

Hi John. Here, for #279, is:

PRINTED #279 ~~1986~~ AUG 1986

STATE OF THE ARCHIVES REPORT #3 by R. Graeme Cameron.

Slowly, slowly I make progress. The CDN zines are catalogued, now I'm working on the US zines.

We now have two filing cabinets. Consequently I have rearranged my plans thusly: Cabinet A will have two drawers devoted to V-Con files, and two drawers devoted to BCSFAzines and documents about our parent body, the UBC SFFEN. Cabinet B will have one drawer for BCSFA-WCSFCCA-WCSFA minutes & important documents, one drawer for general club documents & assorted nifty stuff, one drawer for Worldcon program books & papers, and one drawer for other con program books and papers.

Speaking of Worldcons, we have a near-complete 17 year run of program books from Discon in 1974 to Confiction in 1990, missing only Constellation 1983, LA Con 1984, and Conspiracy 1987. If you happen to have those kicking around, please donate to the archive. And I'm also looking for the program books for Chicon V in 1991, Magicon in 1992, Confrancisco in 1993, Conadian in 1994 (Especially Conadian!), Intersection in 1995, and of course, the upcoming LA Con III in 1996. And, I must admit, I'm hyper keen on acquiring the program book for Torcon II back in 1973. I wouldn't say no to anything earlier, either. Meanwhile, I've loaned my 1956 Newyorcon program book to the archive. Most of the above were donated by either Vera Johnson or Fran Skene.

Also present in the archive: "Phoxphyre: the First SF Con", a well researched monograph by the Philadelphia-in-1986 Bid Committee (they lost, the Worldcon being held in Atlanta that year) on the subject of what American fans claim was the first SF convention ever, a gathering of a dozen or so New York Fans in Philadelphia in October 1936. British fans reject this, saying the first organized 'true' convention was that held in Leeds in January 1937, and that the Philadelphia "Con" was just a small bunch of fans holding a party, and having been exposed for months to news concerning the upcoming British Convention, suddenly deciding, at the instigation of Donald Wollheim, to call it a convention. On the other hand, American fans like to quote: "'Trouble in Paradise and Other Short Stories' by Edward J. Carnell on page 9 of NOVAE TERRAE, December 1936-January 1937 (British fanzine): America (New York) beats Leeds in holding the first science fiction convention, when members from the ISA in New York visited fans in Philadelphia on October 18th. Don Wollheim, William Sykora, Herbert Goudket, and John Michel were entertained by Milton Rothman, John

Baltadonis, David Kyle, Robert Madle and others although the main business was the arrangement of a fully planned Second Convention to be held in New York on February 21st 1937." At any rate, all agree the first Worldcon was the 1939 Nycon held in New York.

In a similar vein, the archive also contains "DNQ" #30 in which Tara Wayne reprints Bob Tucker's "LE ZOMBIE" #63 of July 1948, being the special "Canadian Convention Issue" about Torcon 1 in 1948: "The Canadian Convention Committee conceived and have now horribly executed a special Canuck edition of LeZ. Heap mud upon their ears, the unwashed infidels.... " It appears to be a zine distributed at the con, and the article on how to draw female breasts probably received the most comment. The only references to the con itself are a (fictional) bigname fan grouching "Did you see any exclusion acts up there? Did you see anybody get tossed out on the sidewalk?... Fandom is shot. Nothing exciting anymore.... All they did today was talk.... they're talking about something called nuclear physics -- over my head. Not like the good old days..." and a prediction in "Poor Pong's Almanac" that "Fans are girdling for war on eve of Canadian convention, 1984. Ackerman turned back at border. Passport forged. Canadian convention collapses when Moskowitz fails to show..." Actually he was only 11 years off in his prediction, as mentioned above Torcon II was held in 1973.

Meanwhile, I've made some progress in fitting the rest of the archive into my 280 square foot bachelor apt, which is a rabbit warren of bookcases, shelving, chests of drawers, and book boxes, not to mention three filing cabinets (one reserved for my own purposes). I've selected twelve locations to store zines once they've been catalogued, and am filling in a location book as I progress. Ideally, by the end of the year I or any researcher given access to the archive will be able to look up any given item and determine its location in a matter of seconds. (Hah!)

I would guess that I've spent somewhere between \$200 to \$300 thus far on hanging file bars, hanging folders, file folders, 3-prong folders, envelopes, plastic magazine bags (more than a thousand of em), labels, and suchlike. This is at my expense since these items are not, strictly speaking, necessary, but are useful in making it easier for me to organize things. This is not a subtle hint to be reimbursed, as the club cannot afford it. I do this because being Archivist is my new hobby, and like all hobbyists am willing to donate both funds and hours of my time (on a sporadic basis at least -- when I'm too bored to do anything else) just for the sheer perverted pleasure of it.

Though true perversion would be to dump everything out of the filing cabinets on to the floor just for the thrill of trying to put it all back in order. Haven't quite reached that stage.....yet....