. Try it yourself. I bet it will get under your skin, too."

SUPRAMUNDANE's pages were stitched together on Frome's mother's sewing machine, which is a rather cool way to bind it. A wonder more people didn't think of that method.

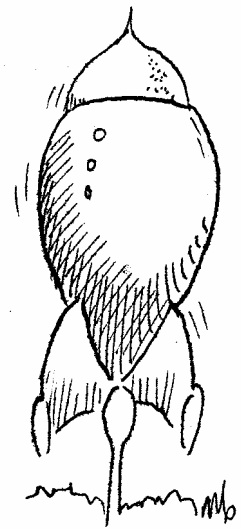
Contents of SUPRAMUNDANE #1 include:

'**The Cosmic Vampire**' by Lionel Dilbeck, a Lovecraftian story about an airplane expedition to the North Magnetic pole which crashes in a storm. Everyone survives only to be picked off one by one by a gaseous being resembling "a huge mass of what looked to be snow-flakes...Glittering whitely and pulsating rhythmically..." which, once it envelops a hapless human, sucks out his life force.

The cover, by Frome himself, depicts an agonized man disintegrating within the embrace of 'The Cosmic Vampire' while another man flees down the snowy slope toward the wrecked aircraft.

Dilbeck also contributed a poem, '**Veiled Venus**', which is rather coy:

"Oh fair & winsome lady
Far across the depths of space
Would that I could for a moment



Catch a glimpse of your sweet face
Must you always keep it hidden
by your clouds so fleecy white"
.... etc. etc.

Frome contributed two stories. The first, **'The Thought God Calls'** is under the pen name Vacton Wells. It's about the first expedition to the outer planets. Here's a sample paragraph:

"Although acerbic climes sent the hull barometer down to an abnormal extreme on the dark side, and horrentious heat on that side facing Titan, mighty machines murmuring in the Planeteer's pentraillia, rapidly reined and used them; so whereas Man with his huge shortcomings should swiftly have expired, but for the miracle of the advent of Brain, the two who stood looking into the drusy distance, mentated not too much on the possibility of anything going wrong in the three weeks old king of space, but trying to envisage the things to come."

His second story, under his own name, titled **'The Flaming Sword of Yucatan'**, is even less accessible to the reader. You might say he attempts to out-Lovecraft Lovecraft, as per this quote:

"Dawson understood. He came into reality, if the strange being and the effulgent object he held, vaguely like a sword but with an elusive, distant look that it might have been a star, was real."

Frome also contributes a poem under the pen name Lionel N. Dwight. It has what I think is a great title: **'All Cold'**, and is about the heat death of the Moon. Here is the complete poem:

"Lonely little Luna's settled to soulful wait
Until when her fate will one day slate
Some cosmic chaos a chance to brim her atmosphere thin
And give her energy to energize her fires dim,
But she cringes lest fate connive, pales lest it contrive
To take her life.
Her struggles strong for ages long
Has inured her to strife,
But the fire cooler grows in her inner great grotto
And she does not know."

The standout item in the issue is the poem **'Written On A Bleak Asteroid'** by J. Harvey Haggard, a professional author & poet "whose stories had appeared periodically in WONDER STORIES & ASTOUNDING STORIES... had several poems appear under the pen name 'The Planet Prince' in WONDER STORIES" according to Moskowitz.

Outstanding in that it's by a 'filthy pro', but its style is too old fashioned for modern tastes, though no doubt okay back in the 1930s. It begins:

"Ye who fate has led hitherto take heed
Upon this threshold other's feet have laid
Into yon abyss other's eyes have gazed
Those paths behind by other steps were mazed..."

Actually it's bloody awful. Which is probably why it appeared in a fanzine. Suspect it had been rejected by the prozines.

At this stage in his life, Frome's grasp of English was good, but he tended towards an awkward syntax and a lust for run-on sentences. (He later wrote far more clearly.) Here is a quote from his editorial, titled **'The Editor's Word'** in which he sets forth the purpose of SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES:

"If you really and truly are for prophetic, noetic literature and see something in short anecdotes, etc, to enhance the regular scientification fare and occupy atween times, and short thought-provokers boiled down so as to insure against any tedium, articles about science, writing, illustrating, and reading fantastic stories and multifarious other features -- then this is your mag. For SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES will have more than any amateur magazine, including crossword puzzles... and model spaceship plans... Scientification is a world apart; ordinary rules do not apply here; competition, certainly! If it can be yeleft so the fostering of a noetic lure that is amaranthine and may not be confined, extends infinitely as thought; no, SUPRAMUNDANE STORIES elbows no "rival" -- she makes the field more lively."

Yeleft? A typo for..? Or a made-up word? It's fun reading Frome!

Note: Sources: My Canadian Fancyclopedia articles, based on:

- **CANADIAN FANZINE BIBLIOGRAPHY** (June 1984) by Taral Wayne, Mike Hall & Keith Fenske. Listed alphabetically by name of Faneditor. 36 pages. Interestingly, the majority of zines listed are APAzines, reflecting the nature of Cdn zinedom at that time.

- **A CHRONOLOGY OF CANADIAN FANDOM** (1994) by Garth Spencer. Mostly a listing of Conventions but with mention of significant events, fanzines and fans. Covers 1930s to early 1990s.

- **FANZINE BIBLIOGRAPHY BY TITLE** (12 August 1985), sent to me by Murray Moore. Compiler's identities not listed, but I suspect it is based on research originally done by Keith Fenske, Michael S. Hall, Taral (and Georges Giguere?) for the earlier CANADIAN FANZINE BIBLIOGRAPHY. Was widely available in dealers rooms at Canadian cons circa 1985/1986. International in scope, but at least 50% of the zines covered are Canadian. Listed alphabetically by title. 198 pages.
- **HOWARD PHILLIPS LOVECRAFT AND NILS HELMER FROME: A RECOLLECTION OF ONE OF CANADA'S EARLIEST SCIENCE FICTION FANS** (1989) Edited by Sam Moskowitz. Moshassuck Monograph series Number 5. The Moshassuck Press, Glenview, Illinois. Publisher: Kenneth W. Faig, Jr.
- **THE IMMORTAL STORM** (1954): 'A History of Science Fiction Fandom' by Sam Moskowitz -- 1988 reprint edition -- Hyperion Press, Inc., Westport, Connecticut, USA.
- **NILS HELMER FROME, FOUND & LOST** (1983) by Michael Dann -- NEW CANADIAN FANDOM V1#6, Beflante Publications, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Publisher: Michael Hall. Editor: Robert Runte.
- **OF TIME AND RESEARCH** (1989) by Sam Moskowitz. Article appeared in TORUS #6, (Oct 1989). Valuable for Moskowitz's own career summary, but especially for his account of his relationship with Nils Helmer Frome and how the Moshassuck Monograph on Frome came to be.
- **ON THE BONNY, BONNY BANKS OF THE FRASER** (1993) by Garth Spencer. A history of British Columbia fandom in general and the British Columbia science Fiction Association in particular. Covers 1930s to early 1990s. Previous versions serialized in BCAPA & OPUNTIA.

SAD NEWS FOR FANZINEOPHILES

Andrew Porter posted on < fmzfen@yahoogroups.com > the following startling news. The person in question is not named (by me) in order to protect the guilty:

"...from ~~censored deleted~~. Just got his Christmas letter, in which he talks about setting up a website of his artwork, writing:"

"Also on hand were 29 boxes of fanzines, from which I extracted my cartoons using an x-acto knife and double faced tape to put said cartoons on sheets of paper. Producing a stack six inches high, which have been scanned in and saved to disc... Lots of cartoons? Oh yes, some 40 years worth, at guess another 4,000."

Robert Lichtman posted the following comment:

"Ohmighod! Run, do not walk, to your copy of FANCYCLOPEDIA II, make a photocopy of the insert between pages 58 and 59, fill it out properly, and send it to ~~censored~~ -- for he is *deserving*."

Robert is referring to a copy of the Fan-Dango Award which was inserted in copies of Dick Enay's Fancyclopedia II when it was published in 1959. Since my copy is downloaded from the Fanac Fan History Project web site:

(< http://fanac.org/Fannish_Reference_Works/Fancycyclopedia/ >)

it does not include the insert in question, but here is the entry that went with the insert:

"FAN-DANGO AWARDS"

"In his campaign of Insurgentism F Towner Laney printed up a number of large certificates like the ones you see on the facing page for presentation to the conspicuously fuzzlewitted. The originals were printed rather'n lithographed, and Laney described them as "suitable for framing" tho none of the recipients are known to have done so. (Don Wilson did tack his up on the wall over his desk.) Altho the awards were supposed to be annual, they were really given out only once (in 1949) by Laney; recipients were Russ Woodman, Don Wilson, and Sam Moskowitz, first, second, and third ranking fuggheads for the quarter ending September 1949. The last Fan-Dango Award was presented to Laney himself, by Walt Willis, for taking up stamp collecting."

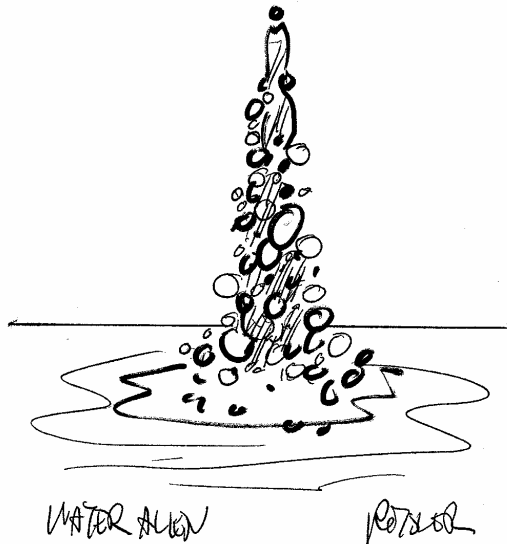
The fan-artist Porter is writing about is long-serving, well-known, and quite gifted and talented... and named. I choose not to, even though many of WCSFAzine's readers probably know who it is, because all I want to do with this article is make a plea for fanzine preservation, not castigate the unfortunate artist seeking to preserve his fanlifetime's work and make it more accessible to all. Of course he has every right to put his oeuvre on the web. It's a great idea. Every fan-artist should do it. (Especially if he gives modern faneds carte blanche to use them as illos & fillos, thus giving them new life, so to speak.)

But couldn't he have simply photocopied them? Or scanned them direct from the pages of the host zines? To cut them out destroys whatever text or art was on the other side, mutilates the zines, renders them extremely unlikely to be preserved by future collectors after he has gone.

Granted the zines are his property. He can roll them and smoke em if that's his desire. But how happy are their faneds, originally so delighted to receive his contributions, likely to be on hearing this? Some of the zines in his collection might well be the only copies still in existence, now most unlikely to be preserved. Certainly none of the few university collections would be interested in acquiring them. He might as well trash them. And perhaps he already has. Freeing up 29 boxes for more useful purposes may haps.

It's a sad day for faneds who dream of their publications being read by futurists in the far future (or more likely, by underemployed librarian-historians looking for something suitably obscure enough to deserve a government research grant). Sigh. Cicero had the ego to declare that he "confidently expected to be read 2,000 years from now" (and he was

right!), but us modern faneds are SOL when it comes to artistic immortality, it seems. Thanks to artists with x-acto knives....



RULE #1 OF FANZINE COLLECTING:

Never throw a fanzine away!

If you're tired of possessing your collection, tired of the space it takes up, find them a new home! Someone who in turn will pass them on when the time comes. Already a small number of cultural anthropologists specializing in pop cultural ephemera are beginning to take an interest. As the decades roll by these amateur publications will be more and more relevant to studying the mindset of the 'ordinary' people of their day.

And take note, the fannish equivalent of the Library of Alexandria has yet to be burned. The bulk of classic fanzine publications still exist, albeit in very few collector's hands. Sam Moskowitz's superb collection has been sold at auction to – one hopes -- responsible collectors. Harry Warner Jr.'s collection is safe for the time being.

But as the old-timers who were 'there' in the 1930s and 1940s pass on, as baby boomers like myself pass on, there will come a crunch time, I'm guessing 15 to 20 years from now, when most of the surviving fanzines will simply disappear, thrown out with all of the other junk Grandpa had in his attic.

Certainly by 2050 the fanzine annex of the Library of Alexandria will be well and truly burned to the ground.

So trashing surviving fanzines in the here and now is greatly to be deplored. Too many kids with zippos being caught in the library basement these days... so to speak.

What can be done? I used to dream of winning the lottery so that I could purchase -- or even build! -- a permanent library building devoted to preserving 20th century fanzines. And winning the lottery again so that I could afford to purchase complete sets from collectors. And win again, so that a permanent trust fund could be set up to maintain the collection. And win yet again, so that an armed priesthood could be set up to defend the library when civilization collapses... and of course once more again in order to purchase robots to look after the collection once the human race becomes extinct... well, you get the idea...

But it's the content that's important. Preserving the originals would be nice. Preserving copies in indelible ink on acid free paper would be even better. Electronic media? Forget it. Obsolete even before the corner stone is completely covered in moss.

Alas, nobody is going to have that kind of money. Even major libraries cull their collections from time to time. A thousand years from now a willing patron might show up, but a wee bit late.

Fact is, it's up to us, them as has closets, attics and basements willing to host a few hundred pounds of silverfish bait for a decade or two before passing them on to a new generation of collectors, to preserve our fanzine heritage. Spreading interest in the zinish past through ezines such as this, and perhaps reprinting on disc, on-line or on paper the best of the best, such as Taral has done with Energumen and Xenium, is about all that can be done.

And hopefully more and more university libraries will become interested, libraries with patrons with money to burn...
Meanwhile: Don't throw any fanzines away! Pass them on!

(And if you want to be immortal, stamp each one with "From the Library of" and your name. Sacrilege I know, but you might as well get some posthumous credit...)

GOOD NEWS FOR FANZINEOPHILES!

The following Dale Speirs quote appeared in BCSFAzine 416, Jan 2008 issue.

"In Winnipeg, Chester Cuthbert's house full of SF and fantasy books has been donated to the University of Alberta library. U of A librarian Randy Reichardt, an SF fan, arranged the transfer at the end of 2007. Chester turned 95 on 2007-10-15, so it is a relief that the collection will find a place where it is wanted."

"This makes Alberta one of the top places for SF collections. Several years ago the University of Calgary Library received the Bob Gibson collection, an equally massive library of SF."

Dale Speirs, *Opuntia* 64.1A, December 2007.

I used to correspond with Chester in my SPACE CADET days. He very kindly donated a complete set of Norman G. Browne's VANATIONS to the BCSFA/WCSFA archive, as well as several equally rare Canadian fanzines. I gather his collection contains quite a few other zines – hardly surprising since he was President of the Canadian Science Fiction Association in the early 1950s – so I assume they are included in the material being handed over to the University of Alberta, along with the archive pertaining to the CSFA, I hope.

However the bulk of the material is undoubtedly the very large number of hard cover SF&F books he amassed over the years. It may well include other genres as well, since he was an avid book collector in many fields. I well remember he advised me to collect as many books as possible – suitably worth collecting mind you – as a hedge against poverty in my old age, on the assumption that time would only increase the rarity and worth of a useful percentage of the collected volumes.

I am startled to learn he is 95. I had not realized he was so advanced in age. I wish him good health and good reading for many years to come.

As for the Bob Gibson collection at the University of Calgary, I believe the Bob Gibson in question *might* be the Bob Gibson fanartist appearing in zines like CANADIAN FANDOM in the late 1940s and early 1950s. But I'm not sure, because there were *two* Bob Gibsons active in fandom at that time, one living in Picton, Ontario, and the other in Calgary, Alberta. Which was the fanartist I do not know. Maybe one of my readers can fill me in.

At any rate, I am always happy when a major SF collection finds a safe, permanent and public-accessible home.
The Graeme

DUFF 2008 BALLOT NOW AVAILABLE!

DUFF 2008: The North America to Australasia Fan Fund!

Download a PDF version of the ballot at

< <http://www.fanac.org/DUFF2008.pdf> >

Since 1972 the Down Under Fan Fund, a fan-supported fellowship, has encouraged closer ties between science fiction fans in Australasia and North America through an alternating exchange of representatives. DUFF delegates attend the Worldcon or a national convention in the host country and visit fans they might otherwise never meet in person. Delegates are responsible for raising funds and administering DUFF until a new delegate from their continent is elected, and are expected to publish trip reports which can be sold to aid the fund.

VOTING:

DUFF uses the preferential balloting system to guarantee an automatic runoff and a majority win. The voter ranks the candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3, etc.). If there is no absolute majority for one candidate after the first count of votes, first-place votes for the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped, and the second-place votes on those ballots are assigned to the candidates named. This goes on until one candidate has a majority. So it's important to vote for second, third, etc. places, especially if you choose to write in a candidate.

(The voter is not required to fill in more than their name, address and first choice.)

Ballots must be signed and accompanied by a donation of at least \$5US or \$6 Australian. Anyone may contribute and donations in excess of the voting minimum are gratefully accepted. Checks should be made payable to Joe Siclari (in North America) or Norman Cates (in New Zealand/Australasia) in the administrator's home currency.

Anyone may vote who has been active in fandom on or before January 1, 2007. "Active in fandom" means involved in fannish pursuits such as fanzine writing or reading, convention running or attending, amateur film/ video production, or club participation. Only natural persons may vote. Each voter may vote only once.

CANDIDATES:

Two Australasian fans and three North American fans nominate each candidate. Each candidate has written a platform and promised (barring Acts of God) to travel to Swancon, the Australian National Science Fiction Convention, in Perth, Western Australia, Australia, March 20-24, 2008, and to serve as administrator of the fund until the next North American delegate is elected.

PLATFORMS:

Steve & Sue Francis

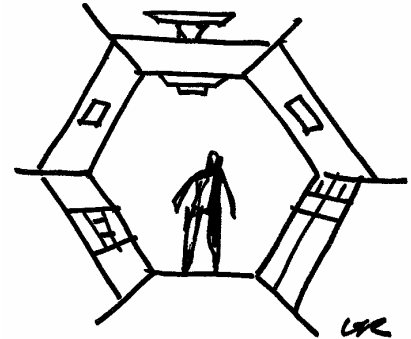
"We are entering our names as candidates for the DUFF selection to continue our goal of making new friends wherever we go, and a second trip to Australia would provide an excellent opportunity to do so. We have each attended 300+ conventions, including chairing 18 RiverCons. Our experiences in running and working on many conventions have made us aware of convention organization and what is involved in administering and raising funds for charitable organizations. Whatever your choice, please cast your vote!"

Nominators: *North America:* Pat Molloy & Naomi Fisher, Pat & Roger Sims, James Briggs & Sandra Childress.

Australasia: Eric Lindsay, Stephen Boucher & Janice Gelb.

Murray Moore

"Being Canadian I can spell Australian. With pen, paper, camera, and Tilley underwear I will spend time with fans in homes, pubs, and cafes, and, oh yeah, attend the NatCon. I want to meet the descendants of my master criminal English relative who stole a loaf of bread. Meeting fans who I know from my membership in ANZAPA would be cool. I might copy Julian Warner and sleep in a kimono. I have read Greg Egan and the *Year's Best Australian Science Fiction and Fantasy*, Volume 2. I will try to like vegemite; I said try. Previous Australasian Travel: None."



Nominators: *North America*: Mike Glicksohn, Hope Leibowitz, Lloyd & Yvonne Penney. *Australasia*: Bruce Gillespie, Jean Weber & Eric Lindsay.

DEADLINE:

Ballots must be received by midnight January 31, 2008! Send entire ballot with US\$5 or A\$6 (or more) donation to an administrator. Results will be posted at: < <http://www.fanac.org/DUFF2008> >

VERIFICATION:

The voters must be natural persons who have been active in fandom on or before January 1, 2007. If you think you may be unknown to the administrators, please give the name of a fan or fan group (other than a candidate or nominator) who can vouch that you meet these criteria. (Reference Name & Reference Address)

BALLOTS CAN BE MAILED TO:

North American Administrator

Joe Siclari
661 Hanover St.
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
USA

or

Australasia Administrator

Norman Cates
P.O. Box 13-574
Johnsonville, Wellington
New Zealand

Once again, you can get your ballot at: < <http://www.fanac.org/DUFF2008.pdf> >

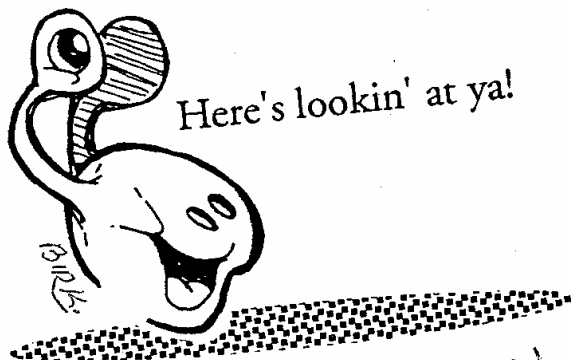
LATEST CANADIAN FANCYCLOPEDIA UPDATES

The Canadian Fancyclopedia is the Graeme's ongoing attempt to put together a 'Fancyclopedia III' but one with an emphasis on the history of 20th century Canadian Sci-Fi Fandom. See < <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html> >
Okay, I've actually done some work this holiday season:

UNDER C: 'THE CALL GOES OUT' issue #2 & 3, being a fantasy orientated zine out of Victoria B.C. circa 1985.

UNDER C: UNDER 'CUFF TRIP REPORTS': I review 'PENNEYS UP THE RIVER and other CUFF stories', Llyod & Yvonne Penney's account of their 1998 CUFF trip to Montreal, and 'WHAT I DID ON MY OCTOBER VACATION', Garth Spencer's account of his 1999 CUFF trip to Fredericton.

LATEST ZINES ADDED TO EFANZINES.COM ARCHIVE



Bob Sabella's *Visions of Paradise* #123, *WCSFAzine* #4, Bill Mill's *The Commando Cody Special* podcast link, Earl Kemp's *el* 35, C.J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #153, Dec issue of *e-APPA*, *Corflu Silver Progress Report* #1, Jean Martin & Chris Garcia's *Science Fiction/San Francisco* #56, C.J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #154, Rich Coad's *Sense of Wonder Stories* #1, Arnie Katz's *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #103, C.J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #155, Steven Silver's *Argentus* #7, Peter Weston's *Prolapse* #9, Jean Martin & C.L. Garcia's *Science Fiction/San Francisco* #57, C.J. Garcia's *The Drink Tank* #156, Bruce Gillespie's *Scratch Pad* #68, & Bob Sabella's *Visions of Paradise* #124.



ASK MR. SCIENCE!

(As submitted by Al Betz, Corresponding Secretary for Mr. Science.)

Ms. LB, of Burnaby, asks: Why is the sky blue?

The present colour of the sky is caused by an accumulation of the traces of blue aniline dyes produced by the burning of tobacco in cigarettes. As the foul habit of cigarette smoking is stamped out, and photo-destruction of these insidious dyes takes place in the upper atmosphere, the sky will slowly return to its normal, beautiful salmon pink colour.

Mr. DG, of Burnaby, asks: Why does sound not travel through a vacuum?

This is actually just another old wives' tale. Sound does indeed travel through a vacuum, but cannot pass through the boundary layer between the vacuum and the air. The very large difference in Index of Acoustical Refraction of vacuum and air causes the sound to be totally reflected at the interface, and hence it appears, falsely, that sound will not traverse a vacuum. Indeed, to those creatures which live in vacuum, it appears, for the same reason, that sound cannot travel through air.

FAN AWARDS

RETRO 1975 ELRON AWARDS

Presented at VCON 4 by Brent McLean.

- 1) Least Promising New Author: Jerry Pournelle.
- 2) Most Appalling Dramatization: CBS' 'Planet of the Apes'.
- 3) Elron Hall of Shame: John Norman, for his new genre 'Bondage Sword & Sorcery'.
- 4) Worst Novel of 1974: 'Population Domsday' by Don Pendleton.

Note on #1: He won an Elron the previous year for 'A Spaceship for the King', which also resulted in his winning the John W. Campbell award for 'Best New Writer of 1973'. Alas, how the mighty are fallen. He won the 1975 Elron for his 1974 novel 'Escape from the Planet of the Apes', a treatment of the 1971 film of the same name. Probably viewed it as easy money at the time, and is something he probably prefers to forget nowadays.

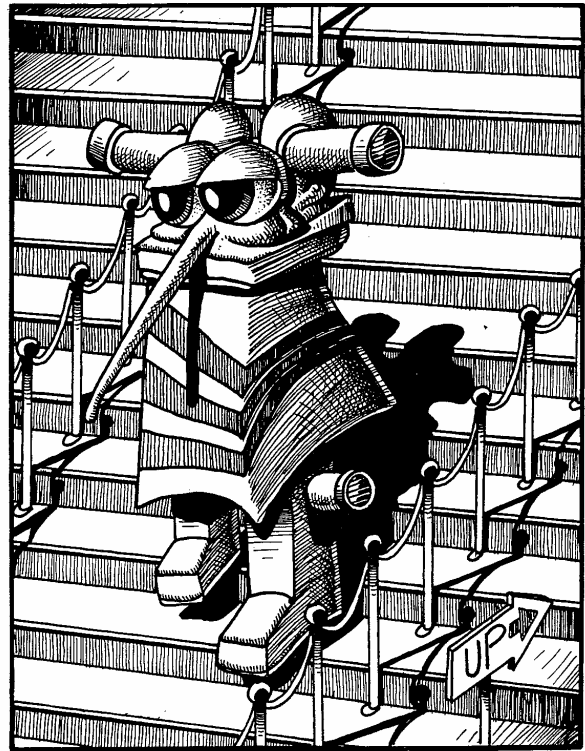
There were four films in all: 'Planet of the Apes' (1968), 'Beneath the Planet of the Apes' (1971), 'Conquest of the Planet of the Apes' (1972) and 'Battle for the Planet of the Apes' (1973). The original inspiration is a book well worth reading: 'La Planete des singes' (Planet of the Apes) by Pierre Boulle, published in France and in the US in 1963. Much darker in tone and more 'serious' than the films.

Note on #2: A one season TV wonder of 14 episodes starring Roddy McDowall and Mark Leonard. I enjoyed it as great 'pulpish' fun, but I guess the Smotes (Secret Masters of the Elrons) of the day found it an easy target. An animated cartoon series of 13 episodes followed in 1975. This in turn led to 3 novelizations, 2 of which: 'Visions from Nowhere' (1976) & 'Man. The Hunted Animal' (1976) were written by legendary fanzine artist & faned William Rotsler under the name 'William Arrow'. The other book, 'Escape From Terror Lagoon' was written by Donald J. Pfiel.

Note on #3: Presumably awarded to Norman for his 1974 novel 'Hunters of Gor', his eighth Gor novel. He wrote twenty-five in all, ending with 'Magicians of Gor' in 1988. Oddly, his writing career parallels Heinlein (just barely) in that his later novels feature plenty of philosophical padding in contrast to the more action-orientated early works. It hardly needs pointing out, however, that Norman's beginnings lack the brilliant originality of Heinlein's, the first few Gor novels merely being – at best -- competent Sword & Sorcery pastiches. 'Hunters of Gor' may be said to represent perhaps the first full flowering of his 'Bondage Sword & Sorcery', finally hitting his stride as it were.

Oh what the heck, might as well list the complete Gor series:

- 1) – Tarnsman of Gor (1966)
- 2) – Outlaw of Gor (1967)
- 3) – Priest-Kings of Gor (1968)
- 4) – Nomads of Gor (1969)
- 5) – Assassin of Gor (1970)
- 6) – Raiders of Gor (1971)
- 7) – Captive of Gor (1972)
- 8) – Hunters of Gor (1974)
- 9) – Marauders of Gor (1975)
- 10) – Tribesmen of Gor (1976)
- 11) – Slave Girl of Gor (1977)
- 12) – Beasts of Gor (1978)
- 13) – Explorers of Gor (1979)
- 14) – Fighting Slave of Gor (1980)
- 15) – Rogue of Gor (1981)
- 16) – Guardsman of Gor (1982)
- 17) – Savages of Gor (1982)
- 18) – Blood Brothers of Gor (1982)
- 19) – Kajira of Gor (1983)
- 20) – Players of Gor (1984)
- 21) – Mercenaries of Gor (1985)
- 22) – Dancer of Gor (1985)
- 23) – Renegades of Gor (1986)
- 24) – Vagabonds of Gor (1987)
- 25) -- Magicians of Gor (1988)



© brad w. foster • 1995

Note on #4: Pendleton began with soft core porn like ‘Boomerang Peep Show’ for Ace magazine in 1958, then graduated to soft porn Sci-Fi novels like ‘The Olympians’ (1969) and ‘Civil War II: The Day it Finally Happened’ (1971).... I guess about the South rising again...pun intended since it *is* porn... His 1974 novel ‘Population Doomsday’, about a catastrophe taking place in 1989, was at least non-porn, though of doubtful speculative quality. Possibly Pendleton improved, in that throughout the 1980s he published six ‘Asthon Ford’ novels with the interesting premise of a hero who is a ‘psychic spy’. Don’t know if they were any good though.

FILTHY PRO NEWS

‘STARDANCE’ HAPPENING NOW!

By Jeanne Robinson

Hello fellow Stardancers,

In just one week I’ll be flying high on Zero-Gravity Corporation’s refitted 727 for the ride of a lifetime! You can read all about it in the attached release, at the site < <http://www.stardancemovie.com/> >, and at our new blog at < <http://stardancemovie.blogspot.com/> >.

As you can imagine, it’s gone beyond simple excitement for me. I’m in a place words can’t reach. Like I said in my first blog entry, I’ve been waiting for this ride since Spider emerged from his pit to tell me was going to write a story about a zero-gravity dancer. That was 30 years ago. And after the Challenger tragedy shut down the Civilian in Space program taking away my seat on the shuttle, I didn’t know if I’d ever get another chance to dance in zero-g.

Enter Dr. Peter Diamandis of X-Prize fame to the rescue. After my Stardance PowerPoint presentation at Robert Heinlein’s Centennial Gala last July, Peter stood up and offered me 2 seats on his company’s plane. The rest will be history in just 7 days.

You can stay in touch with me, Spider, my dancer, Kathleen McDonagh, and producer/co-director James Sposto by reading our blog. Spider is coming to Vegas but he won’t be joining us for the zero-g ride. We’ll keep him busy writing about our adventures on the scene. We’ll post photos and a video as soon as they are available.

You can help me by spreading the word about our upcoming ride online, and in the real world. This ride is only the beginning. I need all the help I can get to reach my ultimate goal of making a large format Stardance film. The dream is for *everyone* to be able to enjoy the out-of-this-world experience of dancing in zero-gravity in an IMAX theatre. That's the ultimate goal — for us all to dream, dance and evolve.

Meantime, happy holidays to everyone....

Warm, happy smiles, Jeanne Robinson, December 23, Sunday, 2007.

'STARDANCE' AS IT HAPPENED!

Spider & Jeanne Robinson Blog Quotes:

“Spider here, using Jeanne's laptop to blog. They just left the ground--Jeanne, Kathleen and Jim--bubbling with excitement and happy as pigs in Parliament. I've got a couple of hours to kill now while I wait for them to come back down. As I type this, I can't stop thinking of Anousheh Ansari, who, to the best of my knowledge, was the first woman ever to blog from space--an achievement for which I once nominated her for the annual Heinlein Award for fiction and nonfiction promoting spaceflight. We all owe her a great deal; the Stardance Team salutes her.”

Jeanne Blogs: "This certifies," says the piece of paper, "that JEANNE ROBINSON has defied gravity, communed with floating objects, levitated, and otherwise successfully completed the zero-gee weightless experience."

“Damn right.”

“We're back, safe and sound, but exhausted... Things were a bit more chaotic than we'd expected--a lot of our plans went right out the window in the first few weightless arcs. But we'd anticipated that, and were able to just do what we could and adapt as well as possible to circumstances...”

“Kathleen said the tendency to drift changed everything. You never knew whether you were liable to find yourself moving left, right, up or down, or some combination thereof.... The first few arcs we just enjoyed ourselves, and I had the greatest of times imaginable. After that, I was just so busy I barely had time to register how I was feeling....”

“Result: We have footage, good footage. We have experienced microgravity. The information we have gathered will be very important to our film. But most importantly, we have ALL had the time of our lives.”

Stop reading this and go immediately to < <http://stardancemovie.blogspot.com/> > to read the blog reports in full AND watch a brief teaser clip of Kathleen dancing in Zero G. Just before gravity ‘returns’ Jeanne is briefly visible against the fuselage wall to the left. A much longer clip shows Jeanne aboard discussing the moves to be made and why modern dancers are perhaps best suited to zero G dancing (as opposed to the more classical type).

Undoubtedly a great deal more footage will be posted shortly on the above blog site, and/or perhaps at the actual Stardance movie site: < <http://www.stardancemovie.com> >

AUTHOR HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

(New information highlighted in violet.)

DON DEBRANDT < <http://www.sfw.org/members/DeBrandt/index.html> >

Don has his ‘Cyberjunk’ website, which has not been updated in several years. He promised me at VCON 32 he will update soon. But see his website under the name ‘Donn Cortez’ < <http://www.donncortez.com> > for a complete listing of books, stories, articles & comics under both names.

Don lives in the Lower Mainland area and was (as always) in enthusiastic attendance at VCON 32. His latest books include the mystery ‘The Man Burns Tonight’ and the CSI MIAMI series volume titled ‘Harm For The Holidays: Heart Attack’. **Currently he is returning to his roots by working on a Sci-Fi trilogy, starting with his upcoming hardcover mystery/sci-fi novel ‘Lucidity’, which is about two ‘Ectives’ (emotive detectives) in the near future where emotions can be read, implanted, bought, sold, and stolen. As Don put it, “I am always searching for a new pantheon” and for the purposes of this trilogy “took a hard Sci-Fi approach to New Age Mythology”. As a result certain ‘soft’ sciences like sociology and sexology are now shifted into the realm of ‘hard’ science, and certain ‘fringe’ sciences like Telepathy and UFOlogy become ‘soft’ sciences. The first volume ‘Lucidity’ will be published in 2009.**

DAVE DUNCAN < <http://www.daveduncan.com> >

Dave lives in Victoria, B.C. His latest books: *'The Alchemist's Apprentice'*, & *'Children of Chaos'* (the latter winning the 'Best Long-Form Work in English' Aurora Award at Convention 27/VCON 32 which he was happy to accept in person from presenter Peter S. Beagle). "I'm told I got a standing ovation as well, but I was too astonished to notice. My thanks to all those who voted (and possibly stood)."

'Alchemist's Apprentice' is available in trade paperback & will be released by Ace in mass market paperback February 2008.

Coming in March 2008, *'The Alchemist's Code'* will be released by Ace in trade paperback & *'Mother of Lies'* (presently available in hardcover) will be released by Tor in mass market paperback.

In August 2008 *'Ill Met in the Arena'* will be released by Tor in hardcover.

WILLIAM GIBSON < <http://www.williamgibsonbooks.com> >

Bill lives in Vancouver. Check out his web site for his Q&A interview 'Across the Border to Spook Country'. His latest book: *'Spook Country'*.

MATT HUGHES < <http://www.archonate.com/> >

Matt lives on Vancouver Island. He was one of the presenters at the VCON 32 Aurora Awards ceremony. His first Henghis Hapthorn 'Majestrum' is now out in trade paperback from Nightshade Books. The second novel in the series, *'The Spiral Labyrinth'* is available from Nightshade Books in hardcover.

The complete Guth Bandar saga is now published as a novel titled *'The Commons'* from Robert J. Sawyer Books.

On his website Matt writes: "I'm in Britain now, getting the house sitting career organized. My first sit will be in a cottage... on an estate in Yorkshire...I've written the first chapter of 'Hespira', the third Hengis Hapthorn novel...I've also written a 12,000 word Luff Imbry novelette, 'Enemy of the Good'..."

EILEEN KERNAGHAN < <http://www.lonelycry.ca/ek/> >

Eileen lives in the Lower Mainland area and attended VCON 32. Check out her latest books: *'Winter on the Plain of Ghosts: a Novel of Mohenjo-daro'*, *'The Alchemist's Daughter'*, & *'The Sarsen Witch'* (reissue in October). Her latest Young Adult Novel *'Wild Talent, A Novel of the Supernatural'* is scheduled for 2008 publishing by ThistleDown Press.

CRAWFORD KILIAN < <http://crofsblogs.typepad.com/> >

Continues to teach at Capilano College in North Vancouver. His latest books: *'Writing Science Fiction and Fantasy'* (1998), & *'Writing for the Web'* (1999). See E-address above for his blog. He is currently working on another novel. Both of the books mentioned above are available from Self Counsel Press; < <http://www.self-counsel.com/ca/> >

DONNA MCMAHON < <http://www.donna-mcmahon.com/> >

Lives in Gibsons on the Sunshine Coast and attended VCON 32. She won a 2001 Aurora Award for her book reviews published in Tomorrow SF, BCSFAzine & other publications. Check out her novel *'Dance of Knives'* which is set in Vancouver in the year 2108. The sequel *'Second Childhood'* is pending publication.

NINA MUNTEANU < <http://www.ninamunteanu.com> >

Lives and teaches in Victoria, B.C. You can order her Sci-Fi novel *'Darwin's Paradox'* by Dragon Moon Press from Amazon.ca (release date was November 15, 2007), and her short story *'Virtually Yours'* is to be found in *'The Best of Neo-opsis Science Fiction Magazine'* anthology published by Bundoran Press and unveiled at VCON 32. Check out her website for her other publications and activities.

SPIDER ROBINSON < <http://www.spiderrobinson.com/index2.html> >

Spider lives in the Lower Mainland area. His latest book: *'Variable Star'*, (Tor). "The hardcover is in its third printing, the reviews have been most gratifying, and an avalanche of reader mail has warmed Spider's heart." The first 8 chapters are posted on the site <http://www.variablestarbook.com/>, and the paperback hit the stands November 27th.

Around the same time, Baen Books published the hardcover, *'The Lifehouse Trilogy'*, a reissue of *'Mindkiller'*, *'Time Pressure'* and *'Lifehouse'*: < <http://www.spiderrobinson.com/books.html> >

“And *The Stardance Trilogy*, the omnibus of his collaborations with Jeanne, based on their Hugo- and Nebula-winning novellas (*Stardance*, *Starseed*, and *Starwind*) will soon be released as a Blackstone Audiobook.”

And then there’s the exciting Stardance movie project slated to be produced in Imax format by James Sposto. For more information go to: < <http://www.stardancemovie.com> >

Most amazing of all, on December 30th Jeanne Robinson & Dancer Kathleen McDonagh experimented in Zero G dancing aboard a ‘vomit comet’. See the above article ‘Stardance Happened Now!’, and go to Jeanne’s blog at < <http://stardancemovie.blogspot.com/> > for the latest info and film clips of this historical first!

Also check out Spoder’s latest podcasts at: < <http://www.spiderrobinson.com/podcast.html> >

Take note that on “July 4 - 6, 2008 at the Vancouver Island Music Festival in Courtney, BC (for more info see: < <http://www.islandmusicfest.com/> >) Spider will be sharing the stage with musician Todd Butler, and comedian/actor Harry Shearer, one of the voice actors on the Simpson’s.”

ROBERT J. SAWYER < <http://www.sfwriter.com/> >

Robert lives in Mississauga, was a program participant at VCON 32, as well as MC for the Aurora Awards. His short story *Biding Time* won for ‘Best English Language Short Story’ Aurora.). “This is my tenth Aurora Award win (and my fifth in the Aurora’s best short-story category). The full text of “Biding Time” is available < [right here as a Word document](#) >....”

Biding Time was in the anthology *Slipstreams*, and has just been released in the *Penguin Book of Crime Stories* edited by Peter Robinson.

And be sure to check out Robert’s latest book: *Rollback*.

ALYX J. SHAW < web site pending >

Lives in Surrey. Her novel *The Recalling of John Arrowsmith* (Book One of her trilogy *A Strange Place in Time*), is available by mail order from Doppelganger Press: < <http://doppelgangerpress.com> >

It will soon be available in E-book form as of March 2008 from Torquere Press: < http://torquerebooks.com/zencart/index.php?main_page=index >

Note: *A Strange Place in Time* is a completed trilogy. Both publishers have contracted to publish the remaining two novels *The White Palace Awakens* and *The Merry Executioner Returns* in due course.

LISA SMEDMAN < <http://www.lisasmedman/topcities.com/> >

Lives in the Vancouver area and attended VCON 32 as the Gaming GoH. Her latest novels (on the ‘Lady Penitent Trilogy’: Book 1 *Sacrifice of the Widow*, and Book 2 *Storm of the Dead*, plus upcoming later this fall, Book 3 *Ascendancy of the Last*’.

NOTE: Most of these novels are available at **White Dwarf Books**, 3715 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6R 2G5. Phone (604) 228 – 8223. E-address: < whitedwarf@deadwrite.com > Web site < <http://www..deadwrite.com/wd.html> >

MEDIA MADNESS

REVIEW: METALCALYPSE – SEASON ONE – THE METALCALYPSE HAS BEGUN

(Copyright 2007 Cartoon Network.)

by *Alyx J Shaw*

Okay, I finally got to see Season One of ‘**Metalocalypse**’. I was impressed enough that I decided to write a review. So you want my unbiased and unemotional opinion?

OMFG!!!!BUY IT!

‘**Metalocalypse**’ is a little eleven-minute show which comes on Teletoon 10pm and Midnight Monday nights. (Pacific time.) Episodes can also be caught on Adult Swim. Written by Brendon Small and Tommy Blacha, it follows the adventures of Dethklok, a death metal band with five members and a collective IQ of three. Lead vocalist Nathan Explosion, lead guitar player Skwisgaar Skwigelf, and drummer Pickles (*known only as Pickles the Drummer, who is arguably the most enigmatic character next to band manager Charles Ofdensen*) are voiced by Small. The two remaining members, rhythm guitarist Toki Wartooth and bass player William Murderface, are voiced by Tommy Blacha. Two of the main

baddies, Senator Stampington and Mr. Salacia, are by none other than Mark Hamill of 'Star Wars' fame, and he makes a nicely creepy villain. All original music in the show, and there is enough to satisfy any metal fan, is by Brendon Small.

It doesn't take long to figure out there is much more going on in this 'toon than heavy metal music and incomprehensible accents. It's a surprisingly clever little show, which I foolishly resisted watching for the longest time because I happen to have a fondness for rock music in general, and the way musicians are portrayed in TV rarely amuses me. However my buddy Rei, in her charmingly unrelenting manner which I shall one day make her pay dearly for, forced me a couple episodes, and I was utterly hooked.

The first rock star based 'toon I fell in love with was '**My Dad the Rock Star**' which follows Willy Zilla, the son of mega-star Rock Zilla, and I was only willing to give it a chance because it was produced by Gene Simmons of 'Kiss' fame. It's a lot of fun and very silly, but it's clearly a show aimed at kids, and does a great job of showing how rough it is to be a little boy when your dad is a slightly dense green-haired mega star. I mean let's face it; parents are strange enough, and you cannot help but empathize with poor Willy. It's cute, it's fun, snuggle up with your child and have a watch. I think you will both get a giggle out of it.

Then make sure your child is no where near when you plug in '**Metalocalypse**'.

The show's premise is intriguing; Dethklok is cursed to bring about a form of apocalypse; an apocalypse of metal, though the show at this point is rather vague on what exactly that means but clearly it is dire. Under the cold, watchful eye of The Tribunal, an organization of religious, military and political powers headed by the darkly enigmatic Mr. Salacia, Dethklok go about their daily business of getting drunk, playing music, and making stupid decisions. Whatever darkness the band is slated to bring about, it is clear they are oblivious to their destiny, though they do seem to be vaguely aware of the amount of death and mayhem that follows in their wake wherever they go. The first episode, '**The Curse of Dethklok**', begins with them meeting their new chef for the first time, and informing him of the bloody fates of their previous chefs. Later on as they are remarking to each other about how their staff seems cursed, we see a man in the background fall to a horrible death. Dethklok are clearly at the mercy of some very dark forces. Fortunately their band manager Charles Ofdensen has no intention of letting anything happen to them.

Ofdensen to me is the most fascinating of the characters. He does everything for the band. He is their manager, CEO, lawyer, and at first glance seems merely a mousy guy in a suit, a common humourless paper-shuffler. We later learn that the Tribunal is very aware of Ofdensen, and has a healthy respect for him. In the episode '**Dethklown**' the Tribunal recruits the obnoxious Dr. Rockzo the Rock and Roll clown to spy on Dethklok, and warn him specifically to watch out for Ofdensen. It's advice Dr. Rockzo could have used earlier in the episode, before Ofdensen had three Dethklok roadies "put the boots to him, medium-style" for being a bad influence on Toki. In the season finale he takes on an assassin almost twice his size, breaking his arm, using said arm to force the assassin to stab his own knife into his kidneys, and finishes with a killing blow that lands him in a frozen lake.

We don't know Ofdensen's story. We do know he is a still pond that runs deep, and he is one of the characters that most intrigues me. I'm looking forward to learning more about him as the show progresses.

If you don't like metal music, no worries. There is enough going on to hold almost anyone's interest, but the music is good, and I highly recommend the CD; The 'Dethalbum'. The humour in the show is varied; everything from standard fart and puke jokes to stuff that you have to back up and watch a couple times to make sure you actually caught it. Most notably is the scene in '**Bluesklok**' where the boys go to the Deep South to learn from master bluesman Mashed Potato Johnson, the oldest living blues guitarist. After a failed attempt to teach Skwisgaar and Toki (*the world's fastest and second fastest guitar players respectively*) to play bottleneck, Mashed Potato leads them to a crossroads to make a deal with the Devil in order to be able to play bestest, baddest, and the darkest blues ever. The Devil hands them a contract, which they proceed to pick apart with lethal accuracy, and ultimately rewrite so that if the Devil signs it, then Dethklok gets 7% of his soul and the Devil gets a five dollar Hot Topic gift certificate.

Not surprisingly, the Devil beats it out of there, but he does crop up later to watch the band play...

The whole DVD is laced with little gems that had me laughing my head off like an idiot. Not giggling, not smirking, but on the ground laughing. In the first episode '**The Curse of Dethklok**' their six star chef Jean-Pierre is dismembered in a freak helicopter accident, which means only one thing; the band is forced to do its own shopping. The whole supermarket scene had me screaming in hilarity; everything from lead vocalist Nathan Explosion using his head to smash a display case in order to reach the sausages, to lead guitarist Skwisgaar Skwigelf putting the moves on somebody's grandmother. It's funny because we have all had that one friend where we just have to stand back and wonder what planet they grew up on, because it sure as hell couldn't be the same one we did.

'**Dethtroll**' is another gem, wherein the boys accidentally summon a Finnish lake troll, and leave the beast to its own devices, which is destroying the tiny Finnish town of Espoo where they released it. They were actually there to apologize for almost destroying the country the *last* time they were there.

I suspect Finland will not be inviting the boys back. What had me on the ground was the conversation between Senator Stampington of the Tribunal (*played by Mark Hamill*) to General Crosier.

Stampington: "Dethklok has summoned a troll."

Crosier: "That's impossible, there's no such thing as trolls."

Stampington: "Then how do you explain the dead unicorns?"

Dethklok eventually decide to put the beast back to sleep because otherwise they may never be able to check their email with high speed DSL again.

Face → Palm.

Every episode is a jewel, but of very different kind. **'Dethkids'** is especially dark and not easy to watch. It deals with a terminally ill child whose dying wish is to meet Toki. Unfortunately after being publicly humiliated at an awards show Toki is in no mood to talk to her, and decides to instead unleash his inner demon and embrace his dark side... most of which involves painting himself in blood and going up and down the halls of Mordhaus, the band's home, with a flamethrower. Ofdensen finally steps in and brings the child to Mordhaus, and as she sits in the main room with the rest of the band, Ofdensen gives Toki a DVD the child made. He watches it, and that is when we see concrete proof of what by now we have come to suspect; Toki was emotionally starved and physically abused as a child. He finds a sort of soul mate in this child, and leaves his room at long last to meet her, saying he now has all the time in the world for her...

Sadly she did not have all the time in the world to wait.

The humour works on many levels because it is universal; there is something for everyone to relate to. Despite the fact that there is something truly sinister about the band, and the mass carnage that erupts wherever they go, they really are rather innocent and helpless. They're musicians. All they care about is metal, and each other. They are a dysfunctional little family, and the death and mayhem that ensues in their presence is rarely their doing. On the other hand, the Tribunal, which is organized to prevent whatever evil Dethklok will supposedly unleash, *are* true evil; they are the people who think they have the right to decide for us what is good and bad, and what is moral and immoral. They are the spin doctors, the corrupt politicians, the keepers of secret military agendas, the senators that make deals with the devil, and all for their own agenda and self gain, to keep themselves above the unjust laws they create. We relate to Dethklok because, despite their millions and their fame and their toys, they are us. They just want to live in peace and be happy, and in the end it will not be they who bring about the Metalocalypse, it will be forces far darker than they could ever be.

Their obvious affection for each other, demented as it may be, is touching. When Pickles leaves to reunite with his old band, the other four members of Dethklok are clearly worried he may not come back. When Skwisgaar goes off to promote his own line of bizarre guitars (*including a Swiss army version suitable for camping*) the other members again crop up, partly to cash in on his idea, but because they are aware of the strain he is under, even if they are not really sure what to do about it. Nathan makes endearing attempts to "parent" Toki, who is quite child-like and naïve, warning him not to run near the wet hot tub, and calling after him: "I thought we agreed no more clowns!" when Dr. Rockzo appears once more at the formidable keep that is Mordhaus. Despite being intensely competitive with Toki, Skwisgaar too takes an interest in Toki's well being, and it is clearly he who has the lion's share of Toki's affection, which he jealously guards.

Brendon Small has done a fabulous job of making the slash fans happy with this pair, whose relationship can be considered ambiguous, though that would likely come as a complete surprise to Toki and Skwisgaar... once you explained to them what 'ambiguous' meant. (*And let's face it, all any good slasher needs is a hint of ambiguity.*) In one episode they hold hands and lean against one another comfortingly, and in the season finale *'It Has Begun'* when they are facing certain death, Toki looks to Skwisgaar and says quietly; "I always hated you, Skwisgaar." Skwisgaar responds; "I know Toki, I know." It is clear from the way they speak to each other exactly what Toki means, and the scene is sweet enough to give anybody cavities.

To those who just want to hear good death metal and see bodies blown up in ludicrous ways, it's satisfying in its carnage and soundtrack. If you want to see five guys trapped in a submarine, one of whom insists upon eating beans and farting into their atmosphere, well there's gross humour aplenty. And if you want to see something that is just a hair more clever than it appears on the surface, that dares to poke a stick at those who see death, damnation, and destruction in every tiny thing they don't understand, that points out the mentality of those who claim the sky is falling with every step forward we take, and read fell omens where none are to be found, then watch **'Metalocalypse'**.

...just don't blame me the first time you accidentally call your boss 'dildo'.

RETRO FILM REVIEW: THE GIANT CLAW (1957)

By The Graeme

I first saw this film as a child. It terrified me. As a teenager, when I found out it would be shown on TV, I told all my friends to watch. At the first appearance of the monster, I phoned my friends to apologize. Far from terrifying, the monster is the most hilarious, the most ineptly conceived B-movie monster of all time. One glimpse will drive a mature adult to hysterics. A lovely film to watch, worth its weight in gold.

Right away, superimposed over the opening credits, is a feathered wing and a giant claw, so you know the monster will be a giant bird. No suspense there.

The film begins at the newly constructed D.E.W. line in Northern Canada where "sensitive electronic instruments detect bombing planes and missiles, and rain clouds and homing pigeons." Homing pigeons? In Canada's frozen North? Seems unlikely....

The instruments are being calibrated with the aid of a test plane being flown by Mitch (Jeff Morrow), the hero. He buzz's the hut where Sally Caldwell, the heroine (played by Mara Corday -- remember her? Playboy's Miss October of

1958? Gosh, did Hugh Hefner spot her in this film? Was she featured as Miss Giant Claw? Gosh!), also a mathematician, is taking notes.

"I thought pilots weren't allowed to do things like that?" she comments.

Someone explains "Mitch is an electronics engineer, he makes up his own rules."

"So does a three year old unless his mother spansks him."

Mitch has been listening over the radio and responds "Mother, dear mother, I'm ready when you are." So now you know they're the love interest, and that it's going to be kinky.

Suddenly, the narrator drones on and on. "People, doing a job, well, efficiently, serious, having fun, doing a job. Situation normal, for the moment. A significant moment in history, a moment when Mitch MacAfee saw something in the sky, something that was almost the beginning of the end of life on this earth." This is rather hard to credit, since what he sees appears to be nothing more than a blurred feather duster zipping by. He tells the base that a UFO "as big as a battleship" flew over him. We see stock footage of T-33 interceptors taking off, as well as Canadian designed & made Avro 100 Canuck 'Clunks' taking off. A nice touch, considering we are part of NORAD and all. The planes find nothing. Radar spots nothing. One of the search planes goes missing. The base commander is not pleased. "By the time I get through with you, you'll be lucky if they let you test batteries for flashlights!"

Mitch is annoyed. "I spotted a UFO and reported it. Does that make me a criminal, a traitor to my country, or a psychopath?" Which raises the exciting possibility that he is subconsciously revealing he is all three. Alas, the scriptwriters do not pursue this. Instead, by merest scriptwriter convenience - I mean co-incidence - they have the base commander receive a phone call reporting a transpolar airliner disappearing in the middle of radioing about a UFO. So Mitch is off the hook, and gets a free ride in an air force transport back to the states, along with Sally.

The sole pilot of the big four-engine transport (no co-pilot. Odd.) also spots the out-of-focus feather duster and reports a UFO. Mitch kids him about it. The plane suddenly lurches, then lurches again. The pilot is knocked unconscious. Mitch takes over the controls and deftly pilots the plane nose-first toward the ground. We see footage of a model B-29 Super fortress (entirely different aircraft) scraping the ground. Mitch and Sally drag the pilot's body from the plane, then cover over him in a genuinely frightening scene (for the actors I mean, the effects crew off camera are hurling burning pieces of metal at them) as the plane explodes. "What was it?" ponders Mitch, "felt like something collided with us up there."

"Yeah," replies Sally, "the flying battleship that wasn't there."

Before Mitch can get steamed, jolly Pierre in a lumberjack shirt shows up and invites them to his log cabin. (Still in Quebec? No, they've crashed in the Adirondack mountains of New York State.) Soon they're all rather merry, sitting around Pierre's table, laughing and sipping his applejack, which seems rather morbid, considering the body of the pilot is lying on the couch behind them. Sally keeps harping about the "flying battleship." Snaps Mitch, "I said that it looked like a battleship, not that it was one. If I'd said an overgrown adding machine you'd have believed me." I doubt that, actually.

Something --Gosh. What could it be?-- scares the animals. Pierre rushes out into a rainstorm and shrieks. They drag him back inside and pour more applejack down his gullet. "La Caconya!" he shouts. "It was the devil himself, with the face of a wolf, the body of a woman, with wings bigger than I can tell!" Too much applejack already, methinks.

"Oh, I remember," says Sally brightly. "It's a legend, a superstition the French Canadians started and came across the border with." Ah yes, yee old quaint native superstition. Wonder how the film played in Quebec? Anywho, the state troopers show up to collect the body and look after poor old Pierre gibbering in his applejack (they probably want some) while Mitch and Sally grab a commercial flight to New York. They spar verbally, kiss, and argue some more about flying battleships, much to the annoyance of the passengers around them trying to get some sleep.

Mitch spots a newspaper describing several mysterious plane and ship disappearances. He plots the sites on Sally's map of North America (she always carries one in her purse) beginning with his own sighting, apparently around Petit Lac des Loups Marin (as far as I could tell). There's no evident pattern till Mitch draws a spiral connecting the X's. This still doesn't prove anything, though he seems to think so. (Actually, what it does prove is that he really DOES make his own rules. Drawing in their crash site somewhere around Churchill Falls, Labrador, instead of the Adirondacks, for example. No wonder they wouldn't let him into the Air Force. He can't read a map!) They bicker and argue further, till he quotes a poem, "Be plain in dress and sober in your diet, in short my dear, kiss me and be quiet." Quite a line. Of course she falls instantly in love with him.

Finally, we get to see the bird as it attacks an aircraft carrying Civil Aviation investigators. I can do no better than quote Bill Warren from his review in KEEP WATCHING THE SKIES:

"The bird has a round, heavy body and disproportionate feet (the giant claws), with turkey tail feathers on its wings. The long gangly neck is ribbed like an accordion, and the giant beak has snaggy teeth. The staring, glassy eyes express a comically over-stressed malevolence.... In short, the Giant Claw looks like nothing so much as Beaky Buzzard."

To this I would add that the head is topped by a Mohawk cut of stringy hair, whiskers sprout from the flaring nostrils (yes, flaring, it's a very soft, mobile sort of beak), and the eyes are located at the join of the beak. It is, without a doubt, the most idiot-looking marionette you could ever hope to see. It was at this point during the premiere showing in Jeff Morrow's home town (as detailed by Bill Warren) that the audience began to laugh. The mortified actor slipped out of the theatre during the showing so as not to confront his friends and relatives after the film. He had not seen the special effects until the premiere. Poor Jeff Morrow. Yet part of the charm of this film is that the actors are competent and playing their roles straight. It makes such a terrific contrast with the threat they're faced with. The film is wonderfully amusing because of that

contrast and the bird itself, crafted by Ralph Hammeras and George Teague. How many films these days are as amusing and entertaining? Jeff should be proud!

Anyway, the chaps aboard the aircraft panic and bail out. Bad idea, and we are treated to shots of the crew dangling in their shroud lines as the bird rushes toward them, beak opening to engulf them. This would be quite effective if it weren't so silly. After all, the men are smaller than any of the bird's teeth. So what is it that goes "crunch!" so loudly when it closes its beak? Breaking its own teeth? No wonder it's in a bad mood.

Mitch and Sally are interviewed by General Van Buzzkirk. "Didn't you get a good look at it?"

"No," replies Mitch, "it was just a blur. Wish I'd had a camera with me."

At this Sally (clever girl) remembers the fixed balloons she'd sent up with cameras for calibration purposes. The balloons are retrieved, and the film rushed to them. We are treated to a superb close-up portrait of the bird leering into the camera. It'll have you rolling in the aisle, believe me. "Well, it's a bird all right," says the General. He and a General Considine argue with Mitch about what should be done.

At one point Buzzkirk blurts out "Good sense isn't confined to civilians, we know how to take care of ourselves and the country!" I don't know, sort of sounds like coup-talk to me.

In any event, a flock of fighters soon spots the beastie. Considine issues instructions: "Shoot it down. No questions, no games, no stalling, just shoot it down!" Doesn't seem to have much faith in his pilots' discipline. But pipes in the radio over his intercom all the same. We are treated to typical examples of the way highly-trained pilots talk (in movies):

"Holy Toledo! I've seen big Chicken hawks down on the farm, but that one takes the cake! I'll never call my mother-in-law an old crow again!" Don't you just love snappy banter?

"The end of the big bird" enthuses Buzzkirk as battle is joined. The planes are destroyed. "It's just a bird," shouts Buzzkirk, frustrated, "a BIG bird, but still just a bird."

General Considine decides to haul in the expensive stuff. He orders missiles with nuclear warheads made ready, but "only from launching sites in the country where the fallout pattern makes it safe to explode them." Has anybody in the Pentagon checked this General's psych report lately?

In any case, it turns out that the missiles won't work, for the guys down in the lab have figured out -- somehow -- that the bird radiates a protective shield of anti-matter energy which it has the power to open "to use its beak, its claws, its wings as destructive weapons." This puts a new light of gloom and despair on things.

But Mitch is happy, for at last he understands why the bird doesn't show up on radar. "No reflecting surface, the radar waves wouldn't bounce off, they'd slide around." Aha! Stealth Birdie!

No matter, the bird reveals itself, driving the human race to riot and rampage via assorted stock footage. Sally and Mitch retire to his apartment to work on a solution. (Sure! Nudge, nudge, wink, wink. say no more!)

"Ever wonder WHY the bird came here?" she asks.

Mitch considers carefully, "Could it have been for food? Does the bird eat, in the sense that we understand eating?" (Huh?.. as in, fast food only, or what?)

"I know why," Sally declares smugly, "To build a nest."

Mitch stares into space, "Nest.....eggs.....MORE BIRDS!" (Quick on the uptake, isn't he?)

Mitch phones Buzzkirk and demands a helicopter to take him to Pierre's farm. Considine comes over the radio and in the course of a five minute speech to the world public, admits "we are faced with a crisis, a crisis for which all the nations of the world in unprecedented co-operative action have found, as yet, no solution." (So what else is new?) The bird flies past the apartment window, cackling and shrieking insanely, as it does throughout the film. Mitch and Sally head out to the airport anyway.

Amazingly enough, as they fly around Pierre's farm in a helicopter -- with a very nervous Pierre aboard -- the bird shows up and forces them to land. "My elephant gun will stop anything," declares Mitch resolutely.

"Anything Mitch?" inquires Sally disbelievingly.

"Well, not the bird," admits Mitch, but we're after eggs." Yeah, I like to shoot eggs with an elephant gun myself. Better than fish in a barrel.

Anyway, they discover the nest while the bird is tending its egg, which is nearly the size of the bird's body. As Bill Warren puts it, *"one regrets the lack of an egg-laying sequence."*

(A digression, I check my source books for basic info, then go out of my way to come up with observations of my own -- I took 14 pages of notes while watching this film -- but every now and then I can't resist quoting pertinent comments by other critics.)

They shoot holes in the egg (nearly as big as Mothra's egg!) and cower as the bird swoops down and eats Pierre. They're pretty shook up about it. "We'll leave the chopper and take Pierre's car," says Mitch. "He won't be needing it."

On the way back they're overhauled by four frenzied teenagers in a speeding jalopy. Dig that crazy teen talk! Like: "Hey Daddy-o, get that tin can off the road!" (I bet this scene was featured prominently in the trailer to attract the teen crowd.) As they pull alongside, the girl shouts "Who's afraid of the big bad bird?"

Mitch roars back at them "Turn off your lights! Get off the road!"

"Don't worry about us, we've got salt to shake on its tail!" the blond bimbo shouts back, holding up a salt shaker. The crazy kids race ahead. The shot of the Birdie swooping down on their speeding hotrod is worth the price of admission all by itself. God, they just don't make films like this anymore.

Back in his apartment, Mitch comes up with a scheme to create Mu-mesons, which are (genuinely) atoms with electrons smaller and 210 times heavier than ordinary electrons, so that the Mu-mesons are small enough to "sift through the defenses of the ordinary atoms and fuse with its nucleus." (What defenses? Teeny tiny bunkers? Sand traps? Landmines?).

"If I can get close enough to bombard the bird's anti-matter shield with a stream of mesic atoms," Mitch explains, "I can destroy that shield. Then you can hit it with everything including the kitchen sink."

General Considine replies, "We've got kitchen sinks to spare, son."

"All I need is a blank cheque for supplies and equipment."

"It's yours." (Aha, a clue to Pentagon spending patterns.)

Alas, there's a slight flaw in the plan. Mu-mesons only exist for a millionth of a second. Never say die, Mitch plunges ahead with bigger and bigger electronic tubes and Jacob's ladders. Each experiment explodes in bigger and bigger explosions. When he wakes up in hospital, he announces the last experiment was a success, and all they need to do is build a meson projector and insert it in an aircraft.

Meanwhile the bird perches on the Empire State building to knock chunks out of it with its beak, then flies on to the UN building to sample its masonry. Its meal is interrupted when General Considine pilots a B-25 bomber past its head (with co-pilot Buzzkirk and projector gun manned by Mitch, Sally, and a 3rd chap I haven't previously mentioned -- so you'll have to watch the film to find out about him -- so there).

The bird swoops in pursuit, trailing about ten feet behind the plane, shrieking and cackling all the while. The projector poking out the rear of the B-25 emits streams of Mu-mesons (curiously resembling puffs of smoke), which eliminate the anti-matter shield hitherto protecting the avian wonder. Then General Considine turns the B-25 around and fires rockets into the hapless Birdie. With fading cackle, the befeathered beastie falls into the ocean.

General Considine has the last word. "We got it!" he cries triumphantly.

Final shot of a giant claw, profoundly clenched, sinking into the depths.....

I love this film. See it. Cherish it. I do.

UPCOMING NIFTY FILM PROJECTS:

ONE MISSED CALL, opening this month, is an American remake of the Japanese 'supernatural' thriller about people who receive recordings of their own deaths on their cell phone days before they actually die.

PLANET 51 is a Spanish animated film about an alien planet living in constant fear of an invasion from Earth, so a visiting American astronaut has to be hidden by local alien kids. Sort of ET in reverse. New Line has acquired rights.

A **TOM SWIFT** film is in the works by digital Studio 'Worldwide Biggies' in which the hoary-old 'boy genius inventor with the FBI in his side-pocket' will be updated with 'green' technology?

KINGDOM OF THE CRYSTAL SKULLS is the title of the Indiana Jones 4 movie for them as hasn't heard.

And of course, there's a **TRANSFORMERS 2** in the offing.

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE, a popular children's book, is being turned into a live action film directed by Spike Jonze with Lauren Ambrose as the voice of 'KW'.

I AM LEGEND, starring Will Smith, based on the 1954 book by Richard Matheson, has been filmed twice previously, as **THE OMEGA MAN** with Charlton Heston in 1971, & as **THE LAST MAN ON EARTH** with Vincent Price in 1964.

10,000 B.C. includes both mammoths and the nearly equally-as-ancient Omar Sharif in the cast of this prehistoric epic directed by Roland Emmerich.

HANSEL AND GRETEL is a feature-length live-action adaptation of the folk tale made famous by the Brothers Grimm, this version a Korean film directed by Im Pil-Sung. Said to be visually impressive and quite scary.

L THE LAST 23 DAYS (or **L CHANGE THE WORLD**) is a prequel to the hugely popular Japanese film **DEATH NOTE** and will be directed by Hideo Nakata (**RINGU**).

METROPOLIS, Fritz Lang's 1927 German Expressionist Science Fiction masterpiece, is to be remade by Munich-based Producer Thomas Schuehly of 'ALEXANDER' fame. I have a bad feeling about this.

CLASH OF THE TITANS, Ray Harryhausen's 1981 Greek mythos flick, his last film, is to be remade by Warner Brothers, and Steve Norrington ' **LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN** ' will direct. Arrgh!

POP SKULL, a film by 24 year old Alan Wingard about a drug addict coping with evil spirits in his home was shot on a budget of a mere two thousand dollars and is getting rave reviews at film festivals.

EDEN LOG is some sort of French Sci-Fi action film directed by Franck Vestiel which has been blowing people away with some atmospheric 'teaser' scenes but so far no one knows what it's all about.

THE LOST SKELETON RETURNS AGAIN is another Horror/Sci-Fi spoof by Larry Blamire, a sequel to his absolutely hilarious 2004 film **LOST SKELETON OF CADAVRA**. Promises a valley chock full of monsters. Cool!

Neil Marshall's **DOOMSDAY** is apparently having trouble pleasing preview audience's and is still being edited. Some sort of post-apocalypse action film it seems. Hopefully original?

THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME is a sophisticated anime film by Mamoru Hosoda about a young woman who can choose to physically leap back into any point in her past, ultimately with dire consequences.

BEYOND THE RAVE is Hammer Films' first gorror movie in 30 years. All about vampires in the UK's underground rave scene, it will be released as 20 'webisodes' on My Space, then head straight to DVD. Stars Ingrid Pitt.

THE HOBBIT and a sequel will be produced for MGM and New Line by Peter Jackson (& Fran Walsh) after all, but Jackson will not direct the two films. Rumour is a different director for each. First film slated for release in 2010.

THE iDol: AN UNUSUAL FILM AND AN UNUSUAL DIRECTOR

THE iDol is an independent Japanese film by Norman England about an action figure collector who acquires a genuinely alien toy figure, with dire consequences.

It was written and directed by Norman England. The cast includes Takako Fuji (Kayako from THE GRUDGE), Yukijiro Hotaru (the Gamera series, ZEIRAM, GMK), and Tomoo Haraguchi (monster maker for the Gamera series, director of SAKUYA and KIBAKICHI), while the crew features people who have worked on the Godzilla, Gamera, and Ultraman series, DEATH NOTE, RING, GUNDAM and more.

The following quoted (with permission) from postings on 'The Monster Fighters Online Club', a Monster Attack Team Canada discussion group. < <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterFighters> >

Stan G. Hyde writes:

The iDOL is a fun film and it played to great audience reaction when it screened here with DEATH NOTE.

Here's hoping it becomes more widely available somehow . . .

It also played to great reaction from two classes of Churchill High School film students - and Director Norman England not only agreed to the screenings but also agreed to write many pages of response to many pages of questions from the classes, and then later on to meet some of them in Japan, even though he was sick at the time, and walk us around locations from the film. He's a great guy. Thanks Norman!

By the way, Norman England (THE iDol)and Shusuke Kaneko (DEATH NOTE) really enjoyed Vancouver. Shusuke said there was a really "nice atmosphere" and I don't think he was being ironic even though it rained the whole time they were here and he laughed when I told them, "Welcome to Mordor." (Actually, it was a nice day the day they flew back, so Norman was able to go down to the water, watch some seaplanes take off against the mountains, and basically see the city for a half a day.)

Strangest story, Viz Productions was doing the voice work on DEATH NOTE at Ocean Studios here on the same weekend as we had the showing - so they asked me to bring Shusuke and Norman in to see the recording session. (We also ALMOST got on set with WATCHMEN . . . but at the 11th hour that didn't come off because other VIP visitors arrived.)

Anyway, we go in and meet the voice work producer, the engineer, and the director . . . voice actor will be in a minute. When the door opens, it's one of my ex-students, Brad Swaile (whose also the voice of Amuro Ray in GUNDAM). Brad is doing the voice of Light Yagami in both the anime and live action versions of DEATH NOTE.

He shakes hands with Norman and Shusuke, then turns to me and double-takes, "Mr. Hyde!!!" Only took him an instant to recover . . . "Finally our professional lives cross . . ." but I felt sorry for him. Bad enough to have the ADR staff there and the Director of the film, but to also have your friggin' High School drama teacher watching you in the booth - sheesh.

Anyway, with all this talk about actors, watching the sessions gave me a new respect for the hard work that actors do. ADR/Dubbing is lonely work, and matching tone, breathing, and delivery in another language takes a lot of concentration and skill while you stand alone with the microphone in the sound booth.

A couple of times Brad noted something in Tatsuya Fujiwara's performance that required line revisions . . . and though he joked about "writer's credit" . . . one of the things actors bring to the mix is a sensitivity about character that no one else - including the writer - have. They can be a pain in the ass for this reason sometimes - ignoring the arc of the story for the arc of their character - but that's their job.

Anyway, it was a bizarre co-incidence, but pretty cool, and I felt really privileged not only to have the weekend to show Vancouver off to Norman and Shusuke, but also to have the chance to see Brad at work.

Later on Viz filmed an interview with Shusuke and Norman for inclusion on the DEATH NOTE DVD. (Then they took us out to a really nice supper - thanks, Viz!)

SOME THOUGHTS ON BEOWULF, THE FILM

The following quoted (with permission) from postings on 'The Monster Fighters Online Club', a Monster Attack Team Canada discussion group. < <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterFighters> >

Stan G. Hyde:

(WARNING! SPOILERS!)

I just saw BEOWULF in 3-D. Fun to see it that way - but I'm not sure the Director really has control of composition with the 3-D process. My attention kept getting drawn away from the action by rolling pebbles or threads in someone's "costume." The Dragon part was cool though . . .

Grendal really did look like an A-Bomb survivor, didn't he? His glittery scales kept distracting me in 3-D . . . and I really could have lived without the ghostly blue flame effect that allowed them to use strobbing in the fight scene (it always

makes me feel THAT CLOSE to a seizure).

Yup - I can't say I really liked the film . . . and the human figures are creepy. The "experience" of 3-D was fun . . . but the "movie" experience is strange in 3-D . . . including weird editing.

Run cycles for the horses were . . . well, pretty lame I thought. And were everyone's hands too big because they'd been motion-captured? (A friend whose a key-frame animator is always complaining about that, and I did think that they seemed a little over-emphasized.)

Grendal's cave was a bit too Freudian too - if you know what I mean. And I guess it was a joke the way they kept putting phallic objects in front of Beowulf when he was naked . . . but - well - not that funny.

Ultimately the POLAR EXPRESS/BEOWULF "Mo-Cap-Men" are doomed to extinction I think . . . too creepy.

You know, I train young actors . . . and actors can be a pain - for reasons that mostly relate to what they do . . . but only a somebody working their heads too far up their . . . "films" . . . could actually think that "virtual actors" should or even can replace real actors.

What an actor brings to the mix is a whole universe away from what a virtual actor can ever bring . . . it doesn't matter how real they look, the process is always going to produce a stylized performance - not necessarily bad but different from an actor on camera.

And as for "stylized" - heck, video games . . .

If anyone tells me that "special effects are more realistic" now, I seriously questions where they've been spending their "real" life.

Sorry if I sound curmudgeonly . . . but Zemeckis' doomed quest to replace actors (sounds like a Director . . .) is a better story than BEOWULF . . . kinda like MOBY DICK mixed with THE INVISIBLE BOY . . . let's try to gain total control of the image so that the actor's choices no longer get in my way.

Too much coffee this morning . . .

My other problem with Beowulf, though I usually like Neil Gaiman's scripting... was that having Grendal be Hrothgar's son . . . and the fact that Grendal's mother was tempting Beowulf . . . was a lot more in the Greek tragic mode than Beowulf really is. The story really isn't about temptation and "secret sin."

The real deal is, to quote Beowulf, "I'm here to kill your monster."

ODD BITS

RETRO CLASSICS TRIVIA: WILL THE FUTURE BE AS WEIRD AS THE PAST?

THE 'STUDIO' OF AUGUSTUS: *by The Graeme*

In 1970 I toured Europe with my 'EUROPE ON FIVE DOLLARS A DAY' book in hand. Among the many ruins I visited in Rome was the partially intact house of Augustus, Rome's first Emperor (you remember, the ruthless little twerp who beat the crap out of Mark Anthony & Cleopatra to become undisputed ruler of the Roman empire?) It was very cool exploring three rooms of his house and examining the fading wall paintings.

Lately there's been a lot of publicity about his house, with freshly restored wall frescos, being reopened to the public for the first time in years. Trouble is, they're talking about the house next door to the one I visited. What gives?

First, here's a quote from Suetonius, Secretary to the Emperor Hadrian more than 100 years after Augustus died, and author of the juicy history 'The Twelve Caesars', primary source for Robert Graves's novel and TV series 'I, Claudius':

"His first house, once the property of Calvus the Orator, stood close to the Roman Forum at the top of the Ringmakers' stairs, then he moved to what had been Hortensius's house on the Palatine hill. Oddly enough, his new palace was neither larger nor more elegant than the first: the courts being supported by squat columns of peperino stone, and the living rooms innocent of marble or elaborately tessellated floors."

Suetonius adds: "Whenever he wanted to be alone and free of interruptions, he could retreat to a study at the top of the house which he called 'Syracuse' – perhaps because Archimedes of Syracuse had a similar one – or 'my little workshop' (the 'technyphion'). He would hide himself away here... When dinner was over he would retire to a couch in his study, where he worked late until all the outstanding business of the day had been cleared off, or most of it."

How I faunched, back in 1970, to explore the upper terrace rooms (closed to the public), one of which was surely the remains of his 'Syracuse' work study. So close and yet so far. Now it turns out I may have been standing in the wrong house!

When first discovered in 1869, scholars assumed it was the House of Germanicus, a Great Grandson of Augustus, for ancient writers indicated that the assassins of the Emperor Caligula fled along a very lengthy tunnel within his palace to the house of Germanicus. And indeed a well preserved 'cryptoporticus' runs 130 metres alongside the palace of Tiberius/Caligula directly to this house. However it turns out it was added in the reign of Nero, so it can't possibly be the escape route in question, ergo, cannot be used as evidence the house belonged to Germanicus.

Some of the lead pipes in the house are stamped "Iulia Augusta" and some scholars believe this refers to Livia, the wife of Augustus, so they call it the 'House of Livia'. Others point out the title "Iulia Augusta" could equally as well refer to

Augustus's daughter. So that all that can be inferred is that at some point this Republican era built house eventually wound up as imperial property. But did Augustus live there? Some authorities still think so, or at least believe he lived there till he could buy more property and expand his digs.

The ancient authors are not entirely clear. At some point before 28 B.C. his house (popularly called by contemporaries 'The Palatium') burned down and was quickly rebuilt with money offered – perhaps after some prodding from Augustus's loyal legionary veterans – by the general public. Part of the house was never rebuilt, but was replaced by a temple devoted to Apollo Palatinus, itself rather large, which indicates the Palatium must also have been rather large, far from the humble edifice of Hortensius. But then the ancient authors do hint he purchased other properties over time to gradually expand his 'palace', in particular a mansion once owned by Q. Lutatius Catalus.

To complicate matters further, the only temple ruin in the vicinity was believed by scholars to be dedicated to Jupiter Victor. But lately they have changed their minds and now believe, based presumably on some sort of evidence, that it is in fact the remains of the celebrated Temple of Apollo Palatinus (which once contained numerous works of art and a famed library) built by Augustus. The 'new' house in question rather conveniently appears to have, in part, occupied the site where the ruin of Apollo's temple stands now. Equally conveniently, it has columns of peperino stone. Thus it would appear to possess the greater claim to be Augustus's residence.

Current thinking goes something like this: the 'house of Livia' may in fact be the 'house of Hortensius' Augustus first lived in, and the more elaborate 'House of Augustus' is in fact the 'House of Catalus' he purchased to expand his 'palace' (and prestige). It's assumed later Roman historians tended to conflate the two, that most of the legends and information centred on his expanded palace and yet retained the pretence of his original 'humble' abode. Ergo, if the 'Syracuse' still exists, it must be one of the rooms found on the upper terrace of the 'new' house, which offered greater comfort and room than the 'old' house.

All this is mostly speculation, since the physical evidence is hard to interpret. After all, the 'new' house burned down (when and to what extent unknown) after a lightning strike, which resulted in the public rebuilding as well as the construction of the Apollo temple circa 28 BC, then burned again in 3 AD, and again in 64 AD during the reign of Nero, then was filled in and used as part of the foundation for the spectacular palace constructed by Domitian, before being rediscovered in 1961.

Whereas the 'House of Livia' seems still to have been in use late in the first century AD, albeit with rooms now subdivided by relatively crude brick walls. In other words, functioning in some manner as part of the working space of the Imperial Palace complex, but not on display as a historical museum piece celebrating Augustus, thus indicating its significance may have been forgotten. Or maybe, since Domitian allowed the remains of the 'House of Augustus' (Catalus) to be filled in, maybe he didn't care to preserve either house, possibly out of a desire *not* to be associated with Augustus.

Domitian being a paranoid egomaniac, he probably did not want anyone viewing him as a lesser figure.

Anyway, long story short, scholars believe they have identified Augustus's work study, his 'Syracuse', his 'technyphion', and here is a picture of it in its restored splendiferous condition, albeit a computer restoration rather than an actual photograph. The 'studiolo' (as modern Italians call it) is a windowless cubiculum 3.5 metres square, its walls covered in 'Second Style' Augustan era paintings, its ceiling a shallow barrel vault encrusted with painted stucco geometric decorations.

Imagine Augustus alone in this room reclining on a couch, examining documents by olive oil lamp light and scribbling comments and decisions, or perhaps listening to a secretary-slave reading the documents aloud, with Augustus dictating replies (Romans took slaves for granted; when Suetonius writes "whenever he wanted to be

alone" he probably meant that no other persons of rank were to be admitted, or members of his family, but that of course useful slaves were present, just as you would expect furniture to be and perhaps a snack or two...).

At any rate, I truly want to believe this interesting room is in fact Augustus's 'Syracuse', and if I am ever back in Rome, I will make a point of lining up for the tour (they only allow ten tourists at a time).

So, what Science Fiction connection can I come up with? How about Ray Bradbury's poignant short story 'THERE WILL COME SOFT RAINS...'? It made me cry when I first read it the Ballantine pocket book publication of a bunch of EC Comics adaptations of his short stories. That was in 1966. The text story was originally published in 1952.

It takes place on August 4th, 2026. An automated house is going about its daily routine, drawing bathes, preparing breakfast, etc. There is no one living in the house, because after a nuclear war, there is no one living.

"The entire West face of the house was black, save for five places. Here, the white silhouette of a man mowed a lawn. There, as in a photograph, a woman bent to pick flowers. Still further over, their images outlined in one titanic instant, a



small boy, hands flung into the air... higher up, the image of a thrown ball... and opposite him, a girl, hands raised to catch the ball which never came down..."

Was this the poignant scene which moved me to tears? Oddly enough, no.

"Twelve noon. A dog whined, shivering, on the front porch... The front door recognized the dog's voice and opened. The dog, once huge and fleshy, but now gone to bone and covered with sores, moved inside, tracking mud... The dog ran around, hysterically yelping to each door, at last realizing, as the house realized, that only silence was here!"

Driven mad by the smell of lunch cooking behind the closed door to the kitchen, the dog runs in circles biting its tail until it drops dead. By 2:30 PM a horde of tiny mouse-sized cleaning robots have removed every last vestige of the poor dog. This was the scene which made me cry, for I found it unbearably sad. Still do.

Bradbury's story, and the house of Augustus, are reminders how ephemeral we all are; May Flies and Morning Glories at best....

The house I grew up in during the 1950s still stands. Alas, I fear it will not last 2,000 years. There will be no tourists for my humble abode. Ah well, who cares? Life is for the living. Besides, I ain't no Augustus. The chances of my becoming Emperor of Canada are slim indeed. I'm 99% convinced of this....

LOCAL EVENTS:

SHOWING OF DAFT PUNK'S FILM 'ELECTROMA':

Jan. 11-12 (Fri & Sat) 9:30pm: Daft Punk's Electroma, a film, at Vancity Theatre in Vancouver International Film Centre, 1181 Seymour Street (at Davie), Vancouver, BC. Single-feature admission: \$9.50 for basic members, \$7.50 for students, seniors and premium members. "In a world without men, two lonely robots embark on an odyssey across a stark California landscape of haunting, surreal beauty on a quest to become human."

For more info, see < <http://www.viff.org/tixSYS/vifc/filmguide/event.php?EventNumber=1394> > or phone 604-685-0260 (VIFC office) or 604-683-3456 (VIFC film info).

VANCOUVER COMICON:

Sunday, January 20th 11am to 5pm: Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street, Vancouver, BC. General admission: \$3, Kids under 14: Free. Dealer's Tables: \$45 wall; \$40 centre. Special Guests include Camilla d'Errico (Nightmares & Fairytales), Robin Bougie (Cinema Sewer), Kelly Everart (Trilogy of Terror), Mike Myhre (Space Jet Comics) & others.

For more info about show, check out < <http://mypage.uniserve.ca/~lswong/Comicon.html> >

LOCAL CLUBS:

B.C. BROWNCOATS:

The B.C. Browncoats, founded April 2004, are fans of Firefly and Serenity, created by Joss Whedon. 300 members.

"Every Thursday from 8-10 PM we meet in the Canadian Browncoat's Chat Room. New members are always welcome, so please come and join us for a chat!" Simply register at < <http://p201.ezboard.com/bccanadianbrowncoats2932> >

See < <http://www.browncoats.ca/> > website for details & info, or The Vancouver Firefly/Serenity Meetup Group (Vancouver) at < <http://firefly.meetup.com/12/> > "Grab a drink, pull up a chair and join us online! It's free...and it's FUN!"

B.C.S.F.A. – THE BRITISH COLUMBIA SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION:

Founded 29th January, 1970. Currently offers for its \$26 membership fee: a monthly social gathering at the home of the Treasurer, a 'Feeding Frenzy' get together at a different restaurant every month (currently on hold till the new year), a book discussion held on a monthly basis at the 'Our Town Café', a monthly 'Royal Swiss Navy Disorganization meeting' at the home of BCSFAzine editor Garth Spencer where random topics are picked out of a hat and hotly debated, and of course, 12 issues of BCSFAzine. For details, such as time & locations, check out the BCSFA Club website listed below.

NOTE: BCSFA BOOK DISCUSSION IN VANCOUVER: Thursday January 17 @ 7pm at the "Our Town" café, 245 East Broadway, Vancouver. "This month, we're discussing four books, three by Arthur C. Clark: 'Against the Fall of Night' & 'City and the Stars' & 'The Sands of Mars', plus Phillip Pullman's 'The Golden Compass'."

NOTE: BCSFA MEETING & PARTY: Saturday January 19 @ 7pm at the Moore-Freeman home, 7064 No. 1 Road, Richmond, B.C. Phone (604) 277-0845 for directions.

NOTE: ROYAL SWISS NAVY DISORGANIZATIONAL MEETING (DISCUSSION GROUP): Saturday January 26 @ 8 pm (?) at Garth Spencer's place, 82 East 40th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C. Phone him at (778) 865-2372 for directions.

BCSFA SPONSORED WEB SITES:

BCSFA CLUB WEB SITE: < <http://www.bcsfa.net> > (Currently 'frozen' pending new site manager)

BCSFA YAHOO DISCUSSION GROUP: < http://groups.yahoo.com/group/bc_scifi_assc/ >

CANADIAN FANCYCLOPEDIA: < <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html> >

B.I.F.F. MEETINGS (Burrard Inlet Fan Fellowship) – Every Friday (except long weekends & VCON weekend) @ 6:30 PM till closing time (officially 9:00 pm). A weekly social meeting for SF fans, founded June 11th, 2005. Held at The Eighties Restaurant, 110 West 14th Street (at Lonsdale) in North Vancouver.

“There are no rules (beyond the fact that the restaurant asks that anybody who comes orders some food, but as you can get something reasonable to eat for very little if funds are tight), and there are no membership fees or dues (although sometimes we ask for donations to cover some expenses), and nobody is in charge (things just sort of happen.)”

Every BIFF event typically has a theme, be it a particular film, panel discussion, guest speaker, etc. For Eg:

Friday January 4 – Show & Tell Night, bring any nifty SF&F gift you got for Christmas.

Friday January 11 – Haiku Movie Review Contest, you will only be allowed 17 syllables to review a film.

Friday January 18 – Agenda Free BIFF, discuss any SF&F topic you want.

To find out what is currently planned for the near future (usually on relatively short notice), please check the BIFF web site at: < <http://biff.realityfree.ca/> >

FANCOUVER: VANCOUVER SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY MEETUP – Vancouver, B.C. Founded Sept 21, 2005. 118 Members. “Meet fellow Sci-fi/Fantasy Fans near you! Come to a local Sci-fi/Fantasy Meetup to have fun talking science fiction and fantasy in literature, media, gaming and art. Who knows, maybe we'll hit a convention too!”

For details & info: < <http://scifi.meetup.com/278/> >

F.R.E.D. MEETINGS – Every Friday @ 8:00 PM. F.R.E.D. stands for “F*** Reality, Everybody Drink”, a weekly social meeting for SF fans, founded May 3rd, 1979. Currently held at Boston Pizza, 1333 West Broadway @ Hemlock (2 blocks East of Granville), Vancouver. Note: Ryan Hawe reports: “I am pleased to report that thanks to Jen, we now have guaranteed seating for FRED at Boston Pizza Broadway every Friday. A gift for local fandom, one might say.”

For info see < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php> > or contact Ryan Hawe, Keeper of the FRED, at < luxdoprime@yahoo.com >

MONSTER ATTACK TEAM CANADA

“This group is mostly for members to keep up with the latest events and happening for the club. MONSTER ATTACK is situated in British Columbia's Lower Mainland, and while anyone is welcome to join to stay up with club events, the primary interest will be to members and those thinking of coming to a Monster Attack - Canada event in Vancouver B.C. or the Lower Mainland. At the same time, we want to answer as many questions as we can for people interested in SF, FANTASY, ANIME, and MONSTER modeling - and encourage people to use the site to pose questions about kit building. Think of this as an online clubhouse as well as an info site - and PLEASE ASK AWAY!”

For details & info: < <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterAttackTeamCanada/?yguid=8788> >

MONSTER FIGHTERS ONLINE CLUB (of Monster Attack Team Canada)

“This Group is for anyone who wants to talk Science fiction and Fantasy films, Figure Garage kits, Monster toys, DVDs, up-coming films, and just plain cool stuff! PLEASE: this is a place to have FUN!!! It's about the love of the hobby, not about flaming someone who feels differently than you do. Please try to express your opinions in a way that is respectful of others' opinions. Let's talk monsters!”

Every month a MOTM (Monster of the month) topic is chosen. “Monster of the Month is designed to inspire Monster Fighters to study their enemies. Sometime during November watch the MOTM . . . then post comments, reviews, thoughts, or pictures to the clubhouse.” The MOTM is announced at the beginning of each month. November's was MYSTERIOUS ISLAND (1961), Oct: IT CAME FROM BENEATH THE SEA (1956), Sept: ATRAGON (1963), etc. “We're still hungry for info on models, toys, pictures and other cool stuff devoted to those monsters. Scan the web, search the world, and deliver the results of your searches back here!”

For details & info:< <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterFighters> >

USS MAJESTIC NCC-78601 (REGION 10 STARFLEET)

This Star Trek vessel is the flagship for Region 10 Starfleet (see non-local clubs), and is based in Victoria, B.C. About 18 members listed.

“Like many ships, our crew is diverse and has a variety of interests, but for us on board USS Majestic our major activities include social events such as watching movies, hiking, games and short story writing.”

Recently began publishing a monthly newsletter titled ‘Majestic Mews’ available online.

For details & info: < <http://www.uss-majestic.org/> >

NON-LOCAL CANADIAN CLUBS:

FREDERICTON SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY:

“Along with our official meetings, members of the group congregate on Monday Nights for a gathering at Tingley's Traditions/Quiznos on Dundonald Street, Fredericton, NB. The times vary, especially during the summer months, but generally anytime after 8:00pm until closing at 10:00pm.”

“The FSFS also helps in the volunteering at [Communicon](#), which is a local gaming convention held the last weekend in January. Though it is a separate entity from the FSFS, it is run by two of the club members and many of the club participate in one facet or another.”

For details & info see < <http://www.celtic-dragon.ca/fsfswebsitemain.html> >

K.I.D.C. – KLINGON IMPERIAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS:

“World's largest & most popular Klingon cultural website... dedicated to the promotion and preservation of Klingon culture and society here on Earth. On this award-winning website, you will find over 225 pages of Klingon data; info on the KIDC, Klingon rituals, ceremonies and traditions, intergalactic cuisine, Klingon fashion and costuming, ships and weaponry; as well as popular discussion forums, numerous Klingon-related mailing lists, and more...”

“The KIDC is an independent and neutral Klingon organization that does not get involved in intra-club political disputes or disagreements. We believe that a Klingon is a Klingon, no matter what organization, club or group they belong to or are affiliated with. We hope to serve as a central resource of Klingon cultural information to all Klingons, regardless of their background.”

“Our headquarters is the *Klingon Imperial Embassy*, based in the Montreal Sector of Canada... The KIDC has many different departments and sections; one of which you will be assigned based on your qualifications and your career preference. Each of our members chooses a Klingon name and puts together a character or persona that fits plausibly within the generally accepted view of the Klingon Empire within the period of The Grand Alliance.”

“Depending on your location on the globe, there are many different ways of participating in the club. We highly encourage interaction between member's characters both through role-playing and through real-life communications via regular snail mail, e-mail and participation in our many Klingon related mailing lists as well as our [Klingon Imperial Forums](#). Members can also become involved in Klingon cultural research, assisting with website maintenance, recruiting and promotion, organizing display tables at conventions, club fund-raising, and organizing or assisting in charitable events.”

For details & info: < <http://www.klingon.org> >

MARITIME SCIENCE FICTION MODELERS:

“The Maritime Science Fiction Modelers consists of about 20 model builders who enjoy the realm of Science Fiction model subjects. We now have members in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario.”

“Formed in 1993 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the group gathers once a month to discuss the sci-fi modeling world, talk about new science fiction movies and television, and swap model building techniques. At our meetings, we are able to work on our latest model, or we can show off our most recent modeling triumph.”

“Many members of the group are involved in promoting the model building hobby, and we have had models in several model contests, museum exhibits, science fiction conventions, local television and movie theatre lobbies.”

“It wasn't until 2002 that we finally put a website together so that more than just the Maritime provinces of eastern Canada could see what we were up to. Enjoy your visit!”

For details & info see: < <http://msfm.seryan.com/> >

MonSFFA – THE MONTREAL SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY ASSOCIATION:

“MonSFFA a club for fans of the science fiction and fantasy genres. We are your connection to the SF/F community, local, national and international. We have been active since 1987. Our areas of interest span the full spectrum of the SF/F universe: literature, movies, television, comics, gaming, art, animation, scale-model building, costuming, memorabilia collecting, film/video production and more!”

MonSFFA is probably the most active SF club in Canada, with a healthy membership base, event-packed club activity, the monthly newsletter IMPULSE (available for download) and a quarterly clubzine WARP (members only download, or discretion of editor). Their website is well worth checking out for the downloadable fan films BEAVRA, MOOSE MAN, and THE SIMPLETON'S LIFE.

For details & info: < <http://www.monsffa.com/> >

OSFA – THE OTTAWA SCIENCE SOCIETY:

“The Ottawa Science Fiction Society is an organization of fans of science fiction, fantasy and other speculative fiction in its various forms, whether in prose novels or comics, television or motion pictures, hardcopy or software. OSFS is the oldest operating science fiction club in Ottawa: Founded in 1977 and incorporated in 1979.”

“Our regular monthly meetings are usually held at the Dalhousie Community Centre at 775 Somerset St. W. at 2 PM on the last Sunday of each month, except during summer hiatus.”

“Our regular newsletter, the OSFS Statement, is published monthly. OSFS members receive hardcopies by mail.”

For details & info: < <http://osfs.ncf.ca/> >

SFL - SCIENCE FICTION LONDON:

“Science Fiction London (SFL) evolved out of an earlier club called Star Trek Ontario, founded in 1980 by a group of Star Trek fans. Science Fiction London (SFL) is a group of science fiction enthusiasts living in and around London, Ontario, Canada. We meet monthly in London to discuss science fiction. We also get together occasionally for social events like movie days and barbecues.”

“To get the most out of the meetings, you should read the book that we will be discussing prior to the meeting, assuming that the topic is a book. The schedule of upcoming meetings can be found in the [Meeting Topics](#) section of this Website. Please note that if the topic is a film, the meeting will include a showing of the film prior to the discussion so you won't need to prepare ahead of time. If the topic is a theme, there may or may not be reading that you should do before you attend the meeting; in that case, the details will be displayed in the [Meeting Topics](#) page.”

“Our meetings take place at the Central Branch of the London Public Library at 251 Dundas Street between Wellington and Clarence Streets. Meetings about books will be held in the Tonda Room. Meetings about films will take place in the Stevenson and Hunt Room, which is beside the Tonda Room. Both rooms are on the first floor of the Central Branch.”

For details & info: < <http://sfl.london.on.ca/> >

STARFLEET REGION 10:

“Starfleet was founded by Star Trek enthusiasts in 1974 and has become an international fan organization whose members (4000 +) are united the world over in their appreciation of Star Trek. Hundreds of chapters worldwide link members into local fandom as well as the international organization.”

“Region 10 encompasses the geopolitical areas of Alaska, Alberta, British Columbia, Northwest Territories, Saskatchewan and Yukon.

Includes Starships: USS Majestic (Victoria, B.C.), USS SOL (Alaska), & USS Bondar (?).

For details & info: < <http://www.10thfleet.org/> >

CANADIAN SCI-FI FACEBOOK SITES:

CANADIAN FANDOM:

You guessed it! A Canada-wide Facebook devoted to Sci-Fi fans, actors, artists, authors, concon, costumers, panelists, sfx people, fan writers, zine editors and all kinds other imaginative people. 143 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=3198365242> >

CANADIAN UNITY FAN FUND (CUFF):

A discussion group for fen who want to promote CUFF, the Cdn fan fund which sends an Eastern fan to a Western con/Convention (Aurora Awards) & West to East in alternating years for sake of Cdn fannish unity. 10 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6119342503> >

F.R.E.D. (FORGET REALITY ENJOY DRINKING):

This is a Facebook for a Vancouver centred social club which has been meeting weekly at local watering holes since 1979. Sci-Fi orientated. (See also F.R.E.D. under Local Clubs.) 56 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2351668529> >

MONTREAL FANDOM:

“A celebration and gathering of all past and present members of Montreal Fandom, as well as their many friends throughout the world.” 35 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=3433145295> >

OTTAWA FANDOM:

A Facebook for Ottawa fans & anyone interested in keeping in touch with them. 28 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=3254325206> >

SCI-FI ON THE ROCK II:

A Facebook for concon, attendees & fans of SCI-FI ON THE ROCK, Newfoundland's annual Sci-Fi convention, founded 2007. 76 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4107298179> >

VANCOUVER FANDOM:

A Facebook for Vancouver & Lower Mainland fans & all those interested in knowing them. 33 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2399759573> >

VCON:

A Facebook for concom, attendees, & fans of VCON, Canada's longest-running ongoing Sci-Fi Convention (founded 1971). Held annually Vancouver/Lower Mainland area. (Next VCON will be #33 in October 2008.) 96 members.

< <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=2315972840> >

CANADIAN SCI-FI WEBSITES OF INTEREST:

CANADIAN FANCYCLOPEDIA:

This is a 'work in progress' project I've been working on for more than a decade. Essentially my working notes for an A to Z 'Incomplete Guide to the History of Twentieth Century Canadian Science Fiction Fandom'. It is my intention to list and describe every Canadian Sci-Fi fanzine, club & organization since the 1930s as well as explain and detail fannish slang, custom, lore and legend. Granted, most of the traditions which form the underlying infrastructure of 'fandom' originated in the United States and Great Britain, but I include as much Canadian material as possible as I stumble across it in my research. For example, only Canadian zines are described. Don't have the time or space to detail foreign zines. So yes, a world-wide Fancyclopedia, but focused on Canadian fannish history.

NOTE: Sometimes people visiting my site, instead of finding the latest A-Z version, hit upon an earlier version that is merely A-C. Don't know why. Solution is simple. Click on 'C' to get the page dealing with 'C' subjects. At the top of the page where it says "Go to [E](#) or back to [Main Page](#)", click on 'E' and it will take you to the 'E' page and also magically jump to the latest A-Z version so that you can now jump to any page. Weird. So rest assured, the Canadian Fancyclopedia is *NOT* stuck in limbo but is in fact updated on a quasi-regular basis. On the Main Page just click on 'Info on Updates' for a list of the latest addition.

< <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html> >

CANADIAN SF -- THE CANADIAN SPECULATIVE FICTION FORUM:

"Fans, publishers, and authors of Canadian SF are welcome to join the discussion of speculative fiction. Log on and chat about science fiction, fantasy, alternate history, or any combination of the genres that make up the varied landscape of speculative fiction in Canada."

- Know of a convention, reading, or other event? [Post it on our coming events board.](#)
- Have you just published or discovered a new [science fiction](#) or [fantasy](#) story? Announce it [here!](#)
- Want to discuss Canadian [science fiction](#) or [fantasy](#)?
- Chat about [science fiction](#) and [fantasy](#) literature for children.
- Or [click here](#) for an overview of forum topics.

For details & info: < <http://www.pippin.ca/cgi-bin/YaBB/SF/> >

FANDOM.CA:

"Before Fandom.ca was a website, it was a protest. In 2000, a company calling themselves Fandom, Inc. attempted to register a trademark on the word "fandom". Their application was denied, as "fandom" was a word in common usage since its first appearance in Webster's Dictionary in 1903. Despite not actually having a trademark, Fandom, Inc. began legal proceedings against a fan who owned another website... The fraudulent legal exploits of Fandom, Inc. caused Science Fiction fans all over the world to begin registering domain names with the word "fandom" in them to keep those domain names out of unscrupulous corporate hands. Seeing such a need, I registered Fandom.ca with the [Canadian Internet Registration Authority.](#)"

"Then, in February 2002, the development started, and here is the result. Like all good websites, it's a work in continual progress. I hope to make it part information resource, and part weblog. In either of these areas, if there is some information I have missed, that should be known to all fandom, please feel free to [contact me](#) with links to information of interest. With help from fandom at large, this will hopefully become one of the better fannish resources available."

Andrew C. Murdoch < <http://www.fandom.ca/> >

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

Sources < <http://www.locusmag.com/Conventions.html> > & < <http://www.sfnorthwest.org/northwestcons.html#cons> >

RUSTYCON 25 – (**Jan 11 – 13, 2008**) at the Holiday Inn SeaTac Airport, 17338 International Boulevard, Seattle, WA 98188 USA. Phone: 206-248-1000 (front desk). To book room by phone call 1-888-465-4329. For info on hotel & booking room online see < <http://www.holiday-inn.com/sea-intlapt> > Enter R25 in 'Group Booking Code' to get special rate (\$107.00 US a night). General interest Sci-Fi convention with Author Guest of Honour Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, Artist GoH Frank Wu, and Fan GoH (collectively) the Elan Empire, a fannish organization as old as Rustycon itself: < www.elanempire.com >. Current membership rate \$40.00 US.

Register online at < http://www.rustycon.com/membership_services/online_registration/ >

POTLATCH 17 – (Feb 29 – Mar 2, 2008) at the Hotel Deca, Seattle, Washington. Definition: “a small, discussion-oriented, literary SF convention held regularly in Seattle, the San Francisco Bay Area, and Portland. Reservations: \$119.00/single or double occupancy; \$134.00/triple; and \$149.00/quad, plus tax. *Rates include parking and continental breakfast daily.* HOTEL DECA, 4507 Brooklyn Avenue NE, Seattle, Washington 98105; Phone: 206-634-2000; Fax: 206-545-2103; Toll Free Reservations: 800-899-0251; reservations@hoteldeca.com. To Register on-line, go to the Hotel Deca reservations page ("Book a Room") and enter the dates you are booking and our Group/Event Code: 00034491. See < <http://www.hoteldeca.com/> >. General memberships: \$50 (through December 31, 2007); Student memberships: \$35 (with valid student ID at the door); Ages 6-18: \$20; Supporting: \$20. Potlatch 17, c/o Suzanne Tompkins, PO Box 25075, Seattle, WA 98165. Website: <http://www.potlatch-sf.org/> Kate Schaefer, chair@potlatch-sf.org

NORWESCON 31 – (March 20 – 23, 2008) at the < [DoubleTree Hotel Seattle Airport](#) >, 18740 International Blvd, Seatac, Washington. Tel: 1-206-246-8600 (to reserve a room). Click here to make a < [reservation online](#) > Fax: 1-206-431-8687. Flat Norwescon room rate of \$105.00 per night for up to four (4) people. These rates are available for up to 3 days before and after the convention. A daily charge of \$10.00 for a 5th additional person. Five (5) people maximum per room. Parties are allowed only in the party wing (Wing 5b). If you're planning on hosting a party, request a room in the party wing when making your room reservation. Convention theme: “Bell, Book and Dragon”. Host convention for annual P.K. Dick Award. Writer GoH: Dan Simmons, Artist GoH: Ciruelo, Special Guest: Naomi Novik. Memberships \$50 US till December 31st, 2007. < [Online registration](#) > is now available (PayPal) or < [Registration via postal mail](#) > (Check or Money Order - U.S. Funds Only). For info such as party rules, programming, other guests, check out the Norwescon 31 home page at < <http://www.norwescon.org/default.htm> >

SCI-FI ON THE ROCK – (April 19-20, 2008) 9AM to 6PM each day, at the Holiday Inn, 180 Portugal Cove Road, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, A1B 2N2, Hotel Reservations 1-888-465-4329, Hotel Front Desk 1-709-722-0506, web site: < <http://www.holidayinn.com> >. Admission \$10 per day, or \$18 for a weekend pass. Guests include Jeremy Bulloch (Bobba Fett), Kenneth Tam (The Rogue Commodore), The Vader Party Star wars Group, Paul Tucker (The Underworld Railroad), Shannon Sullivan (The Dying Days), & Matthew LeDrew (Black Womb). Events include Robotics demo, Masquerade, Model Building Contest, Charity Auction, Dinner with Jeremy Bulloch, Geek Survivor Contest, & Quidditch Match, plus panels on Fanfilm Making, Dr. Who, Movie Makeup, Remote Control Toy Basics, Stage Combat, etc. Email con at < contact@scifiontherock.com > or check website at < <http://www.scifiontherock.com/> > or their facebook site at < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=4107298179> >

CORFLU SILVER / CORFLU 25 – (April 25-28, 2008) Plaza Hotel, One Main Street, Las Vegas NV 89101. Membership Rates: \$60 US / £35 UK attending. Hotel info: < <http://plazahotelcasino.com> > Make checks payable to Joyce Katz and mail them to Joyce Katz 909 Eugene Cernan St. Las Vegas, NV, 89145, USA You can also register through [PayPal](#) by sending the appropriate amount to < JoyceWorley1@cox.net > please follow up with an email to confirm. More info at < <http://www.corflu.org> >

KEYCON 25 – (May 16 – 19, 2008) at Radisson Skyview, 288 Portage Ave, Winnipeg MB. All rooms are \$86.00 per night, plus applicable taxes, and are available at that rate from May 14 to May 21, 2008 Call the hotel at (204)-956-0410. Mention Keycon to get the special rate!! Registration: Before Dec31st 2007 = \$45 Cdn. Then \$55 Cdn till April 30th. At the door TBA. Child 5 to 12 years \$35 Cdn. Mail in < [Registration Form](#) > and mail to: Keycon, PO Box 3178, Winnipeg MB R3C 4E6. Money orders and cheques accepted. Please make payable to: Keycon Mail in registrations accepted until April 30/2008 (by post-mark). Author Goh's Eric Flint & Jane Yolen, Artist GoH: David Mattingly, Gaming GoH: Jamie Chambers & parody/filking GoH: Luke Ski. For more info see: < <http://www.keycon.org/> >

DENVENTION / WORLDCON 66 -- (Aug 6 – 10, 2008) at the Colorado Convention Center, Denver, Colorado. (It's gigantic! 6 exhibit halls total 584,000 sq ft, 62 meeting rooms total 100,00 sq ft, 2 ballrooms total 85,000 sq ft, one 5,000 seat theatre! You'll need a GPS thingie to find your way around!) Entire Mark Adam's Hotel designated for party suites. 250 room block contracted for the Hyatt Hotel which adjoins the Convention Centre. PR2, hotel information and Hugo nomination ballots will be available no later than January 2008. Author GoH: Lois McMaster Bujold, Artist GoH: Rick Sternbach, Fan GoH: Tom Whitmore; Ghost of Honour: Robert Heinlein; Toast Master Will McCarthy. Current membership rates (good till Dec 31st, 2007) are Attending: \$175 US, Supporting: \$40 US, Child: \$45 US. For online membership: < http://www.denvention3.org/wcdb/member_main.php > or for mail in form go to < [membership form](#) > For more info see website < <http://www.denvention3.org/> >.

ANIME EVOLUTION -- (Aug 22-24, 2008) at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby B.C. “Vancouver's Japanese Animation Convention And Asian Cultural festival” with amv room & contest, cosplay & cosplay contest, industry guests,

industry panels, live concerts, video rooms, art gallery, karaoke, video games, dealers room, charity auction, game tournaments, and more! For info: < www.animeevolution.com >

VCON 33 -- (Oct 3-5, 2008) Vancouver, BC. Canada's oldest ongoing Sci-Fi convention (VCON 1 was held in 1971). Author GoH: Patrick Rothfuss (author of 'Name of the Wind'), Artist GoH: Lisa Snellings-Clark. Current pre-registration membership price: \$45 Cdn. Make out cheques to 'VCON' and mail to VCON, c/o Box 78069, Grandview RPO, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V5N 5W1. 85 members pre-registered so far. Details re hotel, rates, dates, more GoHs, etc to be announced. If you'd like to help VCON 33 write: < vconchair@gmail.com > For updated info: < www.vcon.ca >

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION 2008 -- (Oct 30 - Nov 2, 2008) at the Hyatt Regency Calgary Hotel, 700 Centre Street SE, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2G 5P6. Tel: (403) 717-1234. Fax: (403) 537-4444. Web site: < <http://www.calgary.hyatt.com> > Room Rate: CDN \$165 Single/Double Please mention "World Fantasy Convention" to receive the convention group rate and to properly credit our event. The group code that you want to use is WFCC or G-WFCC. This will give you the preferred rate of \$165.00/night. This rate expires October 1, 2008. Author GoH's David Morell & Barbara Hambly. Publisher GoH: Tom Doherty. Artist GoH: Todd Lockwood. Toastmaster: Tad Williams. Current Membership rate: \$125 US or CDN. Supporting: \$35 US or Cdn. Register on-line (via Pay Pal) at < <http://www.worldfantasy2008.org/ro.html> >, or to register by mail, go to < <http://www.worldfantasy2008.org/reg.html> > & choose appropriate form. For more Info check the convention website: < www.worldfantasy2008.org/ >.

ANTICIPATION / WORLDCON 67 -- (Aug 6-10, 2009) Hotel: Palais des congres de Montreal. GoH: Neil Gaiman. Invitee d'honneur: Elisabeth Vonarburg. Fan GoH: Taral Wayne. Editor GoH: David Hartwell. Publisher GoH: Tom Doherty. MC: Julie Czerneda. Contact address: Anticipation, C.P. 105, Succursale NDG, Montreal, QC, Canada H4A 3P4. For info: < info@anticipationsf.ca > or < www.anticipationsf.ca >

OOK, OOK, SLOBBER, DROOL!

From: LEE ANNE LAVELL, November 25th 2007

You made a couple of comments on my article in Askance, "The Rocky Road to Fandom" that I thought I might elaborate on. Actually, (and you must realize that most of this is just from very old memories) the first of the John Carter adaptations to Big Little Book form was not a Big Little Book imprint, although it was in that format. The second (John Carter and the Giant of Mars) was. (It was, incidentally, just called John Carter of Mars.)

((No doubt the prized possession of at least a few lucky collectors. I still have the complete Barsoom set Ballantine Pocket books published in 1963, all first editions too. Great cover art, but unfortunately unaccredited. My eyes can't make out the artist's signature...MCox?))

Also, concerning the radio adaptations of H.P. Lovecraft, the one I remember most vividly was "The Dunwich Horror". I think it appeared on the program "Suspense", and, if I remember correctly, starred Ronald Colman.

((Lots of people still collect old radio shows. I'm betting some of these Lovecraft adaptations still exist in collector's hands somewhere, Would be a real hoot to hear them!))

From: JOHN PURCELL, December 2, 2007.

I don't think I've seen a Derek Carter piece of artwork for years upon years. Granted, this is a reprint of one he did for Susan Wood's *Amor* back in 1976 (a zine which I remember), but even so, it has been a very long time. His stuff was always very detailed and stylish. Love this one!

((I'm hoping reprinting old zine covers will stir interest in the fan artists of the past, just one part of my campaign to reveal Canada's fanzine heritage.))

The retro V-Con I report has been a lot of fun, and Part 4 serves to remind me of why I don't read much Lovecraft anymore. Once in a great while I will read some of his stories. In fact, when I prepare a course pack for my Literature class, I believe I will include some Lovecraft with the Poe, C.A. Smith, Howard, Bierce, Hawthorne, and a couple other fantasy/horror writers as examples of American Gothic Horror fiction. That would be a lot of fun to teach. Of course, there are so many more writers I could mention and cover, but being a survey course there would have to be a limit on what I could offer as a representative sampling. This is all in the brainstorming phase, but is something I really would like to do someday to get my students more into reading and then evaluating it via assigned essays. We shall see what happens some year when I get around to doing this.

((Have you read Lovecraft's long essay "Supernatural Horror in Literature"? It is considered "the first really penetrating analysis of such modern writers as Arthur Machen, W.H. Hodgson, Algernon Blackwood, Lord Dunsany, M.P. Shiel and many others". Plus he discusses most of the authors you mention; I should think his opinion of them would make a fascinating lead-in to class discussion.))

((To me his essay proves there can be no doubt Lovecraft thought very carefully about the traditions and techniques of Gothic Romance writers, of whom he seems to have regarded himself as the last of the breed. His intellectual approach,

plus the sheer sense of fun where he attempts to 'outdo' the stories of other 'weird-lit' writers in his circle, puts a whole new perspective on the motivation and self-awareness involved in his putting pen to paper. It was essentially a hobby for him, really just an extension of his prolific correspondence with his like-minded friends. The humour in his approach has always shone through for me, though evidently not for those critics who take him too seriously, or too lightly.))

((My 'unabridged and corrected' edition was published by Dover in 1973. It apparently is identical with the version found in the Arkham House edition of the Lovecraft anthology 'The Outsider and Others', being his final, revised version.))

((P.S. To the uninitiated, 'Gothic Romance' seems a rather odd way of referring to Lovecraft's writings, but I am using the term in its original sense, 'Romance' as in 'Fantasy-Horror'. Mary Shelly's 'Frankenstein', for instance, being considered one of the earliest Gothic Romances; the very first being Walpole's 'The Castle of Otranto' published in 1764, so we're talking about a tradition more than 200 years old!))

It looks like you're doing the same things with your V-Con 32 report. Part One was interesting, especially the bit about watching the headlights of airplanes bearing down at you while you were eating. That would be a bit disconcerting, yes.

((I like to single out the off-the-wall details and impressions wherever I go and whatever I do. Otherwise life is very mundane most of the time.))

Very nice tribute review to honor Susan Wood. Her passing was a real shocker; too young, way too young to go. I didn't know her very well at all, and it affected me.

((I know for a fact that many local long-time fans still miss her.))

Yes, Garcia won TAFF. Now I will have more space in my fanzine for other material.

((I suspect not. Seeing how prolific he is. You may need to expand your zine to take in his impressions of his TAFF experience. I look forward to reading all about the 'Garcia-straft-England' Garciapocalypse! – I'm assuming he's going to make quite an impact on British fandom...:))

A couple comments about your review of *Askance #5* are in order. First off, Frank Wu's covers are paintings; not sure if they are watercolors or oils, so I'll ask Frank and see what medium he used. Also, I like to include a bit of a "What's in this issue" and "Who's in this issue" for two reasons: to clue readers as to what the major articles are, and also to help set the tone or mood for the issue, or describe the theme of the zine, if there is one. You are right, though, in that it helps for archiving and scanning for articles to read first. It was a fun issue to put together, and I thank you for the kind words. Don't be afraid to loc, fellow faned.

((I'd like to loc, I really would, but so far putting together this zine is absorbing most of my spare time and energy. My zines reviews are a sort of letter substitute for the time being.))

I heard back from James Halperin last week, who admitted that he really hasn't opened that many of the Warner fanzine collection boxes (taking care of other business first), so he couldn't answer my questions yet. He did, though, say that Jerry Weist is coming to town in early 2008 (January or February) to begin planning out that history of fanzines book they will be writing. That is definitely one book I will happily buy once it's completed. No time-line on that since they haven't even begun working on it yet, but that was a tantalizing nugget to dangle before my eyes.

((Must admit, I can't wait either. If they utilize a lot of quoted material it will be an extraordinarily massive volume, not that I would mind. I certainly hope it won't be too dry and schematic, hope it strikes just the proper balance, informative yet interesting. Chances are it will spark a renaissance of interest in old fanzines, driving Ebay prices through the roof. Which is why I am all the more interested in Halperin's comment – if I remember correctly – that he'd like to see the whole collection available in electronic form some day. Me too!))

Your review of *Wizard of Mars* (1964) was a heckuva lot more in-depth than I would devote to such a movie. I love good, schlocky sci-fi films from the late 50s early 60s; so much fun to heckle. You did a good job, I must admit. Still, it makes me wonder why you wrote so much about this "charmingly inept SF film." Too much time on your hands back then?

((Ah, but I love these old films, imprinted on them as a kid. Sure they suffered from lack of budget and poor special effects, but in those days the 'idea' of the film, in the above case a crash landing on Mars, was enough to stir a young lad's sense of wonder and encourage his imagination to fill in the gaps and shortcomings with impressions of his own. At least, that's how it worked with me. Today's films are so impressive visually (though often falling down in the writing) that I suspect the modern sense of wonder experienced is more passive and less imaginative than in the past, since all the dream-work has already been done for the viewer, and there's really nothing left to imagine. But then I'm an old phart so what do I know?))

Overall, a good, fine issue. It's growing, too; 34 pages is a solid sized zine. Be careful or this baby will turn into a monster and take over all of your spare time. Producing fanzines can be addictive. I love all aspects of fanzine fandom, but they really can be like video games: gotta pub/read/loc, etc., one more zine! Then I'll get to mowing the lawn.

((So far, workdays see me put in about two hours of effort after my post-work nap, and weekends see me sit for a total of about 8 hours in front of my computer. The rest of my spare time I devote to sleep. Perfectly normal life-style, isn't it?))

Many thanks for the zine, and good luck with future issues.

From: DAVE HAREN, December 7th, 2007.

I'm kinda surprised that no one has come up with the idea of an alised e-mail group for the secrets.

((I was planning to use an alien e-mail group, actually.))

You can publish the stuff you want the world to see in electronic form BCSFAzine.

For the "things man was not met to wot of" secretive plans all you need is a volunteer who receives the secrets by e-mail and once a week/month sends it to an alias address that is all of the recipients. This was developed to keep computer users from having to address e-mails to groups by individual over and over again.

((Moog The Magnificent of Mars has already volunteered....Cdn fandom in-joke...))

I think the majordomo version to completely auto the whole process has been around a long time.

((Majordomo?...you refer to Head Honcho in Cumberland?...another Cdn fandom in-joke...))

Of course there's some merit to the old ways, using secret drops, discs passed via the sneakernet, making up your own languages, Roman crypto spools and all the apparatus necessary to hide what's really going on at your meetings. The frequency of comment about Lovecraft is suspicious, I'm sure it's just a purely coincidental phenomena.

((Merely a matter of appeasing Cthulhu....you know how important that is!))

Those missing years of the ELrons cry out to be filled in somehow.

((NOW we're talking suppressed information...related to Yog-Sothoth oddly enough.))

Search for Internet Archive and check out the movies section. There's a nice slice of oddball shorts and not so short things available for free there also.

((I find the internet infested with many nests of Formless Spawn. Wondering if it is too late to warn the world.))

From LLOYD PENNEY, December 18th, 2007

It's another WCSFAzine, issue 4. I get the feeling you're enjoying this, starting a fresh zine. Looks like you're getting plenty of feedback on it, too.

((Yes, I'm having fun. A lot of fun. That's the whole point of fandom I think... As for feedback, for every loc I receive I like to think there's at least 10,000 disgruntled readers too upset to touch a keyboard...))

Amor de Cosmos...the first political leader of British Columbia, the lover of the universe. I took some BC history when I attended classes at Camosun College in Victoria, and remember the story of Amor de Cosmos well.

((Wait a mo.... I thought it was just a catchy title. Now you're beginning to ring some bells in the crumbling towers of my memory... Wasn't Amor de Cosmos the Mad Monk with the devoted harem on one of the Gulf islands in the 1920s? Or am I getting my cults mixed up? Please add details in your next loc. Fannish historians (fhistorians) faunch to know!))

Using a bit of artwork by Derek Carter is a rarity indeed these days.

((Reproducing covers – including cover art – I hope constitutes 'fair use' given that my purpose is to educate contemporary Canadian fans about their fanzine heritage. A blast from the past so to speak.))

I'd like to get my hands on a full directory of newspaper articles about conventions. There are many times we're treated well, but I think they are greatly outnumbered by the times the press treats us like idiotic children. A couple of times, I've had to flash my own press card and tell that that I shouldn't have to ask for their objectivity, but I rarely get it. That's why I usually say that the press is not your friend when it comes to publicity for your convention.

((I cannot resist quoting my Canadian Fancyclopedia article on one of the most famous media 'treatments' of them all: "ZAP! ZAP! ATOMIC RAY IS PASSE WITH FIENDS"

-- The incredibly condescending headline of a newspaper article by George Bain, reviewing Torcon 1, which was published in the July 5th, 1948 issue of the Toronto paper THE GLOBE AND MAIL. The article was equally condescending. Sample paragraph: "Seen any machine-men of Zor lately? They have organic brains in metal cube-shaped bodies, you know. What's the word from Helen, the lovelorn robot, or the snail-lizard of Venus? How're interplanetary communications with you, kid?"

The headline apparently originated in a comment made by Martin Alger which George Bain must have overheard. A 16mm British film called 'ATOMIC PHYSICS' was being shown, some fans were fascinated, others bored and milling about. Seeing this, Alger later in the convention commented: "It showed who were the science fans and who were the Buck Rogers fans who expected ray guns to go Zap! Zap!" As Leslie A. Crutch wrote in his TORCON MEMORIES article: "I wonder if it was his (Alger's) remark that might have been overheard and used by the reporter of the Globe & Mail when he made up the title for the article?" Alger himself certainly believed this to be the case.

The two articles came out before the convention was over, hence the reaction on the last day (Monday) as reported by Crutch: "...was George O. Smith, ably abetted by Bob Tucker supplying sound effects, reading two articles about the convention, which appeared in the Globe and Mail and the Daily Star. Tucker makes a better ray gun than a paper doll. Smith would ask him to "make like a ray gun" and Tuck would jump up and go "Zap! Zap!" Some wag would ask Tuck to make like a "man with three heads" -- another, "Make like a wax doll, Tucker!"

The reason the Globe and Mail article has entered into fannish legend is that it is considered the absolute and perfect example of the kind of mindset with which the journalistic media tends to view sf conventions, sf fans, or even science fiction in general. Consider it as an object lesson for convention publicists. Somehow the press has to be convinced there is more to sf than "gosh wow Buck Rogers stuff". Not an easy task.))

Retro Fanzines...John Glicksohn??? You'd better hope that Mike Glicksohn doesn't hear about this one... I would have liked to have met Susan Wood, but of course, never did. Yvonne and I are good friends with Mike and his current Susan, Susan Manchester.

((Oh my Ghod... did I write 'John' Glicksohn? Of course I meant 'Mike'. Just goes to show, no matter how many times you proofread... I had the privilege of meeting Mike at Primedia in 1998. Showed him a printout of a very early

version of my Canadian Fancyclopedia, a printout just listing Canadian fanzines. "I didn't know there were so many", he commented. Gave me a thrill chill racing up my spine. Proof that I was doing OK in my research....))

Don't forget, Graeme, it wasn't just me that won CUFF in 1998, but Yvonne as well. A couple of times Yvonne and I would scrape the dealers' room at a convention and ask for donations for auction. Those auctions were successful as well, especially the one we did at Con*cept in Montréal. I still have a few copies of our trip report left...check with Garth Spencer. I sent him a stack of trip reports, and he says he doesn't know where they are except to say they are somewhere in his home.

((Never fear, Garth passed on a copy for the BCSFA/WCSFA archive some time ago. Have been meaning to plug in an entry for it. Oh what the heck, I just did (courtesy of time compression). < <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html> >

The last movie I saw was The Golden Compass. I have not read Philip Pullman's series of books, but for some reason, my fantasy-hating sister-in-law wants to see the movie, and is reading Northern Lights, the Pullman book the movie was based on. I think many people were a little confused about the plotline of the movie, but the movie itself is a treat to see.

((Alyx and I hardly ever go out to movies. We don't enjoy the 'theatre' experience anymore. We'd rather stay at home. Movies we're keen on we eventually find in the bargain bin and watch on our TV. Jackson's 'King Kong' for example. Not like when I was a kid in Ottawa and thought nothing of watching 3 movies in a row in the Rialto theatre (for only 25 cents!)...mind you, I'm talking early 1960s... the Rialto was a 'third run' movie house. One weekend would be 3 Sci-Fi flicks, the next weekend 3 monster movies...paradise.))

I used to know some of the fans in London, Ontario, but so many go away or head off somewhere else. I honestly didn't know about the club in London, and I'm glad it's there. I wish we had a general SF club in Toronto, but it's been many years.

((General interest clubs don't seem to be in demand anymore... only specialized interest clubs are flourishing.))

I'm going to fold here...I have a job interview tomorrow, so I must get prepared for it.

((I thought you'd found a job with the ? I hope that didn't fall through. Or is it only part time and you're looking for another?))

Yvonne and I wish you and Alyx the best Christmas possible. I think this coming year will be a good one for all of us.

((I hope so!))

ADVERTS FOR THEM AS WE LIKE

WHITE DWARF BOOKS

is entirely devoted to fantasy & SF books,
and offers a mail order service to out-of-towners,
ideal for those living in isolated places.

Web site < <http://www.deadwrite.com/wd.html> >
3715 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6R 2G5,
Telephone (604) 228 – 8223.
Email: < whitedwarf@deadwrite.com >

ROYAL SWISS NAVY T – SHIRTS

and other paraphernalia may be viewed at:

< <http://www.cafepress.com/royalsswissnavy> > (note: no dot between royalsswiss and navy)

'STRANGE VOYAGES': A FANNISH CD

AN OPPORTUNITY TO OWN A MAGNIFICENT ARCHIVE OF CANADIAN FANZINE HERITAGE!

For the first time, the complete runs of Mike Glicksohn's Hugo Award winning ENERGUMEN issues 1 (Feb 1970) to 16 (Sept 1981), and XENIUM issues 1 (Jan 1973) to 15 (Jan 1990) are available in a single CD-Rom Collection. Special features include Mike's Aussiecon GoH trip report THE HAT GOES HOME, his only professionally published short story 'DISSENTING', an exclusive interview SPEAKING THRU HIS HAT, and more!

OVER 1200 PAGES OF TRUE FANNISH READING PLEASURE!

Available from Taral Wayne, 245 Dunn Ave, Apt. 2111, Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M6K 1S6. US/Cdn \$15.00 – shipping and handling included. (\$12 no S&H) \$1 from every CD will be donated to TAFF in Mike's name.

**ISSUE #6 WILL BE POSTED AT EFANZINES.COM
SOMETIME AROUND FEBRUARY 1st.**