

# SPACE CADET

#26

( OR: THE AGING OLD FHART NOSTALGIC TIME WASTER GAZETTE )



## **EXTREMELY WITTY TITLE DESIGNED TO ENTICE YOU TO READ FURTHER**

It will quickly become apparent whether the above title functions as it should. Hope you'll make it at least to the end of the page...

### **2014 HUGO AWARD NOMINEES**

No, this is not the usual breathless republication of 'news' (which I cribbed from AMAZING STORIES) but rather a personal exploration of my true status as a fan.

I like to think I am a contemporary SF fan as well as a fan fond of my beloved genre's past. I'm going to highlight in red all the books, stories and fanzines I have read, dramatizations seen, and authors, artists, editors and fans I know something about. Let's see. The category lists should light up like a Christmas tree. If I really *am* a fan...

Commentary follows each category list.

#### BEST NOVEL

*Ancillary Justice*  
*Neptune's Brood*  
*Parasite*  
*Warbound, Grimnoir Chronicles*  
*The Wheel of Time*

Nope. Haven't read a single one of these, nor am I familiar with any of the authors, so I didn't bother listing them. (I cut out a lot of info from the lists to save space.)

#### BEST NOVELLA

*The Butcher of Khardov* - Dan Wells  
*The Chaplain's Legacy*  
*Equoid*  
*Six-Gun Snow White*  
*Wakulla Springs*

Haven't read any of his books yet, but I met Dan Wells at VCON 38 where he was Author GoH. He did surpassingly well as a pro reader in one of the writers workshops I moderated. Very sharp and intelligent guy. Totally with it. Impressive. All the other authors... never heard of. Now *that's* not impressive. Not at all. Sigh.

#### BEST NOVELETTE

*The Exchange Officers*  
*The Lady Astronaut of Mars*  
*Opera Vita Aeterna*  
*The Truth of Fact, the Truth of Feeling*  
*The Waiting Stars*

Again, not read, never heard of the authors.

#### BEST SHORT STORY

*If You Were a Dinosaur, My Love*  
*The Ink Readers of Doi Saket*  
*Selkie Stories Are for Losers*  
*The Water That Falls on You from Nowhere*

Same. Completely ignorant on all counts.

#### BEST RELATED WORK

*Queers Dig Time Lords: Celebration of Dr. Who Speculative Fiction 2012: The Best Online Reviews, Essays and Commentary*  
*We Have Always Fought: Challenging the Women, Cattle and Slaves Narrative*  
*Wonderbook: The Illustrated Guide to Creating Imaginative Fiction*  
*Writing Excuses Season 8* – Dan Wells & others

Well, at least I know of and have met Dan Wells.

#### BEST GRAPHIC STORY

*Girl Genius, Volume 13: Agatha Heterodyne & The Sleeping City*  
*The Girl Who Loved Doctor Who*  
*The Meathouse Man Saga, Volume 2*  
*Time*

Nothing. Nada. Zip.

#### BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION (LONG FORM)

*Frozen*  
*Gravity*  
*The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*  
*Iron Man 3*  
*Pacific Rim* - Guillermo del Toro

I've heard of all of these films, but I don't go to theatres anymore. Too expensive and too much hassle. I bought a Blu-ray of Pacific Rim and enjoyed it. Oh, I don't much care for Japanese style robots, but I love Kaiju, the Japanese man-in-suit monsters, so enjoyed the film muchly. Still, I have

to admit I would much rather have seen Toro's AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS were it not killed by that twit at the movie studio as it began production, killed on the grounds that no one has ever heard of Lovecraft... Ghod, will hate that moron 'executive' to my dying day...

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION  
(SHORT FORM)

*An Adventure in Space and Time*  
*Doctor Who: "The Day of the Doctor"*  
*Doctor Who: "The Name of the Doctor"*  
*Game of Thrones: "The Rains of Castamere"*  
*Orphan Black: "Variations under Domestication"*

Nope. Nothing. A blank.

BEST EDITOR – SHORT FORM

John Joseph Adams  
Neil Clarke  
Ellen Datlow  
Jonathan Strahan  
Sheila Williams

Ellen rejected a short story of mine long ago. Plus I met her at some convention or another. The others? I know nothing.

BEST EDITOR – LONG FORM

Ginjer Buchanan  
Sheila Gilbert  
Liz Gorinsky  
Lee Harris  
Toni Weiskopf

Again, total blank. Emptiness of mind.

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Galen Dara  
Julie Dillon  
Daniel Dos Santos  
John Harris  
John Picacio  
Fiona Staples

I may have seen their art somewhere, but without remembering names.

BEST SEMIPROZINE

*Apex*  
*Beneath Ceaseless Skies*  
*Interzone*

*Lightspeed Magazine*  
*Strange Horizons*

I may have heard of Interzone, but suspect I am confusing the name with some other magazine. The rest? Never heard of them.

BEST FANZINE

*The Book Smugglers*  
*A Dribble of Ink*  
*Elitist Book Reviews*  
*Journey Planet*  
*Pornokitsch*

JOURNEY PLANET I have frequently read online at Bill Burn's excellent efanazines.com, and I am familiar with the editors, especially Christopher Garcia. The others unknown to me. Blogs maybe?

BEST FANCAST

*The Coode Street Podcast*  
*Galactic Suburbia Podcast*  
*SF Signal Podcast*  
*The Skiffy and Fanty Show*  
*Tea and Jeopardy*  
*Verity!*  
*The Writer and the Critic*

Podcasts all I assume. Have yet to see one.

BEST FAN WRITER

Liz Bourke  
Kameron Hurley  
Foz Meadows  
Abigail Nussbaum  
Mark Oshiro

I'm astounded. Never heard of them.

BEST FAN ARTIST

Brad W. Foster  
Mandie Manzano  
Spring Schoenhuth  
Steve Stiles  
Sarah Webb

Brad and Steve have contributed covers and fillos for my zines, so of course I highlight them. The others? No idea. May have seen their art, but I tend to be guilty of appreciating art without paying attention to the identity of the artist. I'm a bit of an idiot that way. Sorry.

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD  
FOR BEST NEW WRITER

Wesley Chu  
Max Gladstone  
Ramez Naam  
Sofia Samatar  
Benjanun Sriduangkaew

Ah, hmmm. Nope.

**1939 RETRO-HUGO NOMINEES**

BEST NOVEL

*Carson of Venus* - Edgar Rice Burroughs (Argosy, February 1938)  
*Galactic Patrol* - E. E. Smith (Astounding Stories, February 1938)  
*The Legion of Time* - Jack Williamson (Astounding Science-Fiction, July 1938)  
*Out of the Silent Planet* - C. S. Lewis (The Bodley Head)  
*The Sword in the Stone* - T. H. White (Collins)

Read the first four titles, and also other works by their authors, some of which I own.

BEST NOVELLA

*Anthem* by Ayn Rand (Cassell)  
*A Matter of Form* - H. L. Gold (Astounding Science-Fiction, December 1938)  
*Sleepers of Mars* - John Beynon [John Wyndham] (Tales of Wonder, March 1938)  
*The Time Trap* - Henry Kuttner (Marvel Science Stories, November 1938)  
*Who Goes There?* - Don A. Stuart [John W. Campbell] (Astounding Science-Fiction, August 1938)

I know about Ann Rand and refuse to read anything by her. Otherwise read all of the above, and have several works, in some cases many, by each in my personal library.

BEST NOVELETTE

*Dead Knowledge* - Don A. Stuart [John W. Campbell] (Astounding Stories, January 1938)  
*Hollywood on the Moon* - Henry Kuttner (Thrilling Wonder Stories, April 1938)  
*Pigeons From Hell* - Robert E. Howard (Weird Tales, May 1938)  
*Rule 18* - Clifford D. Simak (Astounding Science-Fiction, July 1938)

*Werewoman* - C. L. Moore (Leaves #2, Winter 1938)

Haven't read all of the above, but possess several other works by each of them.

BEST SHORT STORY

*The Faithful* - Lester Del Rey (Astounding Science-Fiction, April 1938)  
*Helen O'Loy* - Lester Del Rey (Astounding Science-Fiction, December 1938)  
*Hollerbochen's Dilemma* - Ray Bradbury (Imagination!, January 1938)  
*How We Went to Mars* - Arthur C. Clarke (Amateur Science Stories, March 1938)  
*Hyperpilosity* - L. Sprague de Camp (Astounding Science-Fiction, April 1938)

Only read one of the stories (as far as I can remember) but possess numerous works by all of the authors.

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION  
(SHORT FORM)

*Around the World in Eighty Days* by Jules Verne. Written & directed by Orson Welles (The Mercury Theater of the Air, CBS)  
*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. Written & directed by Orson Welles (The Campbell Playhouse, CBS)  
*Dracula* by Bram Stoker. Written by Orson Welles and John Houseman, directed by Orson Wells (The Mercury Theater of the Air, CBS)  
*R. U. R.* by Karel Čapek. Produced by Jan Bussell (BBC)  
*The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells. Written by Howard Koch & Anne Froelick, directed by Orson Wells (The Mercury Theater of the Air, CBS)

I highlight all of the titles simply because I've read all of them in book form, but of the presentations I've only heard the Mercury Theater version of WAR OF THE WORLDS. Of the authors, I possess quite a few of their works. (Love Čapek's WAR WITH THE NEWTS!)

BEST EDITOR – SHORT FORM

John W. Campbell  
Walter H. Gillings  
Raymond A. Palmer  
Mort Weisinger  
Farnsworth Wright

Yep, am familiar with the careers of all of the above editors, as well as something of their fanac in most cases.

### BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Margaret Brundage  
Virgil Finlay  
Frank R. Paul  
Alex Schomburg  
H. W. Wesso

With the possible exception of Wesso, whom I'm least familiar with, I can pretty much identify any piece of art by the above without needing to look at the signature. They all have very distinctive styles, especially the first three.

### BEST FANZINE

*Fantascience Digest* edited by Robert A. Madle  
*Fantasy News* edited by James V. Taurasi  
*Imagination!* edited by Forrest J Ackerman, Morojjo, and T. Bruce Yerke  
*Novae Terrae* edited by Maurice K. Hanson  
*Tomorrow* edited by Douglas W. F. Mayer

Haven't actually read sample copies of any of the above named zines, but am very familiar with the fannish careers of the above fans I've highlighted.

### BEST FAN WRITER

Forrest J Ackerman  
Ray Bradbury  
Arthur Wilson "Bob" Tucker  
Harry Warner, Jr.  
Donald A. Wollheim

I know all kinds of things about these guys. Own books by all of them.

### SUMMATION

Well, I think it's clear I'm not a contemporary fan. Totally out of the loop.

Instead, I'd say I'm very much a creature of the past. Two pasts.

First, the era I imprinted on, at a time when I was a contemporary fan on the cutting edge of the genre. I'm talking the 1960s.

Second, the genre before my time, a period I research and greatly enjoy.

But as for today's fandom, I fit into the niche of old guys who live (at least mentally) in the past and have little appreciation or knowledge of the genre as it exists now.

But then, the same goes for my understanding of the world at large. As I've said many times before, I'm a twentieth century kinda guy. This new century is a disappointment to me.

So what does this mean to fandom? Not a thing. Genre fans number in the millions and all manifestations of their enthusiasm will just keep galloping along into the future no matter what I say, do, or think. I'm obsolete.

Which means that any effort on my part to 'convert' these millions of heretic fans to the customs and practices of 'trufandom' is ludicrous, rather pathetic, and absolutely doomed to failure. My time is past. Might as well try to revive paganism in Saudi Arabia. See how far that gets me.

But only if I think of fandom today as 'false' fandom and myself as representing 'true' fandom. People will just laugh at me.

Instead, if I recognize that I belong to a 'niche' fandom, a narrow interest hobby fandom, then all becomes joyous fun as I concentrate on what I like and ignore what I don't comprehend or understand.

I am a genre fan, just not a contemporary-minded one. I is good for what I is.

But what about the Hugos? Have they not changed beyond all recognition? Become different from what they used to be? Irrelevant to my particular niche fandom?

Absolutely.

But it doesn't matter.

Traditional fen can switch their attention to the Retro Hugos (a lot of fun those) and the FAAN Awards (truly peer awards of relevance). Instead of complaining about the Hugos, support the other two. They alone are relevant to 'trufandom.'

Meanwhile, in Canada, I suspect the Auroras are trending in the same direction as the Hugos.

Now you know why I founded the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Awards Society... If I could just get every surviving 'trufan' in Canada to support the 'Faneds'...

Worth the attempt I figure. Call it a mini-crusade on my part, merely a fun aspect of my hobby, something I enjoy doing.

In short, in these changing times, I am content to pursue my fanac and not give a damn about the 'fate' of fandom at large. It can take care of itself.

I'm just going to have fun.

## **FLUNG OUT OF BED**

Or at least it seems that way. As if some ghost picked me up and threw me off the bed.

I was asleep, experiencing some sort of weird dream where Johnny Depp was showing me about his extraordinarily cluttered apartment. Suddenly I was chasing a large dog down a corridor. Why? I don't know. All at once the floor dropped out from under me. Then came a loud sound...

The thud of the right side of my head impacting the corner of a heavy dresser bureau, followed by the impact of my body against a tall cylindrical fan (knocking it against the dresser), followed by a muffled thump as I crumpled onto the floor.

My wife Alyx shot bolt upright. She thought I was dead, was afraid to look. After numerous silent moments she finally heard me say:

*"Owww... I mean, fuck! Owww!"*

My ears were ringing, my head numb, strange pains and weird sensations were running about my jaw. And my right side hurt, as if someone had pummeled my torso.

Took me about five minutes just to sit up. It was five A.M.

*"I guess I might as well get up,"* I muttered. Alyx went back to sleep.

Within 24 hours most of the pain subsided. Nothing seemed to be broken.

Several days later, I seem to be okay. Good.

But what the heck happened? I didn't just fall out of bed, slip over the edge. It was as if I had been catapulted. As if something had picked me up and thrown me. Creepy.

I must have experienced some sort of convulsion.

I'll just do what I always do when I occasionally experience numbness in my fingers or my legs. Just assume it's a mini-stroke and carry on regardless.

Someday I'll wake up dead. I won't mind. Shit happens. I'll just live with it, or not, depending...

## **INSTANT PREPRINT**

SWILL editor Neil Williams asked if I'd like to contribute to a proposed AD ASTRA convention APA in Toronto the weekend April 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.

*"Anything you want,"* he said.

*"Submit in advance if you like,"* he said.

*"Up to five pages maximum,"* he said.

Who can resist a temptation like that?

I understand Lloyd Penney and Taral Wayne also submitted in advance, in addition to myself, and hopefully intrigued and bemused fen attending AD ASTRA contributed on the spot zines to the APA as well, to be published online as soon as Neil is done with marking his student's term finals.

Was it a success? Was it a disaster? Neil's lips are sealed (but only because of his current duties). I sincerely hope, bearing in mind my agenda to inspire a zine fandom renaissance, that at least a few fen composed submissions in the course of the convention. I hope not to be disappointed.

In any event I whomped up the following as my contribution. It filled exactly five pages, albeit five pages of a different column width, I am unable to duplicate its precise appearance here. No matter.

# CANADIAN FANDOM OLDER THAN YOU THINK

For: AD ASTRA APA Mailing #1 April 2014

By R. Graeme Cameron < [rgraeme@shaw.ca](mailto:rgraeme@shaw.ca) >

*(Aurora, Faned & Elron Award winning fannish curmudgeon noted for beginning self-promotions with humble mentions of awards won, followed by subtle reminders of insane amounts of fanac conducted over more than half a century of nothing better to do, and invariably concluding with deranged claims that a few fans have heard of him, and of those, only 40% willing to admit it. He, himself, belongs to the 60% who are not.)*

## LET US BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING!

Ah yes, the laborious and mind-numbing task of defining (in a definitive manner I might add) a precise definition of what fandom is definitely all about and what a fan (as defined by a definiater) really is...

Screw it. You're a fan. You know what you are. So let's cut to the chase...

## A FALSE START? A HUMBLE ONE AT LEAST.

The first authenticated sighting of a Canadian fan took place in the spring of 1936.

American Donald Wollheim (then a mere fan, later a famous author and publisher), wrote about it in issue #7 of 'The Science Fiction Review' published in June of that year, saying he'd received a fanzine titled '**The Canadian Science Fiction Fan**' from:

*"... a chap in Vancouver, B.C., where we least expected a fan to live! A fair little magazine."*

Huh! Do you suppose the editor thought he was the *only* SF fan in Canada, hence the title of his zine?

So who was this guy (or gal) anyway?

Nobody knows. Wollheim neglected to mention the editor's name. No copy of the zine is known to

exist. No second issue ever appeared. No one ever stepped forward to claim the glory and fame of being Canada's first SF fanzine editor and publisher.

Double huh! How Canadian is that? An achievement without boasting or recognition? Typically Canadian.

For this reason, whenever I can, I raise a toast to '**The Unknown Faned.**' (well, it's an excuse to drink...)

In 2011 the 'unknown faned' was inducted into the Canadian Fanzine Fanac Award Society Hall of Fame. The CFFAS awards are called 'Faneds.' Nobody has heard of them either, so seems appropriate if you ask me.

## THE TRUE TRUE NORTH BEGINNING!

This time we know the guy's name!

**Nils Helmer Frome**... easily as famous as the unknown faned, of that I'm sure.



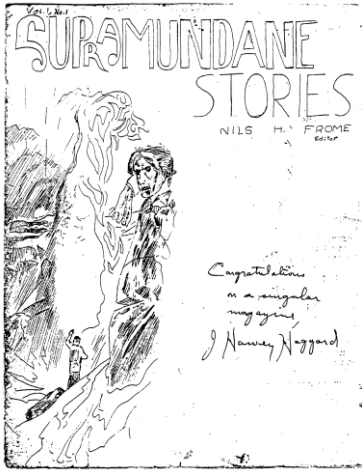
Frome lived in Fraser Mills, a company village on the shore of the Fraser River, just south of Vancouver, B.C, in what is now Coquitlam. Worst of all, like most fans of the 1930s, Frome was a teenager. He grew out of it.

Circa 1934/35 he made quite a nuisance of himself mailing crabbed handwritten missives (he did not own a typewriter) to fans and authors throughout North America under the pen name 'Herkanos.' People like noted fan James Blish (later a famous author) and famous fan Sam Moskowitz (later a famous fan). Amazingly, they wrote back.

Not a good thing. It just made him all excited. He got ambitious.

Awash in enthusiasm he purchased a used multigrath printing press sort of thingy from a slightly used San Francisco fan some time in 1936 and immediately set about gathering material for his zine '**Supramundane Stories.**' Took him many months.

The first issue finally appeared in January of 1937...



*(Note: Most fan historians cite the 1952 Pavlat/Evans Fanzine Index as evidence Frome first published in October of 1936. I know the 1952 Pavlat/Evans Fanzine index is wrong. I can prove it. Isn't that a thrill? I've been feuding*

*with my fellow fan historians for years about this. Nobody cares. Not even me. That about sums up the importance of fan historians.)*

Frome made creative use of his lack of resources (evidently he didn't own a stapler either) by using his mother's sewing machine to stitch together the pages of his zine. Seventy copies no less. I'll bet mom was delighted.

The most bizarre aspect of 'Supramundane Stories' was an artifact of the limitations of his multigraph. You had to set type blocks in the darn thing to get it to print text, but there was no way to configure it to reproduce art.

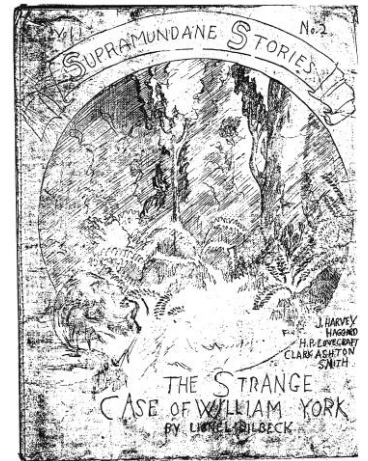
Consequently each illustration was individually hand drawn! Per copy! This leaves modern collectors very frustrated since, each individual copy being unique, it is impossible to own a complete set unless you own the entire print run! (I love exclamation points!)

Frome commented on this repetitive task thusly:

*"I got bored doing the same drawing over many, many times, almost line for line. Try it yourself. I'll bet it will get under your skin too."*

The second, and last, issue of 'Supramundane Stories' came out in spring of 1938. Once again all the interior illustrations were hand drawn, but this time the cover, a Frome piece of course, was hectographed (reproduced from a bed of jelly) for him by American fan Bill Miller. Limitations of a printing press made of jelly imply a maximum print run of thirty to forty copies. Not bad, since this is

slightly more than the average (twenty-five to thirty copies) for a typical American fanzine of the day.



The importance of 'Supramundane' is that it was the first Canadian fanzine (apart from TCSFF which only Wollheim seems to have seen), the first Canadian fanzine to receive widespread

recognition in North American fandom (which makes sense, as Frome himself was already well known by virtue of his eye-squintingly unreadable letters flung about the continent), and the first Canadian fanzine to print articles by legendary horror author H.P. Lovecraft.

Yes. You read that right. Lovecraft.

And J. Harvey Haggard and Clark Ashton Smith.

How did he get these professionals to contribute?

He asked.

Balls of adamantite steel had Frome methinks.

Lovecraft sent his short story NYARLATHTEP and an essay NOTES ON WEIRD FICTION WRITING – THE "WHY" AND "HOW, both published in issue two.

From the above it is no doubt clear to you 'Supramundane' was an amateur 'prozine' replete with fiction, poems, and 'serious' essays, including examples of each by Frome himself.

(You can read both issues in their entirety online at my website < <http://cdnsfzinearchive.org> > under headings "Zines, Zines You Can Read, Historic Zines.")

(And while you're at it, check out all the other zines and my Canadian Fancyclopedia as well.)

A third issue was planned but World War Two broke out and spoiled everything (to put it mildly).



By 1939 Frome worked as a cook in various B.C. lumber camps. Because of the war the federal government classified his job as an essential service, which meant he was stuck for the duration in the company of guys whose conversation seldom dealt with SF or art. As a result Frome's fannish career slowed to a crawl during the war, only to revive afterwards (as I will explain later if I remember to do so).

Needless to say (you can tell I like to say needless things needlessly), Nils Helmer Frome was inducted into the CFFAS Hall of Fame in 2012.

### **“THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE CRUDZINES.”**

The above is a quote by American fan Harry Warner Jr. who was the greatest letter of comment writer of all time. For about sixty years it was acknowledged that no one could claim to be a genuine fanzine editor unless they had Locs from Harry to display in their zines. (Today Canada's Lloyd 'Ubiquitous' Penney has taken on that role.)

The quote refers to 'Light,' a very personal fanzine published by **Leslie A. Crutch** from 1937 to 1961. Harry Warner liked 'Light' very much, considering it as scruffy and comfortable as an old pair of slippers. Don't know what Crutch thought about that opinion, but he probably didn't care. He was very much the centre of his own universe, and I don't mean that in a bad way.



In fact, Crutch started off as the centre of a fannish universe little larger than himself, the earliest version of 'Light' titled '**Crutch Market News**' being a short list of magazines and books he was willing to sell or trade which went out to just a few fans he saw whose addresses were listed in professional SF magazines.

As fandom expanded (coincidentally Crutch expanding too, or as Canadian Fan Fred Hurter Jr. wrote: "*First impression of Crutch, there's a lot of him*"), 'Light' evolved into a monthly hodgepodge of musings on politics, films, fandom and much else interspersed with articles and art contributed by numerous Canadian, American and British fans.



Interesting to note that he traded 'Light' for other zines, letters of comment, articles or artwork. This trade concept, known as 'The Usual,' though not original to Crutch, was independently invented by him, and he was the first to actively promote it and inspire widespread use. (Prior to this – circa 1942 – fans demanded paid subscriptions). If you disagree, don't blame me, I'm just telling you Harry Warner's opinion, and he had a pretty good handle on this sort of thing, so he's probably right. So there.

Crutch earned his 1940s reputation as Canada's premiere fan by being a prolific writer of articles for other zines as well as his own, as well as being a major letterhack. Of his fanac he wrote (in 1942):

*"For myself, I think I am doing my share in upholding Canadian fandom. In the past I have appeared (articles, news, fiction) in the following U.S. fanzines: MSA BULLETIN, SPACEWAYS, VOICE OF THE IMAGINATION, LE ZOMBI (cartoon). In England in TIN TICKS and FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST. I have material coming up in America's SPACEWAYS, VOICE OF THE IMAGINATION, TELLUS, FAN-ATIC, and plenty of other material going the rounds..."*

He also wrote a large amount of fiction, at least 100 stories, most of which appeared in his or other's fanzines, but some of it was professionally published. For a while Forrest J Ackerman (frequently voted the "Number One Fan" in the 1940s) served as his agent. AMAZING STORIES published his 'The Day The Bomb Fell' in its Nov 1950 issue, and his most famous, a post-holocaust story titled 'Eeman Grows up', appeared earlier in the June 1948 issue of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES.

Yet, for all his fannish fame, Crutch remained firmly grounded in the reality of living all his teenage and adult life in his parent's home in Parry Sound, Ontario. He was self-employed, operating 'Crutch Radio Service' out of his bedroom for a

while, and then out a workshop he built onto the house. To his local friends and neighbours he was the bluff, straight-forward repair guy whose only eccentricity was a habit of going to the movies twice a week. His fannish life he kept secret.

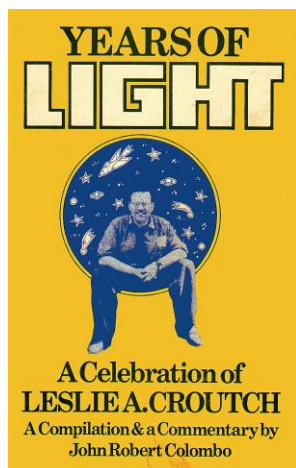
Not because he was trying to hide anything. It's simply that publishing 'Light' and keeping up his correspondence with other fen was a pleasant, private hobby he shared with no-one locally because he took for granted he was the only fan in town.

Today it is his per/genzine 'Light' for which he is best remembered. As Harry Warner Jr. wrote in 'New Canadian Fandom' #6 (Jan 1983):

*"Les was one of my favorite fans of all time.... there's a vitality to everything he wrote, an enthusiasm and joie de vivre that makes them better than the more polished output of the famous fans of the period who wrote dearly dull stuff."*

Alas, Croutch remained true to his chatty, informal, punning style, and gradually began to seem dated to new generations of fans. This led to a falling off of his fanac, till he gafiated in 1961 (two years before dying in a typically Canadian fashion, a heart attack while shoveling snow).

But there's no doubt that at his height he beat the drum for Canadian zinedom & Canfanac, inspiring many to fanac of their own, and was much beloved by Canfandom for his efforts. He deserves to be remembered.



And he certainly was. In 1982 Hounslow Press of Toronto published an entire book devoted to him titled YEARS OF LIGHT, by John Robert Colombo. Now out of print, it's well worth getting a hold of if you can. It not only puts together a compelling story of Croutch's life, interests and achievements, it's a great survey of Canadian

Fandom in the 1940s and 50s.

More recently, in 2013 Leslie A. Croutch was inducted into the CFFAS Hall of Fame. (Bet you didn't see that coming!)

One last note, among artists who contributed was Nils H. Frome, occasionally entire covers. No surprise there.

## THE REST OF THE USELESS BOUNDERS.

Since I'm running out of room (only five pages maximum allowed in this APA) I'll pile up the remainder of 1940s fen (= plural of fan) in a disjointed, confusing mess. What fun!

Even more exciting, I'm going to leave out a whole bunch of fanac (= fan activity) and just concentrate on what I think are the highlights. Prepare to be subjected to my idiosyncratic personal choices!

## ONTARIO SCIENCE FICTIONEERS



This is the first SF club formed in Canada. Don't know when. According to Harry Warner Jr. it disbanded in 1941 when its President **Ted White** joined the armed forces.

Oddly enough, a Ted White article titled "The Birth of Ontario Fandom" appeared in issue #123 of 'Light' in December of 1942. Something written on his bunk in training camp? Or simply a contribution Croutch had been sitting on for a long time? It probably tells everything we need to know about the Ontario science Fictioneers.

Point is, I've never seen it, never read it. The definitive collection of 'Light' is held in the Merrill collection of the Toronto Public Library. Could someone see if that particular issue is included in the collection, and if so, send me a photocopy of the article? I'd be embarrassingly grateful (and probably send you a list of other articles I'm keen on reading... just so you know...)

## CENSORED

'Censored' was founded and edited by **Fred Hurter Jr.** First issue published out of Aurora, Ont.,

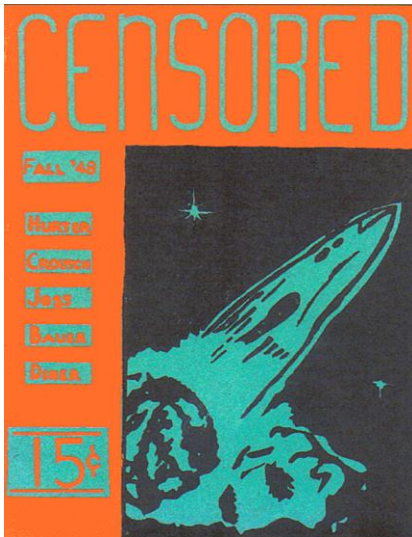


while Hurter was attending the St. Andrews College for Boys, in June 1941. He was originally going to call it 'Rocket,' but when he found out (after he printed the first issue's cover) that there was an American zine of the same name, he stamped the cover 'Censored'

which then became its title for all subsequent issues.

There were 6 issues in all published between 1941 and 1951. The last two, Hurter having moved, were under the auspices of the Montreal SF Society (the second club to be formed in Canada, founded November 1946).

According to John Robert Columbo, 'Censored' was:



*"...a stylish and substantial publication. Particularly appealing were the silk-screened covers (by Ron Smith)... The most arresting and attractive covers of any fanzine in the country.... These were art-decoish in design and set*

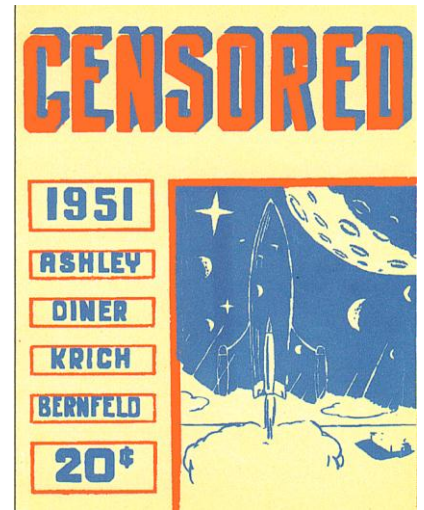
*such impossibly high standards that no other Canadian fanzine attempted to match them."*

CENSORED was a genzine containing both nonfiction articles and fiction by the likes of Leslie A. Croucher, who also appeared in a column titled "Thoughts While Shaving".

In 1942 Croucher wrote: *"Canadian Fandom has two accepted fanzines... my LIGHT is one, Fred Hurter's CENSORED is the other. The latter is a full-fledged subscription affair that ranks easily among the better rank and file of foreign zines."*

Also in 1942 a comment by Hurter was printed in 'Light':

*"Personally, I'm getting a bit worried about so-called Canadian fandom! There doesn't seem to be any, if my circulation figures are correct. 30 copies at most go to Canadian subscribers, about 10 to England, and over 100 to the USA. Seems sort of funny for a Canadian fanzine to sell almost completely in the United States!"*



Sigh. It was ever thus. Even today, when Canadian zines are available for 'the usual'. More fanzine fans needed! More Canadian fanzines too! Why not start your own? I'll host it for free on my website! (I did warn you I love exclamation points...)

## RON CONIUM



This guy never published a fanzine, but he lived on Morrison Avenue in Toronto and I have reason to believe he was active in Ontario fandom. Despite his low key fanac, in 1942 **Ron Conium** became a fannish celebrity.

Why? Because it was revealed he was the only fan known to possess a copy of every single SF magazine ever published in North America up to that time. Every copy of the American AMAZING STORIES, SCIENCE WONDER STORIES, ASTOUNDING, THRILLING WONDER STORIES, WEIRD TALES, etc., and presumably the Canadian pulp magazines EERIE TALES and UNCANNY TALES.

Without a doubt Conium briefly became the most envied (and therefore hated) SF collector/fan in at

least two countries and possibly more. I wonder whatever happened to his collection?

## MEPHISTO

Can't help but question if Vancouver fan **Alan Child** was inspired by Frome's 'Supramundane Stories' to produce 'Mephisto' as both were fiction fanzines masquerading as professional magazines. 'Mephisto' wasn't a combination of SF and weird fantasy like Frome's zine though, it was strictly weird horror fiction.



There were two issues, in January and September of 1943. I know of only one surviving copy, in the hands of a prominent American collector who is also a genuine BNF (recognized 'Big Name Fan'). Someday I'll work up the courage to ask if I can have a photocopy to post on my Zine Archive Website. Someday.

## CANADIAN FANDOM



**Joseph 'Beak' Taylor** started 'Canadian Fandom' in February 1943 while a student at St. Andrews in Aurora, Ontario (he had apprenticed on Hurter's 'Censored'). In 1949 he passed his editorship to Edward 'Ned' Mckeowan, who in turn presented it to Gerald A. Steward in 1953, and finally to William D. Grant in 1955. There were 37 issues in all, the last in 1958. (Note: the first three issues were titled '8-ball,' or possibly 'Eight Ball.')

This long-lived zine grew in importance with every issue, eventually eclipsing Crutch's 'Light' to become the most renowned Canadian genzine (= multiple contribution) of its era. It was very well mimeographed and illustrated, with a maximum print run of 200. Affectionately known by its readers by the shortened name CAN FAN. Legendary U.S. fan Art Widner (still going strong as a current member of FAPA) once called it "still the biggest nickel's worth in fandom," back when a nickel was worth something.

A frequent loc contributor was Leslie A. Crutch. In CANFAN #15 (May 1948) he wrote (in 'The Maelstrom' loc column):

*"I like the byline 'Published For Canadians By Canadians'. Why not? For far too long Canadians have acted as though they were ashamed to be Canadians. Why shouldn't we brag about our nationality? We've got just as much, if not more, on the ball than others."*



The Canadian national inferiority complex long being part of what defines being Canadian, of course. Good for us.

Crutch also contributed a column called 'Light Flashes' which on at least one occasion was rated by readers as the best article in the issue (#4 - Sep 1943). Such short fiction of his as 'The Moth' & 'The Mouse in the Stocking' also appeared. Fiction by other Canadian fan writers, including Shirley K. Peck of Vancouver and Nils Helmer Frome out in the woods somewhere, was printed in CANFAN as well. The majority of articles were non-fiction essays, columns, convention reports, and reviews, almost all quite interesting.



The first cover I chose to reproduce (top of page, from issue #7 1944) is by Frome, possibly a self-portrait. It depicts a square jawed young man's face lit from below, as impersonal as a cult statue, with piercing, frightening

eyes ("He never could draw eyes" claimed his relatives).

According to Sam Moskowitz:

*"The drawing, approaching professional quality, was photo offset. This cover received mixed reviews, ranging from praise to condemnation."*

The 2nd Frome cover (above) is just plain silly, but fun.

## **STICKS AT NOTHING**

*By Taral Wayne*

Victoria had just bought a large Tinkertoy set for her friends to play with. She was in the habit of engineering her social occasions so that we'd be set to some novel game for her amusement. It was what she thought passed for "entertaining." That night was no different. We obediently trooped over. While we waited in an orderly line, she emptied the spools and sticks out of their cardboard tube, onto the hardwood floor. Then, by the numbers, we set to examining the parts for a clue as what to do with them. There was always a potential for violence when someone might snap under the tension.

Actually, it wasn't as grim as all that. Most of the time we did enjoy ourselves, in fact, and Victoria joined in.

After sorting out the different sorts of parts, the bunch of us collaborated on a monster about two feet long, that looked something like a mechanized scorpion. It had a long, many-jointed tail, with a stinger that hovered menacingly above its head. Six spidery legs carried a tank-like body a few inches above the ground, realistically flexed in the act of locomotion. The finishing touch was technically a cheat. My eyes fell on a two-inch tall, wind-up plastic Godzilla which was no more than claw high to our Tinkertoy tarantula. I wound it up, and put it in peril of its life, an inch under the nose of a *real* monster. Godzilla's feeble, waddling escape was immortalized on film and is one of the highlights of a certain slideshow that no-one has seen in a good deal more than two decades now.

But monsters weren't our forte. An interest in mayhem for its own sake was in the past for all of us by then. (At one time, the thirteen-year-old-Taral

crashed model cars together, with his friends, to see which would disintegrate first. I did well by using a one-piece ringer, until my friends caught on.)

The search for perpetual motion seemed to have more possibilities that night. Well... not *perpetual* motion. Rather, mechanical motion as best we could engineer it with such unsophisticated materials. We worked alone this time, vying with each other to create more and more complex linkages that transformed movement in one place to movement at a distance. To transform linear motion into rotational motion. Changing clockwise rotation to counter-clockwise rotation was particularly envied.

A variety of bizarre contraptions grew under the auspices of our budding technical sophistication. A three foot tower with counter-rotating vanes, a reciprocating engine, and a plane with a three foot wingspan and pusher-puller propellers were among the mechanical breakthroughs that emerged. The plane, however, had an unfortunate tendency to come apart in mid-air, just like the real thing. Consequently, it never flew. It probably never could have even if it remained in one piece. Even a bumblebee could have seen that the plane's power-to-weight ratio was impossible.

Everyone made one discovery after another, and we were all quick to incorporate the latest developments of our competitors. The crowning achievement was the playing of a 45 RPM record.

How this was made possible was by one of those rare flashes of inspiration that only comes to genius. As an unexpected benefit of spilled water came to Archimedes, as the repair of bicycles came to the Wright brothers, so the Tangentially Coupled Rotating Play-Back Apparatus came to me...

The first stage of construction was a sturdy framework, to protect the precision alignment of the many moving parts. Next, an axle assembly was mounted in the centre. It was simply a blue stick, about three inches long, run through two of the spools with large center holes. They were anchored to the framework so that the axel moved freely. Next, a platform was attached to the upper end of the axle. A spool jammed over the spindle kept it in place, and the platform was made of short pegs radiating from the spool rim. At the end of each peg I added the green plastic vanes that came with every

Tinkertoy set. (And serve what purpose, one wonders?) The flat vanes were all the better to marry the Tangentially Coupled Rotating Play-Back Apparatus to its soft-ware.

The next step involved the Tangentially Coupling sub-assembly. An arm was built that pivoted from one corner of the framework, and swung over the freely-moving platform. It also had a vertical lift and drop function. This was simpler to make than it might sound. The arm was a purple stick jammed into a spool, and the spool was jammed onto a shorter stick at right angles. The short end was then left loose in one of the spools with a large centre hole, and could ride up and down as well as circularly. At the distal end of the Coupler was an orange plastic connector.

The third stage was the construction of the power train. One of the framework legs was rebuilt with a pulley and axle arrangement, the upper end of which was attached to a manually operated crank. The pulley ran an elastic band that drove another pulley wheel on the central axle. There was a two-to-one mechanical advantage, to smooth out the erratic power supplied by manual cranking. It still took a bit of practice to get anything like smooth movement of the platter, and it tended to jerk into motion or come to a sudden stop if the rubber band slipped.

Finally, a pin was struck through a Dixie Cup, and mounted on the Tangential Coupler so that the pin stuck down through the hollow inside of the plastic connector. Given something like a three ounce track weight (instead of a more usual 3 grams or less), only a beat-up old 45 RPM recording was worthless enough for a trial run. Bobby Jimby's "Ca-Na-Da!" – performed in French on the flip side – was an ideal choice.<sup>(1)</sup>

With the record in place on the Tangentially Coupled Rotating Play-Back Apparatus I cranked. The scratchy clarinet of Bobby Jimby, and the

<sup>(1)</sup> - All the rage in 1967, the year of Canada's World's Fair in Montréal, Bobby's jazzed up unofficial national anthem, was already a nearly forgotten article twenty years later. And deservedly so. Victoria, who had the vinyl single for reasons best unexplored, felt no compunction at donating it in the interests of science.

distorted voices of a children's choir, played through the pin and cup. It was unfortunately quite intelligible.

There's a photograph to prove this too, though it has been stashed away somewhere secret. Where?

"Oh that was many years ago... I doubt that anyone would know."<sup>(2)</sup>

I don't think we played with Victoria's Tinkertoys after that. How could we top ourselves? Then, when a few years later she threw them away, we knew an age had passed.

<sup>(2)</sup>- Sweeny Todd, Act 1, "The Barber and His Wife", sung by Len Cariou and Angela Lansbury. Accept no substitutes by Tim Burton.

## A POCKET FULL OF HISTORIES: COIN NOTES

*By Taral Wayne*

(Editor's note: though I've decided to make SPACE CADET much more of a perzine, I continue to include Taral's articles on ancient coins cause I likes ancient coins.)

*The coins illustrated in these short written pieces are all from my collection. I've scanned each one, and drawn on my own knowledge to describe the coin, the Kings, the Queens, the Emperors, and the times. Certain statements are my opinions only, even guesswork, but that's alright. After more than 2,000 years in some cases, there's nobody around to sue!*

\$275 Cdn.



Leo I 473-74 AD  
Obv. DN LEO PERPET AVG



Gold Solidus  
Rev. VICTORIA AVGGG  
N COMOB

Some while ago I wrote about my ambition to own a Roman gold coin someday. I was never able to afford the real thing, which commonly carry mid-range, four figure price tags. But I was fairly lucky to find a gold solidus from a later century, that was by comparison quite reasonably priced.

What I never expected is that at the very next local coin show I'd run across an even better bargain. This solidus by Leo I is fifty to seventy-five years more recent than the first I owned. And it has a less Roman-looking frontal portrait of the emperor. But such frontal portraits aren't unknown even back to the late 4th. century, and the inscription is still Latin rather than Greek. So the later solidus is just as "Roman" as the earlier one. Something had damaged the face of the emperor though. The dealer thinks it was a flaw in the die rather than later damage. But whatever the case, it made the coin less desirable in the eyes of collectors who have the money for gold coins. I was able to buy it for a "mere" \$275. If you think that's not a bargain, may I remind you that gold has been as high as \$1000 US an ounce in recent history, and might be again, soon. A gold solidus weighs about a fifth of an ounce. I got the coin for about \$100 over its value as metal.

One thing this coin tells us is that by the 470's the empire (what was left of it) was entirely Christian. The reverse figure is an angel (or winged Victory if you prefer), carrying a long stemmed cross. A hundred and fifty years of persecution of pagans, destruction of temples, and burning of sacred texts had made its point. Be Christian or else. Besides, the Greeks were always more gullible when it came to cults. Paganism would survive underground in the fallen West for a considerable time to come.

Other details of interest include the inscription in a part of the reverse side of the coin called the exergue. Just so you'll know, the exergue is the space under the thin line beneath the standing figure of the angel. You should be able to make out that it says COMOB. This meant "Comitatis Obryziacum Aurum". The second and third words referred to "fine gold", and the first to the Imperial court. Concerned with the use of local mints to fund rebellions, the later emperors reserved the right to mint gold to their own court.



## CUFF NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR 2014

Nominations are now open to find a CUFF delegate for 2014. We are looking for a fan from Eastern Canada to come attend V-Con in Surrey, BC this October as the CUFF delegate.

The delegate is welcome, even encouraged, to stay longer than just the convention and hang out with the local fans.

In order to be nominated for the CUFF this year an application must be submitted by email to

[2013.cuff@gmail.com](mailto:2013.cuff@gmail.com)

Or snail mail CUFF 2014, c/o 250 Jarvis Street, Toronto, ON M5B 2L2, deadline is Midnight (EST) Sunday April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014

*Any Canadian fan or pro may individually nominate a fan to be this year's CUFF delegate by email (see details above)*

The application must have a minimum of 3 supporters from the East and 3 from the West. It should contain a letter describing who you are, why this would be beneficial for you and your community.

If you (the nominator) are not known to the current fund administrators Debra Yeung or Kent Pollard you must indicate the name and contact info of a fan who is known to one of the administrators, so that they can confirm you are an active fan. The same process will hold true for voting.

Eastern Administrator: **Debra Yeung**

[dyeung17@gmail.com](mailto:dyeung17@gmail.com)

Western Administrator: **Kent Pollard**

[kentpollard@gmail.com](mailto:kentpollard@gmail.com)

Voting will be open 12:01 AM May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 and close 11:59 (PM) May 21<sup>st</sup> 2014; this will allow the successful candidate enough time to work with V-CON programming and to schedule their visit.

Voting, when open will be permitted by anyone who has been active in Canadian fandom for two years prior to the Convention, (so for this year, October of 2014) or anyone who has a membership to V-CON. Voters are required to make a donation to the fund of at least \$5.00

Canadian Unity Fan Fund provides for a Canadian Science Fiction and/or Fantasy enthusiast to attend Convention on the opposite side of the country.

Convention is the annual convention of the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Association.

Traditionally, the location of CanVention alternates between Eastern and Western Canada. In 2014 CanVention will be held at VCON 39, October 3-5, 2014 at the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford hotel. <http://vcon.ca/>

## LETTERS OF COMMENT:

### OOK, OOK, SLOBBER DROOL!

**From: NEIL WILLIAMS, January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014**  
**Faned & Elron award-winning editor of SWILL**

#### Comments on Graeme's A Shift in Focus

Perfect! Yes, science fiction is fun and that is what we all DO have in common, the genre. The genre is very, very big these days and now includes many sub-genres and sub-sub-genres. It is now impossible to have read/viewed everything that is out there; and this is not a bad thing, it means that the genre is healthy and vital and that there are always new things to discover (even stuff that it a decade old that you missed when it first came out). Although I pub a fanzine (which puts me in the tradfan camp) I do see myself as just a fan, period. And I have always been FIJAGH (okay, you will see in Sirius that I did subscribe to FIAWOL when I was very young and very naive and also rather ignorant about the mainstream of fandom, but I quickly got over that...).

#### Comments On Graeme's Editorial Comment to [Further] On "Nasty Rumours" by me

*"Yes, I will agree that the pubbing of SWILL does place me in tradfandom, regardless as to whether or not (from the majority it would appear that "not" is the dominant view) traditional fandom accepts me as one of them. Not that it really matters at the end of the day -- an old Groucho Marx quote comes to mind..."*

The Groucho Marx quote: *"I don't want to belong to any club that would have me as a member."*

Nachinat, oozhassny nadsat me starry veck, malenky more than stracking shoom; but no vred done, me brother. You're just having a smeck. No need to be poogly this raz; future chumbling chepooka, without govoreeting an appypolly loggy, will privodeet a right tolchocking or at least a clop to the gulliver. Yes, even droogs have limits; especially starry old droogs...

On tradfandom and the "trufen" segment -- it does not appear to be unique to Canadian fandom or even BC fandom and this IS one of those endless debates. Right now I have my willy-wacker deep into the mess and I am stirring the shit. I will probably back off from this for a while after SWILL 22 -- unless the fur really flies... After all, there are some other things I want to attend to in SWILL, such as your columns in Amazing for one.

*I look forward to your spirited condemnation...*

#### Comments on Taral's Man Without a Country

As I don't want to appear mean-spirited and bullying, I am only going to use my soft foam willy-wacker for my comments here. <sigh> There would seem to be little that Taral and I agree on in many areas. What we do agree on is that the current federal government (HarperGov tm) is not a good government. It is also an anti-Ontario government and anti-southern Ontario government and an anti-Toronto government. Of course, what would you expect from the Reform Party (it may call itself the Conservative party but ideologically it is the Reform Party)? In their POV its payback time...



Now, I am a bit of a person without a province/home city. I was born in Montreal, but haven't lived there for over forty years. I did live a few years in Vancouver and loved it and still have a weak residual Vancouver identity (at least in my own mind). But, the bulk of my years on the planet have been spent in Ontario and I don't really have a resonance with that province, even after all that time. I have lived a few years in Toronto, a few years in Brampton, a few years in K-W, a few years in Guelph, but over twenty years in the Greater Hamilton Area. Do I identify with Hamilton? A bit. I identify with Dundas more. But, I guess I have enough "home town" feel that I don't tolerate Hamilton being trashed for no reason.

Having lived in the Vancouver Lower Mainland area for some 46 years, I think of this region as my home. Lived in Toronto for maybe 3 years, but no sense of identification. My nostalgia is reserved for my years growing up in Ottawa.

In regards to the evil Hamiltonian plot orchestrated by Sheila Copps to steal the Haida from Toronto; absolute rubbish in my opinion. Regardless of Copps' political manoeuvrings (which did happen) it all came down to who was willing to fund a plan to restore and maintain the historic ship. If I recall correctly, Toronto wasn't interested, period. The province wasn't interested on doing it alone and neither was the federal government. The Copps plan was to make the Haida an anchor for the Hamilton waterfront revitalisation and was able to receive federal and provincial funding because the City of Hamilton was willing to match federal and provincial funds; something that Toronto wasn't prepared to do. And so the Haida was moved to its present home in Hamilton harbour. Bottom line, this was no grand anti-Toronto plot; had the Copps plan not gone through, by now the ship would probably have been sold off for scrap as the City of Toronto had demonstrated little interest in even maintaining it, let alone restoring the vessel. The downside of the Copps plan, which doesn't directly impact Toronto, is that the promised "gentrification" of that area post revitalisation, didn't happen quickly -- but, it is starting to take place, albeit almost a decade late. In other words, the City of Hamilton spent a lot of taxpayers money on a project that it is only now beginning to see some real benefits from.

I still have, somewhere, the negatives of an entire roll of colour film pictures I took of the Haida when I visited her in the mid sixties. The store supposed to process the roll refused to make any prints, claiming that ALL of my pictures were uniformly lousy and out of focus. Sigh.

On the subject of Toronto-bashing, I do not hate the city and never have. If my work was closer to Toronto or in Toronto, I would probably live there. I like the city, but I am not a Torontonian (Lester is the Chief Toronto correspondent for SWILL). I have lived there so I can speak from experience that long term residents and those born in Toronto tend to have an overinflated view of the city. Torontonians have a Toronto-centric worldview that sees Toronto as the centre of the known universe. And some Torontonians subscribe to the notion that only the old City of Toronto proper (unencumbered with the riff-raff from Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, etc.) is Toronto and within the circle of civilisation; beyond that border one enters the barbarian realms of suburbia and far-off distant towns and hamlets such as Montréal, Hamilton, Windsor, Calgary, Vancouver, etc., where there may abide monsters (e.g. the Reform Party, Sacred remnants, and other strange creatures). While residents of other cities may have similar views, Toronto is, at present, our largest city and our financial capital; this kind of attitude can rub non-Torontonians the wrong way.

Later, Neil



**From: TARAL WAYNE, Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014**  
**Rotsler & Faned Award Winning Fan Artist**

### **In response to Neil Williams**

I'm not sure I remember a motion to create a Brampton branch of OSFiC, but I can probably reconstruct the reasoning behind voting the idea down. Brampton was more or less a part of Toronto, being a bedroom suburb just outside the municipal boundary. I doubt anyone saw a reason for a separate branch when it was possible to attend meetings of the downtown "branch." It also reads too much into the "Ontario" of the "Ontario Science Fiction Club's" name. Our generation was stuck with the name but the reality is that it was always a Toronto SF club. There had been a brief time in which there was Kingston branch, and perhaps an Ottawa branch, but that was for a single summer. The three or four people involved in our branches moved to Toronto, and that was that. In later years, younger fans formed their own clubs without even going through the motions of trying to form branches of OSFiC. For example, there was GVSTA. They were organizing their own convention at the George Vanier science & technology institute before we even knew they existed. Then there was Robert J. Sawyer's high school club, NAFTA. The reality was that OSFiC couldn't even claim to be the *Toronto* club, let alone the official SF organization for Ontario.

Even within OSFiC, the New Derelicts were a clique and not the club. And after all these years I think I'm safe in being brutally honest in saying that the New Derelicts tended to be cliquish, and the tone was largely set by Phil Paine and Patrick Hayden, who wasn't yet Patrick Nielsen Hayden. Both were intellectually competitive and judgmental in the extreme, and gave even other New Derelicts a hard time. Patrick, for instance, never let up on showing his contempt for Victoria Wayne, for which she bears him a lasting hatred to this day. I recall one time we were discussing a small, invitational apa for our friends, whoever they may be. I was told in no uncertain terms that I couldn't invite Brian Earl Brown, for one, even though Brian was at that time friends with both me and Victoria. When I protested, I was told that Brian was the sort of person who shouldn't be our friend and that was the end of the discussion. The

apa idea really didn't go anywhere, anyway, as I recall.

**Hmmm, is this not the sort of thing Neil ran into and which turned him off the club?**

But the New Derelicts were not OSFiC, though they may have largely run the club at the time. Some of the "members," such as Jim Allan and Michael T. Smith, didn't even consider themselves members, and probably Phil and Patrick didn't consider them members either. There were some members from feminist and gay circles that I never thought of as being "real" Derelicts, though Patrick and Phil reckoned them in the inner group. It was a subjective call. But even at the height of Derelict influence on OSFiC, there were other groups, such as the one around Anne Sherlock and Bob Hadji, who were very bookish, and only overlapped marginally with the Derelicts. Yet another group were the Mythopoeic Society types and SCA members associated with Steve Muhlberger, Jennifer Bankier, Dorothy and Elliot Grasset. Many of them were OSFiC members in good standing, and OSFiC people were involved in both. For a while, the Mythopoeic Society's newsletter, *Mythlore*, was produced by the Toronto group – I did art for several issues. And there was a loose grouping around Mike Wallis, that had tendrils into Ad Astra, Baskon, gaming and other activities that were far outside the interest of the Derelicts at least, but had large followings.

**Well, the New derelicts may not technically have been the same thing as OSFiC, but as you say, the club was largely run by them at the time. So easy to see where identification confusion would arise. Details are always lost amid confrontation.**

At the time, Neil Williams was one of Kevin Davies little group of Droogs, if I remember right. They appeared in bowler hats, white duds and canes at conventions, and were not especially out-going except for Kevin himself. I remember no especial effort by Neil or Adam Smith or others to become active in OSFiC, though maybe they were present at some meetings. But meetings were only the formal part of the club and not its most interesting feature. Adam published a zine or two that were once part of my collection – called *Nuclear Bunnies*, that ran for perhaps a couple of issues. And there was Neil's *Swill*, which struck me as being greatly influenced

by the punk-zine fad. More interesting was Kevin Davies' and Bill Marks' *Miriad*, a slick attempt at a semi-pro media magazine that Hadji and I wrote for. The Droogs only seemed to last about a year, and except for Kevin were no longer seen around the parts of Toronto fandom I knew anything about.

I'm guessing they made no special effort because they were still trying to figure out if OSFiC would be congenial to them and their particular interests, or not.

What points am I trying to make here? 1) That OSFiC was never a blanket organization. There were many other groups and clubs. 2) That OSFiC members, even the snootiest such as Phil and Patrick, in fact belonged in a number of different circles. 3) Neil was a part of one such, rather small circle of limited influence. 4) That perhaps the Droogs make no lasting impression on the New Derelicts, but the Derelicts were neither Toronto fandom nor OSFiC.

My conclusion is that 5) Neil has had rejection issues that he is still trying to work out by blaming OSFiC or the Derelicts or Fandom.

Well, any effort to break out from one's own 'limited circle' is often thwarted by the sensation of being cold-shouldered. Did OSFiC ever make a deliberate effort to recruit new members? Some clubs don't. Ever.

On the other hand, very few social organizations are welcoming in the sense of accepting new members warts and all. Usually a newbie has to quietly absorb the reality of a given organization, observe from within as it were, then, having spotted a compatible area of activity or interest, begin to volunteer active participation. Before you know it, though the process usually takes years, you wind up helping to run the damn thing and get to experience all the blame showered on active participants by formerly active members who insist on holding you to their standards from back in the alleged good old days when they were running the show. In a certain sense there is NEVER a time when you feel a sense of universally acclaimed accomplishment. This is why some people avoid joining clubs in the first place.

I understand rejection issues. I had them myself, regarding Glicksohn's generation of OSFiC and the circles of fandom he belonged to. But over time I gained friends, found my comfortable niches in fandom, and grew the confidence in myself needed to cope successfully with old baggage. I strongly suspect that Neil needs to check his in at the counter and get on with his life. Proving that somebody is to blame because he wasn't an instant hit with a small clique of 12 to 15 people, nearly 35 years ago, is no substitute, and is probably doing neither Neil or the study of fandom a favour.

Yes, hanging in over time is the key. Sometimes you hang in long enough that newer members assume that, because you're still a member and not been turfed out, you must actually be of proven worth to the club. Handy that.

As for rejection issues, in my case it's mostly people thinking of me as an idiot. Since that's very likely the case from time to time, I don't mind.

### In Response to Graeme

I applaud your decision to stop talking about fandom and simply fanac. Trying to understand fandom reminds me of what they say about staring into the abyss – after a while, it stares back. So even if the nature of fandom is the elephant in the room nobody sees – to mix a metaphor – better not to look.

Traditional fandom is just about extinct, at least in Canada. I'll be writing about that at annoying length in some future publication, probably my FANACTICAL FANACTIVIST whenever I get the next issue out.

My own adaptation is to deny I'm a science fiction fan. It is true, as Dave Harren pointed out in your letter column, I do read a small amount of SF, and now and then I even write about it. But I haven't the zeal I once did. I don't care if everyone learns to love Science Fiction, or if it is accepted as serious literature or whether Azimov or Heinlein are ever commemorated on a coin. The genre is just something I read and sometimes think a little bit about – like many other things.

I'll even go a little further and state that I am not a fan. Given that Old School or Traditional fandom

has not only lost its grip on the institution, it is even a vanishing small part of fandom these days, describing me as a fan seems to be stretching a point. Sure, I'll watch Big Bang Theory, but I have never seen an episode of Game of Thrones. I am puzzled by references to popular video games. I don't dress up as characters from Star Trek or Hogwarts or Shrek. If I happen to be at a convention, I will happily browse the dealers' room for DVDs or toys or vinyl figures or bubble gum cards, even books, that I can add to my collections. But everybody does. I don't see that it necessarily makes anyone – *or me, especially* – a fan.

I suspect you are still thinking of 'fan' as being part of a fan organization, or at least a community of like-minded individuals.

Whereas I think of a 'fan' as being someone who likes this or that aspect (or aspects) of the SF&F genre. In this sense it is possible to be a genuine fan without knowing or having contact with any other fans. A purely individual thing.

Certainly that describes ME as a fan in my teenage years. I was the only person I knew who defined SF&F as a specific interest.

Consequently, buying SF plastic figures (or SF bubblegum cards, or SF whatever) if I am seeking them out precisely because I like SF stuff DOES make me a fan, at least in my eyes.

But I'm willing to concede, because your definition of 'fan' is different from mine, the very same activity does NOT make you a fan, at least as far as you are concerned. Nothing wrong with that. I find that every fan has their own unique interpretation of fannish terms and that a universally accepted interpretation of said terms does not and never has existed. We's all different.

I admit it, then, I just write. And I draw. Sometimes somebody defines it as SF or fantasy, and often they're right, but frankly I'm tired of labels and have intention anymore of using them to pigeonhole my interests or pursuits. I am even gradually winding down the process of talking about it ... I hope.

It is more useful and satisfying to 'do' rather than talk about doing. Definition pigeonholes are for scholars who have nothing better to do.

There have been no new "Pocketfuls" pieces since the Apollonian drachma, unfortunately. I have added to my coin collection, however. Now that I'm on a disability pension, I can put aside a small amount each month and buy a new old coin from time to time ... as long as it isn't too pricey.

There have only been three additions since the drachma – a badly worn bronze piece with the emperor Titus on it is a prize despite the patina and wear. He was emperor for only 2 years, 2 months and 2 days, and didn't have a lot of time to satisfy the needs of coin collectors 2 millennia later. I've also acquired another quadrans minted under Claudius. It was thrown in as a freebie with the purchase of the third coin. Although I can rarely afford pricey coins, unfortunately it was a bit. But the emperor on the denarius was Balbinus, an obscure figure on a list of increasingly obscure emperors who are not part of my collection yet.

Still to be tacked down are Aelius (Caesar under Hadrian, but deceased before his patron), Pertinax (ex-governor of Britain and emperor due to the murder of Commodus), and Didius Julianus (who infamously "bought" the purple when it was auctioned by the Praetorian Guard after they murdered Pertinax). A few months later I was fortunate enough to be given a bronze coin with the face of Marcus Agrippa. I owned one already, but so worn that it was hard to make much out. The new one was very nice, and worth a good deal more than I could afford.

Will there be new "Pockets?" Probably. After all, there aren't so many left unpublished that Graeme would probably not welcome more. And there is another coin show in Toronto at the end of February.

I still have four of five of your coin articles yet unpublished. Always happy to add more though. I love looking at ancient coins. There's a certain time machine aspect to them, knowing they had been handled back in the day.



Claudius  
Quadrans

Balbinus  
Denarius

Titus  
As

Working to  
remove the  
black deposi

The Chinese economy simply cannot continue to grow unchecked. There aren't enough resources in the world to supply every one of the Chinese population of 1.2 billion people with the standard of living they envision. Maybe with some sort of 3D printed, nanotech, quantum computed, solar powered future it can be done, but not with the technology that currently exists or is likely to be available en mass in the next generation. At some point, if the Chinese economy is to continue growing, it will probably have to be at someone else's expense. Need I mention whose? Maybe I do – clearly, the U.S. is the most likely candidate, as are Canada and the European Union. Then there is India and Russia, also determined to make this their century. As the Chinese say, we're due to live through some interesting times.

Russia (especially Siberia) still has vast untouched resources. Not so India, as far as I'm aware. Methinks Russia has more to worry about.

**From: BRAD FOSTER, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Hugo Award & Rotsler Award Winning Artist**

Greetings Graeme

Thanks for sending along the first issue of 2014. As per usual, while I read and enjoyed just about all here, not much I could find to hang any comment hooks on, but realized it had been a while since I had sent you -any- feedback, so thought I should get my lazy behind in gear.

Looking back in records, my last loc was way back a year ago on issue 20. As per usual, with such a think loc, sent along a couple of pieces of art to

try to make up for that. Was pleased to read in issue 21 that you liked them both, and might be using them in a later issue. However, now that a year has passed and four more issues have come out with neither appearing, thought I'd check to make sure you still have interest in those? I don't expect everyone to like every single drawing I send out, and have no problem if you wish to turn down anything as not to your taste. Be happy to send something else, and can find a different home for the other piece.

If you still want to hold on to those to use, let me know and you can keep them there.

Actually, I believe I used all of the illos you sent me, mostly as zine covers. We discussed this further and you sent me two more pieces, both of which I'm using in this zine. This means you can send more any time you want to!

Currently I am rotating SPACE CADET covers between you, Teddy Harvia and Steve Stiles. And using Taral for other zines of mine. But I'm always publishing (if sporadically), so I'm always open to more illos from anyone who wants me to publish their art.

I do notice you've been getting some bright and colorful pieces from this new young artist "Teddy Harvia". Those young whippersnappers with their flashy computer coloring make it hard for us old-school black and white guys to get any space any more in a fanzine. Kid does show promise, though, so can't say I blame you for moving him up to the front of the line. :)

Back to the drawing board for me, actually having a sunny day and the studio space is above freezing, so time to see if the inks have thawed out and I can get a few new drawings done!

stay happy~ Brad

**From: DAVE HAREN, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014  
Renowned Letterhack**

Hi Graeme,

I enjoyed your epic going over Ed Wood's saucers in your column. I'm sending you a picture

of my Mars Attacks saucer. If I find the two seater version I'll send you a picture of that model as well.

This week's epic movie find is She Demons available from archive.org. Shipwrecked socialite and stooges find secret Nazi base on US navy bomb range island with dancing girls. usw, you get the idea, lots of fun unless you suffer from seriousness. Did I mention the lava driven perpetual motion project and the human animal gene transplant scheme ?

**It's a fun film. I have it on video tape with Elvira commentary.**

Your terrain tiles are a good idea, one of the tragic losses in modern gaming is the do it yourself attitude that was encouraged in the early days. The passivity of people conditioned to be consumers has caused a stunting of the imagination and discouraged any kind of personal innovation. A lot of the fandom segments (Trek, Star Wars) suffer from consumer fetishism but do a valiant struggle to make it personal.

We as a species suffer from rule nuttiness used as a shield against a reality we are very uncomfortable with. Fortunately we also are a breed that thinks rules are only there to be broken to see what will happen. This keeps us from becoming what the hypocrites pretend to be.

I've been watching a lot of 30C3 videos lately which are a wide spectrum of interesting things mainly because the participants are nosy, curious, and not afraid to break things by taking them apart. One interesting revelation was that when Canadian spooks tried to recruit a famous shit disturber they told him they had to get NSAs approval before they could recruit anyone. So much for the quaint idea of national sovereignty.

**Well, our spookery and military power are interlaced with America's policies. No choice really. Mind you, I'm assuming it was an American shit disturber. Nothing to stop us from secretly recruiting non-American agents without telling the Americans.**

**On the other hand, the Canadian government is on record stating we have no equivalent of the CIA at all (CSIS is domestic it seems) and that we rely**

**entirely on the information provided by our good buddies the Americans and the British. I hope that isn't true. A modern nation is distinctly handicapped if it lacks an independent, competent world-wide intelligence gathering capacity.**

**In other words, I hope Canada is secretly one of the most aggressive sovereign national entities looking after its own interests. If not, we're idiots.**

I had no idea Steve Stiles was suspected of Wobbly sentiments in his army days, he was far too young to have been even a baby bottle thrower when they were active.

That's a rarely mentioned benefit of fandom. You run into all kinds of people who are not too ordinary, who have made some difference in the world, usually for the good. The mainstream may disagree as to the good part but they aren't making things better so should be automatically discounted when the votes are in.

**Oh, doing good isn't limited to fandom, just to people with the politics I approve of. As for mainstream being discounted, I'm afraid they are virtually the ONLY relevant voters these days, as the recent Hugo nominations amply demonstrate.**

The world adventure gets better every day, from Toronto, from Kiev, from the barricades in hundreds of cities we have the human drama being enacted on a grand scale. USA just lost a presidential runner to a traffic jam. We may lose a diplomat to a phone tap. It seems others know how to do it too.

**Screw up, you mean? Absolutely.**

I'm sending you an entry in the Markoff Chaney runoff captioning contest. Be sure to sign your entry the Mgt.

Warm Regards, Dave Haren

**From: LOYD PENNEY, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014  
Aurora & Faned Award Winning Loc Writer**

Dear Graeme,

Finally getting to issue 25 of Space Cadet, hope I'm not too late. If fanzines are dying off, why am I so busy responding to such a pile of them?

American zine fanac is holding steady. It's Canadian zine fanac that seems to be perilously close to extinction.

Do you plan to reprint some of your columns in your zines? These days, I haven't had much time to go onto Amazing Stories. We have our FAAN ballots to fill out, but I think we will wait until the Hugo and Aurora final ballots are out to see if we can knowledgeably vote.

Where's the fun in that? I prefer to vote out of ignorance. In any case I voted for the FAAN Awards and nominated for the Auroras. We'll see what happens.

As for my AMAZING columns, I may republish some of them eventually. At the moment keeping up the weekly deadline occupies most of my thoughts. I missed one week out of illness, but have nevertheless managed thirty columns so far. Not bad. If you click on the latest, at the bottom you can click on "see my previous posts) & peruse all.

During the years I lived in British Columbia, I was constantly derided for being from Toronto. When the family moved up-island, I found some work as a reporter with a weekly paper, but being from Toronto actually hindered me in my job; some just didn't want to talk to me. I figured that was their prejudice talking, but if I couldn't do my job... well, it was just as well that I was leaving to return to Toronto and studies at Ryerson.

Toronto is the New York City of Canada, which can be a good thing, but also a bad thing, as far as perceptions in the rest of the country go.

Neil's experiences echo my own. My own entry into Toronto fandom in the late 70s was not very friendly, and I got called a fakefan too, but I decided that they weren't going to chase me away. At the time, I was both media and literary-oriented. Now, I have decided that I am not going to be the unfriendly older fan, and as I continue to step back, I have welcomed, I believe, a couple of hundred new people over the years, and I still do that. I am trying not to have a proprietary attitude; it's not MY fandom, but it is what you make of it. You just need the opportunity and encouragement to do so.

Agreed. Good for you to remain welcoming. I think I am sometimes so tired I fail to make an effort. My fault.

Even after all that, I did go to the monthly Bascons when they were held, from when I first found out about them, to the very last one. Those were great parties, and that's one place where I made so many valuable connections in local fandom.

With me, it was the local VCON and BCSFA. That's where most of my friends (and enemies) come from.

My loc...here it is, late February, and I have not been able to find any work since those two months at Perennial. We're both starting to get worried. I am finding the jobs to apply to, but there must be hundred of others also going for the same job, and it is so difficult to rise to the top.

Just ONE lucky break for you, that's all I ask. You deserve a fulltime job, especially one you enjoy. Make it so, fates!

Just about got the page...off it goes shortly. My best to Alyx, and see you with the next issue.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.



**From: Jason Burnett, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**Faned: OF MICE AND MARTIANS**

Hi Graeme,

I just finished reading Space Cadets #24 and 25, and enjoyed both.

In #24, I think Taral ends his reaction to "Nasty Rumours" with a good idea, when he says publishing fanzines about himself (and by extension, his interests) is the best possible thing he can be doing. Attempting to design a zine in order to draw an audience won't really work, but if you publish a zine about what you're interested in, that interest will show, and eventually people will find your zine who will enjoy it. Case in point: Dale Speirs' Opuntia. Dale publishes about what he's interested in, and as a result I often find myself reading an article in Opuntia, and enjoying it very much, even though I had had no previous interest in the subject of the article.

Spot on! SPACE CADET, for the most part, is all about sharing my enthusiasms even if they lie outside any strict definition of the SF&F genre. It is MY perzine after all. I like to think that at least SOME people enjoy reading it.

More importantly, I enjoy writing it. As I work the silence of my concentration is continuously punctuated with "aha!"s, chortles, chuckles and cries of glee. Probably few writers of any sort have as much fun writing as I do. Consequently I am not forced to depend on response from others (welcome though it be) to achieve satisfaction.

In #25, I think your decision to simply declare yourself a fan, minus all adjectives and qualifiers, is a good one. Any time anyone tries to declare some activity "not fandom," all it seems to do it piss people off and cause needless drama. "But," the excluders always come back, "if anything fans do is fanac, where do you draw the line? Model trains? Ferret breeding? Crochet?" To which I respond "Why draw a line?" I contend that even if fans and non-fans are doing the same activity, you'll still be able to tell the fans by the fannish way they do the things. The last con I went to had a knitting circle as one of the Saturday afternoon activities. I don't knit, so I didn't go (what an amazingly simple solution of things of this sort - yet

one so often overlooked), but I bet if I had gone, I would have known without being told that I was at a fannish knitting circle.

**I have evolved to the point where to me being fannish is to be a fan of something. Period.**

Your wargaming setup looks remarkable - terrain has always been my biggest problem with wargaming, as it can easily eat up all the time and money one has available. Recently, after years of seeing Heroclix in the shops, I've finally gotten drawn in to playing them, thanks to the release of a Legion of Super-Heroes set. I'm sure that sooner or later I'll buy more unpainted figures (there's only so much you can do with superheroes), but for now I'm enjoying just being able to take figures out of a box and game with them.

**My variable terrain setup is good for large scale battles, but for simpler, smaller confrontations I've come up with a different, fixed system that nevertheless offers infinite possibilities. Possibly next issue I will explain, with pictures.**

Take care, Jason Burnett

**From: Doug Finnerty, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

**Long Time Active Vancouver area fan.**

Hi Graeme:

Thanks for continuing to send me the SCG. Sorry for not writing sooner.

I appreciated your Nasty Rumours editorial and intended to send something in reply. Alas, I put things off too long and SCG 24 (and now SCG 25) showed up. Perhaps someday I might get around to composing (and sending) this sermon from Friar Doug. But only if I feel that you're not getting enough locs and/or contributions. You have been warned.

**I like locs. I like getting them. I like reading them. I like responding to them. To me one of the definitions of a healthy zine is an extensive loc column. The voices of fandom!**

Only thing from SCG 23 that I'll be commenting on was a loc (I think it was Dave Haren's) where your correspondent expressed the opinion that the



1960's was a very bad time to be in the United States. Here's a thought experiment I've proposed in response. Select one year, or a five year period, or even a decade, between 1946 and now. Assign two teams to produce a documentary chronicling said period. Team One will make the case that this was the best of times. Team Two will make the case that this was the worst of times. I picked 1946 as a start point, because I don't think anyone could make a case for the period 1929 - 1945 being a good time. I've already forgotten why I picked 1946 instead of 1950 as a start point.

Well, the late forties were a terrible time, especially in Europe, in economic terms. Besides, not many people know that enemy prisoners were not released till several years after the war, in the case of the Germans held by the Russians, for some of them, not till the 1970s. Even in America the economy didn't really boom till the early fifties once all post-war adjustments had been made.

Anyway, I think Dave Haren was expressing his lack of understanding, due to internal conflict in the states (race, Viet Nam, etc), as to how I could possibly think of 1967 in positive and optimistic terms.

Simple, we always thought the Viet Nam war was unwinnable (obvious to me even as a teenager) and stayed out of it. Besides, we weren't part of SEATO (South East Asia Treaty Organization – the Pacific equivalent of NATO), so we didn't have to get involved.

And while racism existed in Canada, it was never institutionalized to the extent it was in America, and was not considered a pressing issue (which of course it was, but not perceived as such).

No, we looked at Canada's future from a purely Canadian point of view, and everything looked bright and rosy. Turns out we were overly-optimistic, but we didn't know that at the time. For us, 1967 was a VERY good year.

For reasons given by everyone else on this matter, I don't like the term TruFan either. But if anyone still desires to describe themselves as a TruFan, then they might as well continue to do so anyway. I did like your FIJAGH signoff in SCG 25. I'm more of a FIAH kind of guy, myself. But given

enough provocation, I guess one who's into FIAH could move into FIJAGH, or even FIJAGDH territory. But here's a few other fannish schools of thought to consider.

FITWOL. Fandom is the way of life. The way being a little more extreme than merely a way. In truth, I've met one or two wha'hobbyists who were even more fanatical about their brand of fandom than the average lifer.

Yep, I can think of a few fen to which this term applies.

FCBB. Fandom can be both. One advantage that this school of thought has over FIB (Fandom is both) is that the acronym is unpronounceable. Definitely a fannish plus.

Agreed.

Just as an aside, BCSFAzine gets its name from William Gibson who suggested it on the grounds that an unpronounceable acronym was very much in the tradition of fandom. Issue #34, April 1976, was the first to be so named.

And finally, there is FIWII. Fandom is what it is. A kind of Jersey Shore Zen if you will.

Oh, hopefully better than that!

On to SCG 24 and more responses to locs. I liked Dave Haren's photos of his miniatures collection. Perhaps someday I might inflict the pages of SCG with some of mine. As soon as I've assembled and painted them, that is. Recently, I've been collecting miniatures produced for a game called Dystopian Wars. This game covers an alternate 1870's where steampunk rules all. The scale is 1/1200, but the models are large enough that you could easily play them alongside Dave Haren's 1/285 scale Ogres. Note that in this world, the British infantry still wear red. This makes perfect sense since all those mechanized monsters running around the battlefield will turn this fabled thin red line into a thick red smear.

I like miniatures. Steampunk miniatures? Armoured dirigibles I'm hoping. That would be cool. However, currently GHQ military miniatures absorb my entire hobby budget.

More disclosers of strange behavior. I too am one of those people who will print off an SCG issue prior to reading it. Also, not only have I stopped putting ketchup on my fish and fries (as of many years ago), but just last year I finally gave up on vinegar. I find that the vinegar slides off the fries and onto the plate, resulting in a small lake. When it comes to absorbing vinegar, I've found the battered fish to be equally useless. Perhaps I should be pouring my vinegar onto something like quinoa instead. So now I put hot sauce on my fish and fries. When available, HP sauce, Worcestershire sauce (Lea & Pearn's of course) barbecue sauce, and even soya sauce will be used to douse my fish and fries. I have found vegemite to be way too thick to be useful as a fish and fries condiment, but marmite is doable. By the way, I find marmite with sushi to be awesome.

I'm even more peculiar. I like my fries plain, without ketchup or vinegar. I must be an alien.

Speaking of vegemite, I find it odd that the only version of this fabled Australian condiment that seems to be available is produced by Kraft. It's like living in a parallel universe where the only beer that is brewed downunder is something called Molsons Australian. I am hoping that the current craft beer (I still call it micro beer) craze will lead to some of these craft breweries producing their own yeast extracts for human consumption.

I'm assuming you don't mean yeast concoctions that would consume humans. Wouldn't be very popular. Probably not sell very well.

I enjoyed Taral Wayne's *The True Meanies of Christmas*. It was a nice reminder that I really do need to start reading the works of Charles Dickens and perhaps those of Ayn Rand. I have considered writing an alternate history where Ayn Rand is an evil counselor in the court of the ever erratic Czarina Anastassia Romanov, in which the Russian Civil War ended in an uneasy truce between White and Red sectors. Leon Trotsky rules the Reds, and seems to be employing some guy named Beria as his special henchman. Mind you, the main focus in this alternate 1930's world is a fascist France (whilst the Germans hold on to their democracy). I considered inventing an ex-NCO for my "French Hitler" figure to complement Marshall Petain's "Hindenberg". But the more I think of it, I wonder if

Jean Paul Sartre would make for a better "first citizen".

There were a number of extreme right wing leaders under Petain who thought of the Nazi's as being too soft. Any one of them would do. (I can't remember the names but a bit of research should reveal them.) Sartre, no, too much of a twit. He was (briefly) happy Hitler had conquered France because he assumed, Hitler being a bohemian-style artist at heart, that he approximated Plato's philosopher king concept. However, Sartre soon realized twas not true. (Sartre wrote a trilogy of novels detailing his experiences during the invasion in fictional terms. Really quite good. Only decent books he ever wrote.)

I had more lines to add, but I think I'll end things here. Perhaps in a few days, I'll pick things up again. Until next time.

Cheers, Doug Finnerty

## COLOPHON

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