

WCSFAzine

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

#17

January 2009

winding



1

numbers

WINDING NUMBERS #1, FALL 1975. FANED: RANDALL REICHARDT
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(Note: All uncredited articles are by the Editor.)

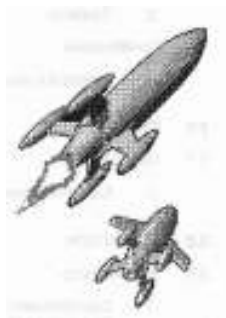
ART CREDITS:

Cover: Stuart Gilson.
Clip Art: 3, 24, 41, 42, 43, 45
Barry Kent Mackay: 10, 16, 20, 22, 23, 31, 34, 40
Brad Foster: 17
Scott Patri: 11, 39, 44
Ted Parnell: 21
William Rotsler: 13, 14, 26, 28, 29, 30

PHOTO CREDITS:

Famous Monsters #23/1963: 4,5

EDITORIAL



I continue to monitor the site counter stats. A full months report indicates the readership is bordering on respectable. No less than 48 readers (after deducting repeats & my own visits). The figures boil down to the following:

- 46% American (or 22 readers)
- 27% Canadian (or 13 readers)
- 11% United Kingdom (or 5 readers)
- 12% Other (1 each from Australia, Bulgaria, Brazil, Czech Republic, France & New Zealand.
- 04% Unknown.

The pages read count is low, but I am assuming it reflects readers quickly checking out a few items of interest, than downloading the zine for further perusal at their leisure. Certainly that's what I do with the zines on efanazines.com, though I'm hard put to find the time to read them let alone review them. Still, I promise to get a few reviews, maybe a decent number of reviews, into the next issue.

Given that WCSFAzine is mandated to promote Canadian fandom in general and West Coast Canadian fandom in particular, 13 Canadian readers seems rather slim. Kind of disheartening when one considers this is but a portion of the WCSFA membership, never mind Canadian fandom at large.

On the other hand, overall the readership is respectable (and certainly would be expensive if this were a paperzine). At least the info I provide is 'getting out there.' Besides, it's my hobby. I spend hours and hours writing and editing these issues. More fun than watching TV.

I won't bore you with the stats in subsequent issues but will instead insert them somewhere as an article easily skipped over. One thing for sure, I will be watching closely to see how many readers are 'regulars,' i.e. checking out each issue as it appears as if they were subscribers. So far about 15 out of the 48 seem to fit into that category. Not bad. I hope that particular stat improves significantly with the publication of THIS issue.

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

Cheers! The Graeme

FAN NEWS & NOTES

FORREST J ACKERMAN IS NO MORE.

By R. Graeme Cameron

I can't say "passed on" because he didn't believe in an afterlife in any way shape or form, and held to this view his entire life, along with a strong belief in the future as a better place (if only humanity would get its act together). Suffering from pneumonia and a deteriorating heart, he chose to reject further treatment at a hospital and return home to the last incarnation of 'The Ackermansion' to die peacefully surrounded by friends and inundated by an outpouring of affection (via letters and emails) from the innumerable fans whose lives he'd touched over the decades. His lifelong friend Ray Bradbury, himself no spring chicken, threw a 92nd birthday party for Forry at another location to which FJA listened over the phone. In my honest opinion this is a wonderful way to go. Peacefully. In the company of friends. Would that we all be this lucky when the time comes.

Some of you may be wondering who 'The Ackermansion' was? He had a number of incarnations. In the 1930s, 40s & early 50s he was generally considered the 'Number One Fan' in zinedom (the ONLY fandom back then, more or less). He was the first to wear a costume to a convention (the 1939 Worldcon in New York). He turned 'filthy pro' after the war by becoming a literary agent for such as A.E. van Vogt. He invented the term 'Sci-Fi' circa 1955 (not Heinlein, as a misprint in 'Grumbles From the Grave' has led some people to believe). And, with the aid of publisher James Warren, launched the world's first film monster magazine FAMOUS MONSTERS OF FILMLAND in 1958. I 'knew' FJA through the pages of Famous Monsters in the early 1960s. In the current issue of my perzine SPACE CADET (#12, available online at efanazines.com) I reminisce about the powerful impact Famous Monsters had on an impressionable 12 year old. But I will not repeat myself here.



Forry carves a snack circa 1963

Alan R. Betz chaired VCON 15 in May of 1987. His theme was "Celebrating the History of Science Fiction", and featured Guest of Honour Sam Moskowitz, the 'Newark Neanderthal' of 1930s fan fame, author of THE IMMORTAL STORM (a history of 1930s fandom described by one critic as "the only book I've ever read in which the onset of World War Two came as an anti-climax"), Artist Guest of Honour Alex Schomburg (many covers of comic books & SF magazines from the 1940s to the 1960s), and Fan Guest of Honour Forrest J Ackerman! Hot dang!

I can't tell you how much I looked forward to VCON 15! And it was truly a wonderful convention. Alas, Forry was unable to attend do to health reasons I believe. So I never did get to meet my childhood mentor. Oh well.

The program book for VCON 15 featured "An appreciation" of Forry written by his friend Eric Hoffman. I reprint it here:

FAN GUEST OF HONOUR FORREST J ACKERMAN

AN APPRECIATION (FROM THE VCON 15 PROGRAM BOOK)

By Eric Hoffman

"If there had been no Forrest J Ackerman it would have been necessary to invent him!"

— Anthony Boucher.



Forry in his Ackermansion office 1963

I'm not sure if I have the esteemed Mr. Boucher's words right. Come to think of it I'm not sure if I can ever come up with all the words that I would like to be able to use regarding the man known to friends and fans the world over as Forrest J (no period) Ackerman, or just plain Forry. To those involved in the world of science fiction, fantasy and horror, professionally or as fans, he has been an agent, fellow fan, and one of those individuals who has been right in the thick of fandom for more years than most of us have been around.

For fans of the fantastic film genre, such as myself, he is the one who gave us the rallying point for our interests, beginning with the first magazine column dealing with our kind of films, "Scientifilm Marquee" which appeared in the now defunct *Imagination* and

Imaginative Tales magazines. He then topped it by giving the world the first original (accept no imitations!) magazine devoted to the realm of the fantastic and the chilling in movies, *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Along the way he also masterminded the spin-off publications *Spacemen* and *Monster World* (Son of *Famous Monsters*!). And if that wasn't enough he is also the father of that beautiful, bouncing, bodacious blood-sucker from another world, Vampirella.

Forry Ackerman has been known as "Mr. Science Fiction" for years, and with good reason. His knowledge of the genre is gigantic. His collection of books, in some cases different editions of the same title in various languages, is staggering; it has caused more than one sf devotee to turn green with envy. He could also be called "Mr. Metropolis" due to his love for the legendary Fritz Lang classic of the future. He is also the only man I know who has a re-creation of the remarkable Robotrix from Metropolis, looking out from its display case in his office, surrounded by an assortment of printed Metropolis memorabilia that any sf film fan would kill for! His trophy room of props, models and

what-nots relating to sf/fantasy/horror films is a constant source of delight to anyone seeing it for the first time.

My own meeting with the gentleman known as Forry Ackerman, or FJA, or Forry (or whatever variations his fertile, twisted mind comes up with) was a result of my first ever fan letter to a magazine, *Famous Monsters*, naturally. I received something that any terror fan worth his fangs would have killed for – an invitation to the first ever open house of the original “Ackermansion” in Beverly Hills. It was the beginning of my association and friendship with Forry Ackerman that has resulted in my writing for FM, both as the answer man and the article scribe. I am happy to say that it has continued to this day.

If there has ever been any question of Forrest J Ackerman’s place in the world of the fantastic and the hearts of the people who know him, then the answer was given at his seventieth birthday bash. Over 500 people, friends and fans, especially invited for the event, came from as far as Japan, China, France and, I believe, Poland, and from any region in the United States you care to imagine.

For those willing to look and see, Forry Ackerman is an individual filled with an enthusiasm and enjoyment for almost anything regarding the sf and fantastic genre that resembles that of a youngster at large in a toy store. He may be found one moment at a convention sitting in on a panel discussing science fiction, whether in films or just in general, while another moment may find him in the audience, as attentive and enthusiastic as any fan enjoying a panel. He might be found hobnobbing with anyone from fans to some of the biggest names in science fiction (many of whom are his old friends, such as Ray Bradbury, A.E. Van Vogt and Ray Harryhausen to name only a very, very few: you would need a phone book to list them all), or else coming up with a string of puns (sometimes in the company of life-long friends Walt Daugherty and Robert Bloch) that will evoke groans or laughter, or both.

There is much to say about Forrest J (no period) Ackerman. To me, however, he is simply Forry – the magician who held the light up high for those of us who love the world of the fantastic. A welcome oasis of enthusiasm who has kept the science fiction, fantasy and terror beacon blazing with an undiminished light, who inspired such budding fans as Steven Spielberg and George Lucas and Joe Dante, among others, to carry on and become the story tellers of today. His love for it can be felt by all. It shows no sign of withering.

If this piece sounds like I am praising Forry Ackerman, you’re right. I have to agree with Anthony Boucher’s words: if there had been no Forrest J Ackerman it would have been necessary to invent him, mainly because it would be difficult to conceive of the world of the fantastic without him. So when you see a gentleman who looks like a mellow, genial Vincent Price, with an infectious grin and a gleam of wonder in his eye, step up and say hello to Forry Ackerman. I think you’ll find it will be worth it.

2009 AURORA AWARDS NOMINATION FORM ON-LINE NOW!

Go to the Aurora Awards site at < <http://www.prix-aurora-awards.ca/> >

Click on ‘English’ to get English language home screen.

Click on ‘Nominating’ to get the on-line form. (You can also got to a PDF version if you prefer to mail in your nomination.)

And remember, nominating costs nothing! Just fill in and press 'submit'.

The rules are simple:

- To nominate, you must be a Canadian Citizen (not necessarily living in Canada), or a permanent resident.
- The person you nominate must be a Canadian: defined as a citizen, (not necessarily living in Canada), or a permanent resident.
- You may select up to three nominees in each category. All selections will be given equal weight. There is no fee to nominate.

Categories include:

Professional:

- Best Long-Form Work in English – 2007/2008
- Best Long-Form Work in French – 2007/2008
- Best Short-Form Work in English – 2007/2008
- Best Short-Form Work in French – 2007/2008
- Best Work (Other) in English – 2007/2008
- Best Work in French (Other) – 2007/2008
- Artistic Achievement – 2007/2008

(For a fairly comprehensive listing of eligible professional nominees check out The Canadian SF Works Database at < <http://www.canadiansf.com/> >)

Fannish:

- Fan Achievement (Fanzine) – 2007/2008
- Fan Achievement (Organizational) – 2007/2008
- Fan Achievement (Other) – 2007/2008

(Actually, the Fan categories are only listed for the year 2007, but that must be a mistake. I assume they are for the same period as the Professional awards, & list above accordingly.)

As far as I know, there is NO database for fan categories. (The Canadian SF Works Database seems to be strictly a professional listing.) So in a splendid spirit of altruism and Canadian fannish unity I'm going to suggest myself in every category I can think of and then, oh yeah, there must be a few other fans around, maybe suggest some of them too. So here goes. I'm doing this on short notice, so it will be woefully incomplete, but it's a start. Remember! Nominating costs nothing! So let's get a respectable showing of nominees for the final ballot!

Please note that the definitions of each category are my best guesswork and not 'official'. Meant as a guide only.

- Fan Achievement (Fanzine) – 2007/2008

Note: *this can be a perzine (personal zine consisting mostly of items written by the fan-editor), a genzine (general zine, an anthology of sorts, with multiple contributions by fan-writers), a fictionzine (edited anthology of amateur fiction), a newzine (emphasis by the editor on what has happened in fandom and upcoming events), or any combination of the above, providing the editor is doing it on his own and not on behalf of an organization. The nature of the zine can be a paper-print zine distributed by mail, or an on-line zine available on-line, but should in theory involve some aspect of science*

fiction or fantasy (which could include SF&F aspects of comic fandom, anime fandom, gaming fandom, costuming fandom, etc).

- **ISH**, Felicity's annual perzine/genzine out of Richmond, B.C.
- **OPUNTIA**, Dale Speirs' frequent perzine out of Calgary.
- **THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE**, Garth Spencer's perzine out of Vancouver.
- **SPACE CADET**, R. Graeme Cameron's newly revived quarterly perzine.

(See < <http://efanzines.com> > for latest issues of ISH, ROYAL SWISS NAVY & SPACE CADET)

- **Fan Achievement (Organizational)** – 2007/2008

Note: this can be any type of zine as described above, but produced on behalf of an organization, a 'clubzine' in other words. The category also covers any kind of organizational activity, be it convention organizing, club organizing, special event organizing, or any other organizational effort you can think of involving SF&F.

- **Paul Bobbit**, for THE VOYAGEUR, publication of the U.S.S. Hudsons Bay I.D.I.C.
- **Keith Braithwaite**, for IMPULSE, monthly publication of the Montreal SF&F Association.
- **R. Graeme Cameron**, for WCSFAzine, monthly publication of the West Coast SF Association.
- **Ryan G. Hawe**, for F.R.E.D. (Forget Reality, Everybody Drink) in Vancouver B.C.
- **Palle Hoffstein**, for years of service on behalf of the West Coast SF Association.
- **Stan G. Hyde**, for years of service on behalf of Monster Attack Team Canada.
- **Sandi McLaughlin**, for The OSFS STATEMENT, monthly publication of the Ottawa SF Society.
- **Greg Slade**, for B.I.F.F. (Burrard Inlet Fan Fellowship) in North Vancouver, B.C.
- **Garth Spencer**, for BCSFAzine, the monthly publication of the B.C. SF Association.
- **Danielle Stephens**, Chair of VCON 32 & 33.
- **Faned?** for WARP, quarterly publication of the Montreal SF&F Association.

- **Fan Achievement (Other)** – 2007/2008

Note: this is a catch-all category for anything related to fannish SF&F activity not covered by the above two categories. Probably the most important is fannish art appearing in fanzines or on-line. The Best fan-writer concept probably belongs here, as does Best Letter Hack (writer of letters of comment), Best fan Essayist, Best convention Master of Ceremonies, Most Humorous Performer at Conventions, & so on.

- **R. Graeme Cameron**, an avalanche of essays on fan history, zinedom history, B movies, etc.
- **R. Graeme Cameron**, editor of The Canadian Fancyclopedia, online at:
< <http://members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html> >
- **Lloyd Penney**, Canada's best known and most prolific Letter Hack.
- **Garth Spencer**, for numerous editorials & essays in BCSFAzine & THE ROYAL SW GAZETTE.
- **Michael Walsh**, for years of service as Master of Ceremonies at VCON conventions.
- **Taral Wayne**, contributor of art to innumerable zines, including Space Cadet & WCSFAzine.
- **Taral Wayne**, for numerous articles on fannish history.
- **Taral Wayne**, for his website display of his art over the years, zine covers, illos, etc, at:
< <http://taralwayne.deviantart.com/gallery/> >

All of the above suggestions off the top of my head as WCSFAzine 17 "goes to print." Research would produce more suggestions, but I've run out of time. At the very least, I hope I have suggested (using mostly local examples) the variety of possibilities open to you to put forward. Select from the above, or come up with your own, but please nominate!

Remember, being nominated once isn't sufficient to make the list. I believe a nominee needs to be nominated at least 3 times to appear on the final ballot (or is it 5 times?), so nominate your candidates and encourage others to nominate choices of their own. Fannish democracy in action!

Oh, and by the way, don't forget to nominate in the professional categories too. Fact is, the more people who nominate, the more people who vote, the more legitimate and prestigious the Auroras become. This is your opportunity to award your favourite pros and fans! All in the good cause of promoting Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy! Heck, this is WAY more important than the recent Federal election! Nominate! Vote! Let your voice be heard!

FANDOM HISTORY

CLIPPINGS FROM CANADA

By Leslie A. Croutch

A column by Canada's own Leslie A. Croutch (Publisher and editor of LIGHT) taken from Rosenblum's 1940s zine FUTURIAN WAR DIGEST posted online by UK fan Rob Hansen:

From: Futurian War Digest #9, June 1941

CLIPPINGS FROM CANADA

Beginning February, fantasy dark ages descended on Canada for us fans. All pulp magazines containing non-serious fiction, whatever that is, were banned from Canadian newstands. I mean all American magazines. This then means no more science fiction, fantasy or weird magazines for the Canadian public. The only way for us Canadians to get our reading matter is to trade for it with American fans. This move was taken by the Canadian Government to conserve foreign (distasteful word in this case) exchange which is needed badly for the purchase of munitions. Hitler told his people "Butter or guns" and they got the guns (poor blighters). We were told "Magazines or munitions" and we gave up our reading. However in the future, I believe what will happen is what happened years back when a similar ban was on - the big American houses will either contract Canadian publishers to print special editions, or else establish Canadian branches. The Canadian editions have, in the past been equal to the American ones except for one small detail - "Printed in Canada" at the bottom of the contents page in very small letters. During the last ban Amazing Stories was the only American magazine printed here, and, of consequence, had the field to itself. I think it will be a vastly different story this time, but we must just wait and see.

Out at Universal in Hollywood, Lon Chaney is working on the latest weird- horror film entitled "Man-Made Monster". Universal is also making "Horror Island", starring whom I don't know. The success of Walt Disney's "Fantasia" has spurred him on to make another fantasy feature in technicolor the new one to be named "The Reluctant Dragon". It will be released some time this Spring by RKO. Monogram filmed Boris Karloff in "The Ape", and Bela Lugosi is in "Devil Bat".

"Lost Horizon" has been revived, tho in black & white, not technicolor. It makes a surprising difference to the film, however it is still a wonderful thing to see.

Leslie A Croutch,
Parry Sound, Ont., Canada

HENRY & CLAUDE

By Taral Wayne

On a site called Fandom Wank there is an article of interest -- "The Cosmic Circle of Wank"
< http://www.journalfen.net/community/fandom_wank/1157179.html >

It's about Claude Degler, a familiar story to us. As an aside, the author also brings up one Henry Argasinski as a later day Degler. The full story largely quotes Teresa Nielsen Hayden who must have had it from Patrick. Henry would be known only to older Toronto fans and Patrick was living here at the time this happened. To be frank, I have to blame myself for much of Henry's meteoric rise to and subsequent fall from absurdity. Mea culpa.

Claude Degler is of course the iconic model of what fans should *not* become. He was instantly recognized for what he was in his own day, but because Claude was so much further out than "over the top" he earned a place in history. There had always been minor characters of his type. They are as old as SF fandom, if not as old as Man. And there continued to be types like Claude long after the Cosmic Circle was revealed as a sham. But in making his mark on fandom he remains the most successful of all our most colourful kooks... if successful is the right word.

Henry Argasinski, on the other hand was a purely local phenomenon. Keep in mind that the Toronto fandom of the 1970's was a similarly large and diverse a body, perhaps, as SF fandom was in 1944. His inferiority to the legend of Claude Degler then is not just a matter of numbers, nor a matter of quality even. Once a myth has been created, though, it cannot be supplanted easily. Claude was the myth, Henry can only be compared as an also-ran, and that is his ultimate downfall as a legend. If Claude was the Shakespeare of clowns, Henry only the comic-laureate of Herzegovina.

Mike Glicksohn taught math at Humber College in those days, and Henry was one of his students. I think Mike sponsored Henry's school SF club. For whatever reason, he pointed Henry in the direction of the Ontario SF Club (OSFiC). Initially I tried to encourage Henry in positive ways. He imitated the newszine I was publishing for the club at that time. Flattering at first, his attention to detail became annoying. If I broke up text with lines of // or +, so would Henry. He copied my digest covers and full page insides. Even the style of editorial comment, and my way of organizing content came in for imitation. But he would have had few other models, I told myself. I contributed a few drawings, to Henry's zine-of-various-titles, and some short bits of writing as well. (This included fanzine reviews meant as a broad hint.) I also ran a bit of Henry's stuff in the club monthly. For his age, seventeen or eighteen I think, his writing was simultaneously precocious and juvenile. But there might have been potential there that was worth drawing out. After a few months, it was evident that there wasn't.



Among other signs that not all was well was that Henry would change the title of his zine, but essentially publish the same material over and over. His imitations of other club members grew into something rather unsettling. It was as if he had no ideas of his own, but was determined to out-do those who did have them. He invented an artificial language that could not be understood because the

meaning of words depended on ever larger contexts, ad infinitum, so that a sentence was never actually finished. Particularly disturbing was his imaginary world, which was populated by one "supermind," with a gigantic brain the size of a pumpkin, and a race of mindless slaves. His super-brain alter ego evidently lived alone in a stone castle, sat on his throne, and supervised the lives of every other being on the planet. I suppose it was about then that I decided enough was enough. I began to cultivate his instinct for self-destruction instead.



That Henry was a nuisance goes without saying. But he was tolerated at first, because none of us were perfect... few of us would call ourselves even normal. But Henry was an order of magnitude less well adjusted. He was a distraction at best and a concern at worst. Now at the time I was only marginally adjusted myself. Ten years later, I would just have kept my distance and pitied Henry. But in my early 20's I was quite a lot more proactive but far less foresighted than later. I had been reading heavily about past fan history, and in particular the story of Claude Degler was on my mind. The match was perfect. I sent Henry his first letter from "Claude" through a mail drop in Ohio. Rather than use my own, identifiable typewriter, the letters were composed on Victoria Vayne's Selectric. Posing as Claude Degler, I claimed that Henry's own small "cosmic circle" had come to my attention. Not only was Henry an obvious "slan", but his own organization looked as though it were an ideal candidate for a merger. I not only held out membership in the parent organization, the original Cosmic Circle, but equity! In

subsequent letters I outlined plans for in-breeding desirable genes, for political takeovers, for collectivist communities of telepathic fans, etc. All right out of the 1944 book, so to speak. I began to drop hints that Degler was aware of OSFiC as well, but regarded it as an unimportant and obsolete sort of fan body that would fall by the wayside. Henry ate it up, and began making broad allusions to his future importance around the club. His zines and other miscellaneous manifestos proclaimed his connection with the CC. Things had gone far enough, in other words, and one way or the other the hoax had to be brought to a stop.

We might have done it gently, or we might have done what any bunch of insensitive, brash, cliquish young pseudo-intellectuals would do. I don't think I need to ask you to guess. You probably know which way we took. How much of the subsequent event was premeditated I don't recall, but it could hardly have been planned to crush a liberated if misguided spirit more cruelly. During the club's summer Toronto Islands picnic, we produced all the carbons of "Claude's" letters, told Henry who the Ohio address really belonged to, explained how everything about the Cosmic Circle had been taken from a book written years earlier, and revealed that Claude Degler himself had disappeared decades ago, and never been seen since. You wouldn't think a 17 year old kid laughing hysterically for 20 or so unbroken minutes would be quite as unsettling as it was... And like the humanitarian super-brains we were, we picked him up bodily and threw him in the lake to cool him off. It was the perfect end to a perfect afternoon, and a perfect hoax.

It wasn't the end of Henry Argasinski, nor our encounters with him. He formed his own high school club, with about three other members. One, with a knife fetish, was nearly as disturbing as Henry (but seems to have straightened out in later years). Henry continued to publish his little fanzines

with the same contents from issue to issue. I was finally forced to cram him against a wall and threaten to knock his teeth out if he ever used any of my old contributions again -- and that seemed to work. Finally, perhaps as an act of revenge, or maybe just a projection of his sense of importance, Henry ran for mayor. Indeed people did vote for him. I don't know about second, but he came in above the bottom of the ballot. Doubtless he'd learned enough not to mention anything about mind-control or fannish supermen to the voting public.

By now he'd be a middle-aged man, likely taking a lengthy prescription of mood modifying drugs, and might well be a respected member of your school board or riding association. It's food for thought.

[*Editor's note: Henry Argasinski's zine PAPERCHIPS ran for 15 issues from November 1974 to some time in 1976. He also issued a one-shot titled THUNDERING in July of 1975. There may possibly have been other titles issued in his fanpubbing career.]*

ORIGINS: THE UBC SFFEN PART FOUR

1971/1972 ACADEMIC YEAR:

OCTOBER 1971:

The clubs were indeed dormant during the summer. The UBC SFFEN Newsletter #1 (for 1971/1972) came out October 24th, 1971, with the following handwritten note: *"Since the BCSFA was not active this summer we are extending your membership for another year."*

But in this new academic year UBC SFFEN was certainly active. New members were reminded *"to bring in their five books in order to complete their membership fee... the office (open every weekday from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm) has over 1,000 books, so come in and borrow them."*

This issue, a 2 page ditto, was edited by Robert Scott & Robert Leung. After mentioning the Hugos (Larry Niven won for RINGWORLD), they comment:

"All kinds of good things are planned for this year in SFFEN.... One such plan is the running of films... Another convention is in the planning stages.... BCSFA will be more active than ever in the months to follow so try to make it to the meetings. We hope to have a party in the near future...."

NOVEMBER 1971:

A general meeting was held 9th November, 1971. The following individuals were elected:

UBC SFFEN EXECUTIVE - 1971/1972 ACADEMIC YEAR

Chairman -- Robert Scott
Vice-Chairman -- Brian Greiner
Secretary -- Rebecca Bradley
Treasurer -- Mike Bailey
Publications Officer -- Robert Leung

In the UBC SFFEN Newsletter #2, produced by Rob Scott & Rob Leung, the workings of the club library are explained. For example, recent mail order books by LoveCraft not available in Canada *"will*

not be placed on the shelves but in the club's locker.... A deposit of one dollar must be placed on each book you borrow.... All newsletters such as LOCUS or LUNA cannot be borrowed until one week after they have been received. They will be on the bulletin board.....Private orders may also be sent through the club at a 20% discount..." Ah, the advantages of belonging to a club with an office!

Other interesting tidbits of info to note: *"Harlan Ellison has a bit part in an orgy scene in Bill Rotsler's movie 'THE GODSON'. The scene was filmed in Harlan's house..... Phillip Wylie, author of 'WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE', died Oct 25 of a heart attack at his Florida home.... George Pal, producer of many grade B SF movies, has acquired the movie and TV rights to all 181 DOC SAVAGE novels. These will be played in order. He plans to start with movies and move into TV when interest in the films decline." DOC SAVAGE, MAN OF BRONZE came out in 1974. It bombed.*

Also in this issue it is announced that:



"On February 18th & 19th, 1972, the UBC and SFU Science Fiction Societies are hosting the 2nd annual Vancouver SF Convention. The Guest of Honour will be Philip K. Dick, author of MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE, UBIK, A MAZE OF DEATH and about 25 other novels. The convention will be held at the Biltmore Hotel on 12th & Kingsway. There will be a banquet at which the Guest of Honour will speak, panels, a varied program of speakers, films, symposiums, parties, an art show and a fashion show. The rates are \$3.50 before Feb 4th, \$5.00 after. Banquet tickets are \$4.25... there is a choice of Salmon steak or veal cutlets...."

Not all of these promised items were to occur. It is of interest to note that no mention is made of BCSFA as a sponsor for the second convention. In fact, the flyers produced for the convention say: *"SF3 with the cooperation of ubc sf fen PRESENTS"* etc., so it looks

as if the concept of BCSFA as a coordinating entity had been discarded.

DECEMBER 1971:

A party was held Friday, December 3rd in the Clubs Lounge of the Student Union Building at UBC, beginning 7:30 pm. A BYOB affair, slides of various conventions were shown. One of the highlights of the evening would appear to be the subject of an apology printed in #3 of the newsletter in January of 72:

"Apologies to any of you who were injured at the party when Mike Bailey jumped off the top of the door. It seems Mike misunderstood when we asked him to be doorman."

And then there was that obscure reference in #2:

"At the age of 4 years Mike Bailey started the SFFEN tradition of standing on the tops of doors and leaping onto anyone unfortunate enough to walk through."

Hmmm, can't quite picture it.

Meanwhile, on behalf of SF3, SFU student Daniel Say was producing a monthly newsletter. The December issue makes for an interesting comparison with the UBC SFFEN Newsletter. It has nothing on club activities, other than mentioning that the SF3 membership fee is \$1.00 and seven books (as opposed to SFFEN's \$3.00 & 5 book fee). In general SF3's newsletter is more literary, with comments like:

"EXTRAPOLATION is now in the SFU library. This is a Mod. Lang Assoc. fanzine. [Academic zine with articles like] 'Olaf Stapledon, Saint & Revolutionary', & 'Intelligence Testing in Utopia.'" And "You may be tempted to buy the 'Science Fiction Story Index 1950-1968' by Fred Siemon. DON'T!... He only indexes 200 anthologies and has left out at least 50 that were published in 1968.... doesn't even know the many pseudonyms of the various authors..." and more in that vein. I found particularly interesting the announcement: "New World will begin filming DUNE in Czechoslovakia in summer. Producer: Roger Corman..." Sigh, was not to be. Would have been a wonderful B movie....

JANUARY 1972:

Newsletter #3 came out on January 12th, 1972, written and printed by Robert Leung and Robert Scott.

In reference to the upcoming convention:

"All members are strongly urged to join soon. Note that the convention is budgeted for \$500 so we need about 150 attendees to break even.... Philip K. Dick's talk will be entitled "The Human and the Android: a contrast between the authentic person and reflex machine". His new novel is FLOW MY TEARS, THE POLICEMAN SAID and he describes it as being objective as opposed to all his recent novels. He is also collaborating with Roger Zelazny in what is sure to be a mindblower of a novel, DEUS IRAE."

In fact, Dick had been suffering from a writer's block due to his personal problems. The invite from Vancouver had inspired him to write the above mentioned speech, his first sustained writing for quite some time.....

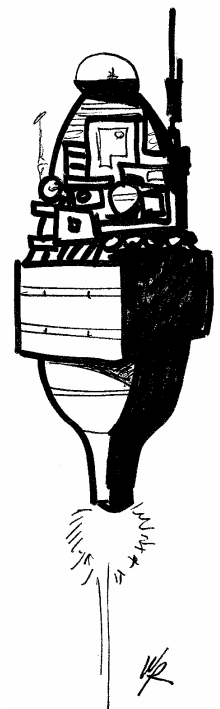
In addition, the newsletter noted that the 'fashion show' mentioned last issue was, in fact, to be a masquerade.

A humorous note was the statement: *"There will be a special meeting of the UBC SFFEN on April 29th, 1986 to watch Halley's comet come to perihelion. The meeting place has not been decided upon but will probably be somewhere."* Alas, Vancouver was overcast throughout Halley's visit, which wasn't very spectacular anyway.

As for the club's library service:

"The club has decided not to subscribe to any magazines from now on. The reason being that very few of the members make use of the hundreds of magazines we already have..... The club is still operating a book buying service. You can buy virtually any pocketbook, hardcover or magazine (even back to the 1930's) and receive discounts up to 20%, and pay no sales tax."

Wow! Apparently Robert Leung and Mike Bailey were the operators of this marvellous service....



"It is possible to order tapes of old radio plays through the club. Contact Fred Whitehead for this service..... The club will shortly join the SF Book Club..."

UBC SFFEN was obviously a book and magazine collectors paradise at this time.

Other items of interest: *"Harlan Ellison chased some people who hit his car recently and was beaten up when he unfortunately caught them."* It seems Harlan-interest stories were a running feature... And the credentials of Steven Spielberg, director of the TV movie "SOMETHING EVIL", starring Sandy Dennis as a frightened woman discovering her home is Satan's playground, are listed simply as: *"Duel"*. All the rest was yet to come.

FEBRUARY 1972:

VCON 2 was held on the 18th & 19th at the Biltmore Hotel in Vancouver. I cover at length this and Guest of Honour Philip K. Dick's subsequent mental break down in WCSFAzine issues 6, 7, 8 & 9 (available on efanazines.com).

1972 - END OF SESSION & THE DYING OF THE CLUB:

You've noticed I haven't referred to anything UBC SFFEN did after the convention. Apparently activities sort of petered out. A good many core members of the club graduated at the end of the academic year and were not present to provide continuity for the club in the following academic year (72/73). It is my understanding the UBC club was dormant during that time. I assume the hundreds of books and magazines the club owned remained locked in the club's lockers, awaiting renewed interest in running a University SF club.

OFF THE CUFF

(A TRUE HISTORY OF THE FUND)

By Taral Wayne

[Editor's note: This was first published in 1988. Taral has given me permission to reprint, with contemporary footnotes he has provided as comment.]

For those of you who aren't in the know, there is a newsletter for parties interested in the back-room machinations of the annual *Convention*, the *Caspers*, (1) and *CUFF*. But I forget that many of you probably won't know what a *Convention*, *Caspers*, and a *CUFF* are either. Once a year, one convention held somewhere in Canada is deemed to be the annual Canadian equivalent of the *Worldcon*. Again like the *Worldcon*, the *Convention* gives its own awards – two professional categories, one in French and one in English, and a fan award. (2) Anyone may be nominated for the fan award on the basis of their fanzine activity, convention running, filking, costuming, apa-hacking, video-taping, gaming, fund-raising, huckstering, puns, impersonations, bubble-gum card and action figure collections, namedropping, clever buttons, origami, and for holding really super nitrous parties. Or you may become eligible for six coupons clipped from *The MLR* (3) (q.v.), and redeemable from the current *Convention*. *CUFF* is the *Canadian Unity Fan Fund*, also administered by the con. For reasons that will be apparent, I've put off the subject of *CUFF* until later.

1) Today, mercifully renamed the *Aurora Awards*.

2) Now a plethora of pro categories and three fan categories, in both official languages.

3) *The Maple Leaf Rag*, published by Garth Spencer for a few years in the 80's. Not to be confused with Mike Skeet's *MLR*, which was somewhat the same, but rather different.

The newsletter I began with is more in the nature of a collection of letter excerpts, organized by the editor along with her own commentary. Most of the letters are earnest, and not in the least self-conscious. I'm reminded of the great debates over the tables of organization of vanished fannish empires that one reads about in *All Our Yesterdays*. This is to their credit in a way. Without such beginnings, would there have been an occasion for our later generation of witty, and urbane fans to refute it all? Aside from this food for thought, the newsletter also serves as a source of unintended humour.

Our letter-writer had more or less this to say, "Perhaps it can be argued that we have exhausted our supply of nationally active fans for an award, but I don't believe it. The same argument was made about the pro award, saying there were only a few writers eligible, but in recent years we've seen that number expand. I like to think that the award has played a role in their growth. There may not be too many nationally known fans right now, but that just proves why we need an award."

At first, this just seemed like specious reasoning. Putting the cart before the horse. But before I could commit myself to print, I had second thoughts. What do I know about the real motives of professional writers? Suppose I'm wrong and they do write principally for the egoboo, and that, with the simple legerdemain of a new award, an entire generation of new writers can be created where none existed before. The only way to check was to ask a writer. Fortunately I had one at hand, Bob Wilson. He was just one of the fans I grew up with in the 70's, but of late he's also Robert C. Wilson, the author of *The Hidden Place* and of *Memory Wire*. (4) I phoned him up immediately.

"Bob," I said, "how is it I've known you for many years, and all this time you've been allowing me to believe you had been writing because you'd always wanted to write science-fiction, and because there were people who paid you money for it? You've been misleading me. Your real motive all along has been to win a *Casper*."

"Yes, I'm afraid it's true. I knew what friends thought about the *Casper*, and didn't want to look foolish to them. All this time I've been keeping the real reason for my writing to myself."

"Foolish? Why would we think that? Why, you've been fiendishly clever. Imagine the genius behind conceiving an ambition to win a *Casper*, years before the thing was even invented! Why you deserve the award just for that."

"Gosh. If only "I'd known how you'd react, I might have spared myself years of humiliation and self-doubt. Now that I've been nominated, do you think I should make my current ambition known?"

"By all means. But what ambition could top a *Casper* nomination?"

"I want to go down in history as the Boswell of Canadian SF."

"That's already been taken, I think." (5)



4) Also of *Mysterium*, *Chronoliths*, *Darwinia*, *Blind Lake*, *Spin*, *Axis*, and several others.

5) By John Robert Columbo, for a number of Canada Counsel funded books on Canadian Science Fiction. I forget who it was who called Columbo "The Boswell of Canadian Science Fiction, but I am sure he was well intentioned."

Not long after I hung up I began to think maybe he'd been pulling my leg. I seemed to recall that he'd once told me that the real reason he was writing science fiction was because he couldn't write for fanzines.

To return to the subject of CUFF, we have to go back several years. At the time, I was working on a small, book-oriented and sometimes fannish convention called *Torque*. Bob Webber had the spur of the moment idea of a Canadian fan fund. He called it the *Canadian Unity Fan Fund* at first, but later thought it over and realized there was room for improvement. *COFF*, the *Canadian Overland Fan Fund*, never caught on however. WebBob kicked in \$25 to get whatever-it-was-called started. He talked the local club into another \$25, and *Torque* was set to hand over the entire fortune to the first official winner.

WebBob not only put up half the money, he wrote the rules, and picked the winner as well. "In recognition of his great contributions to Canadian fandom," he explained in the club newsletter, Bob awarded the fund to Robert Runte. In a moment of candor Bob was later head to say, "who else was there west of Humberside Collegiate in 1981?" (6)



It would have been like that too, only history had other plans. Runte had some trifling little obligation to attend to, his thesis or job or some such unimportant detail. He couldn't make it. The money was given to Mike Hall instead, who'd drive all the way to Toronto from Edmonton, and probably deserved the fifty bucks and the handshake on just that account.

Some years go uneventfully by. *CUFF* had been laid to rest by that great leveler in fandom, apathy. Until one day someone thinks, "no one seems much interested in traveling to far-away Canadian conventions." Following the incontestable logic of the fan award, it was obvious that there needed to be a fan fund as well. It is directly attributable to this line of reasoning that *CUFF* went on to the humiliation of 1987.

Although it was not noticed at the time, the second campaign began inauspiciously. A nomination form was produced which, among other things, gave a brief history of the fund. In crediting the originator, Webber was spelled W-i-l-s-o-n. I'm tempted to blame Mike Glicksohn for this, but since two wrongs never make a right, I'll resist the impulse. The ballot was otherwise impeccable, and efficiently distributed.

(6) *As in-joke. Humberside was the Toronto High School attended by the surreal Henry Argasinski, who would take an entire article of his own to explain. It is also the high school where Mike Glicksohn once taught math, and Ned McKeown was superintendent over. It's a high school with a fannish history, by gawd!*

However, that was the last anyone heard from *CUFF* that year. *Convention 7, Ad Astra*, came and went without a word about the nominees. No final ballot ever appeared. There was no winner. And no explanation of the missing fund until there had been so much belly-aching that there was finally a public accounting. Speculation had been rife, and particularly irresponsible up to that point. One theory I liked was that Wallis and the Toronto conglom were held hostage by a “Winnipeg in ‘90” terrorist squad, to prevent a competing *Worldcon* bid. The actual answer turned out to be rather simple, though. And I imagine the *Convention* had been a little red in the face.

No one had been nominated. Therefore there’d been no race.

To be sure, a few ballots had been sent in. But not one of the names on the ballots could fulfill the requirement of three nominations from his or her region, and two from the other. Apparently no fan in Canada was known by as many as two other fans nation-wide. Or, putting it kindly, it seemed that no one was thought well enough of by more than two fans from one end of the country to the other.

Fortunately, other explanations were sought, and found. It wasn’t the lack of well known fans that was to blame, but a lack of interest in remote events and personalities on the part of the rank in file fan. After all, wasn’t that the rationale for the need of a fan fund? Although this explained everything, it still left the central problem – how to make a fund work in the conditions that made it necessary? The solution was felt to be more promotion. The idea was that, even if they didn’t care, you could talk people into anything if you talked loud enough, long enough, and often enough. Would it work? Did it work?

I’m happy to announce that I’m the living disproof. After a dedicated twelve month campaign for *CUFF ’88*, the powers-that-be arrived at precisely the same impasse as last year. There were no nominees meeting any requirements whatsoever. The self-appointed factotum of the unofficial standing *Convention* and *Casper* committee was Fran Skene. Fran also published the committee’s newsletter. And Fran had all but instructed her select peers who and how to nominate in ’88. You’d think it would be enough, but only two weeks before the deadline for nominations, there still weren’t any. Word went around that If Something Wasn’t Done, she’d close the fund down for another year.

So much for the open, above-board, democratic way of running a fan fund. If that wouldn’t work, well, there was always the closed-door, smoke-filled room full of SMOF’s approach. In the original tradition of 1981, *CUFF* was fixed. Here I am, ladies and gentlemen, this year’s, er... “winner,” quote unquote. Once again there was no final ballot, no candidates, nor a vote. But by god you’ve got a winner whether you want one or not!

I heard someone out there mutter under his breath, “ohmigod, what about his bloody integrity?” I resisted, I swear it. When the whispering campaign for my nomination started, I turned a deaf ear. When people asked me if I wanted to be nominated, I said I was above politicking for egoboo, and they would have to act as they saw fit. When Fran wrote to tell me that the fate of *CUFF* was in my hands, to choose to run or let it die for another year, I was fraught with indecision. I took my quandary to the phone. One after the other, people I talked to said, “Go for it!” “Who else is there?” said Glicksohn. “You’ve got our nominations,” said Toolis and Skeet. Oh hell, I could even count on my old arch-enemy, Jo McBride. Next thing I knew, people were congratulating me for winning *CUFF*. “Haven’t you heard yet?” they said.

I’ve tried my best to be true to myself, to be independent of public approval, and show a lordly disdain for the symbols of status in fandom. But I ask you, caught up in the implacable mysteries of fame, would you do better? In the end I took the offered bait, and went cheaply at that.

I’ve... sold... out... dammit!

FANATICAL FANZINE FABLES

RETRO CANADIAN FANZINES: WINDING NUMBERS #1

Faned: Randy Reichardt.

WINDING NUMBERS #1, Fall 1975. Published out of Winnipeg, Alberta.

“Winding Numbers is a late second attempt at fanzine publishing (it has been some 8 years since my first attempt, and in order to save face, the name of my disaster shall remain a guarded secret.)”

The zine Randy is referring to is preserved in the WCSFA archive. Alas, I cannot recall the name nor remember where to find it. I may unveil it at a future date, as I am bound to come across it sooner or later. I seem to recall it was not as bad as Randy implies.

“A winding number is a concept in topology to do with positions of curves and their direction, etc. Unless you’ve done it yourself, you probably don’t realize how hard it is to come up with a name for your zine that you’re personally satisfied with.”

WINDING NUMBERS is a genzine with a healthy roster of contributors. It begins with an editorial by Randy titled **FACSIMILE**. He talks about being introduced to fandom by a friend, then *“some months later I latched onto a copy of LOCUS, and was hooked for good. I remained inactive as a fan, but continued to follow fandom, largely through subscriptions to LOCUS, as well as the odd single issue of other zines, like COSIGN, TRUMPET, and CROSSROADS, (remember them?).”*

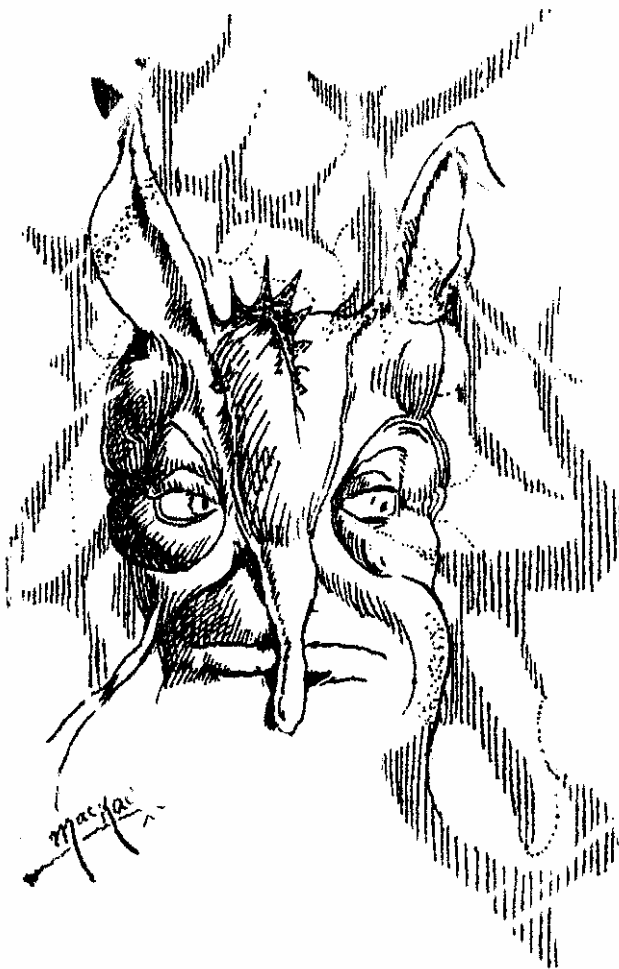
No, I don’t. I have no information on these zines. Were they Canadian? American? Anybody know?

At any rate, inspired by local Andy Taskans, who had attended the 1969 Worldcon, and encouraged by Co and Esco (two booksellers from Amsterdam who opened the Paperback Galaxy, an SF bookstore in Winnipeg at 333 Hargrave Street), Randy wrote clubs across North America for advice on how to start up a sci-fi club. He received advice from Phil Paine & Pat Hayden in Toronto, and Linda Bushyager in Philadelphia. As a result: *“The letters from the two other towns proved invaluable, and we had our first “meeting” on September 27th (1975), on the campus of the University of Manitoba. There were only four of us, but it was a start at least.”*

Was this the start of Decadent Winnipeg Fandom, the name by which five active Winnipeg faneds were known in the late 1970s? They were: Garth Danielson, faned of BOOWATT, Randy Reichardt, faned of WINDING NUMBERS, James A. Hall, faned of JABBERWOCKY, Michael S. Hall, faned of LAID, & Stuart Gilson, a fan artist whose work appeared in such diverse zines as WINDING NUMBERS, SIMULACRUM, & US fan Mike Glycer's SCIENTIFRICTION.

Yes and no. Let me quote from Randy’s editorial in issue #2 (Dec 1975): *“Last issue I told you the story of my attempt to start some sort of regularly meeting group of fans. Most of the people I talked to knew little or nothing at all about fandom. We met a couple of times, but little ever came of those meetings except discussions about this magazine. I met Stu Gilson via a phone call, and saw him in person the following week at Chester Cuthbert’s home. It was here that I learned that for many, many years there was in existence the Winnipeg Science Fiction Society, which published, among other things [Ed: on behalf of the Canadian Science Fiction Association, a 1940s/50s alliance of Canadian*

SF clubs, of which Cuthbert was President circa 1951 to 1953.] *the FANTASY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM* by Alastair Cameron. Now, however, the group exists in "name alone." Perhaps that's a bit harsh, but one way to look at it is that there is no official club in existence. But there is a small group of fans, that's right, fans, ones who are aware of fandom, who meet semi-regularly at Mr. Cuthbert's home; we gab, buy books, and whatever else comes up. I am the "newest recruit", so to speak; there are about 7 or 8 of us. This seems to be the extent of active Winnipeg fandom at this time. This issue features some of them: Jason Pascoe, Stuart Gilson, James Hall, Chester Cuthbert, and myself. The others featured in this issue (#2) are not into fandom, all by choice. When I sent those letters I told you about in the last issue (#1), one reply questioned, and rightly so, whether there was a need for a club. The reply also mentioned that if I should find any fans in town, the number of them would probably not reach double figures. So, my original plan of forming a group has been scuttled, since there already is one. It's a solid group, albeit locally there are no activities, such as conventions, but give us time. We'll be holding a regional within 5 years, hopefully."



The above is a good illustration of the difficulties of starting up, or even maintaining, a sci-fi club. The Winnipeg Science Fiction Society was primarily a small social club, quasi-dormant, for most of its existence. It never sponsored a convention as far as I know.

And yet, in a way it did. Once Decadent Winnipeg Fandom got going (according to Garth Spencer in his history of Canadian Fandom titled *I GUESS YOU HAD TO BE THERE*): *about this time, DWF asked Cuthbert's permission to use the name WSFS, which he gave. Under this name they produced a radio show, "Step Beyond", in the late 1970s, sponsored by Peter Shott (co-owner of the Red River Bookstore), and held Uncon in 1978.*

The Winnipeg SF Society held Uncon on Sept. 9, 1978, a one-day con with over 550 attendees. Reichardt indicated in Winding Numbers #6 that the hope was to inject new blood into WSFS (and DWF):

"We've got a huckster room ... and another area ... that'll house the WSFS people (DWF, basically), as well as a refreshment table, and a stuffed bison that we all really believe to be a Venusian Dog. We're also showing mandatory films, including 2001 and The Making of Silent

Running, along with some NFB shorts and Bambi Meets Godzilla The only possible hassle that could occur is an onslaught of Trekkies."

It was very successful, and encouraged further development. THE JOURNAL OF THE WINNIPEG SF SOCIETY (a four-page mimeo production) appeared Sept. 21st that year, edited by James Hall. But this was the only issue published.

Then, as Chris Rutkowski indicates in *SWAMP GAS JOURNAL* (Dec. '83), "most of the core of WSFS left Winnipeg ... what was left was a group of not-as-seriously-dedicated individuals ..."

Randy Reichardt wrote: "It is unfortunate that those who remained after many of us left didn't continue the work ... It was always my understanding ... that everything we had worked towards never came to pass after we left, and that saddens me ..."

And Chris Rutkowski wrote: "Even at this point, WSFS still had speakers at most meetings and tried to organize discussion groups. However, this is where the 'new' WSFS failed to cut it. Most of the remaining 'original' members took a dim view of Trekkdom, which alienated the Trekkers, who happened to make up a majority at one point."

However, in Issue #1 of *WINDING NUMBERS* all is yet hopeful for the future.

Tony Dalmyn contributes an article titled **THE PRINCE AMONG THE PLANETS: MACHIVELLI AND GORDON DICKSON**, in which he argues that some of the writings of Dickson involve individuals who "by comprehending the nature of the power relationships in existence is able to follow a carefully planned course of conduct to exploit that balance and to change the future of the human race" presumably for the better.... "I do not say Dickson does this consciously or deliberately... Dickson demonstrates a theory similar to that of Machiavelli. Both appear to embrace a humanism which emphasizes the destiny of Man as the key value. Man is at his best when he stands as master of his world, be it the environs of the Mediterranean or the vastness of space..."

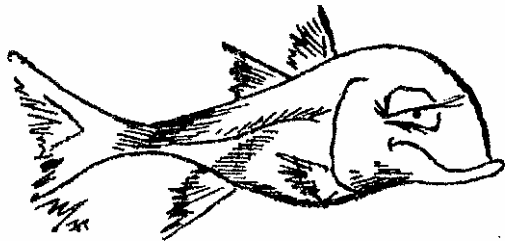
Right. We all know what a great job we've done as master of our world. And there's nothing like one man taking it upon himself to correct the errors of the human race by remolding it into 'proper shape' like so much wet cement, as does Culihan O'Rourke in Dickson's *NONE BUT MAN*, as Dalmyn points out. He may be right, Dickson may indeed resemble Machiavelli in what he (or his characters) advocate. But this is not a good thing. Far from it. Fascinating article though. Possibly a recycled term paper.



On the lighter side, Bern Roy describes **HOW TO MAKE A BELIEVABLE SCIENCE FICTION MOVIE**. Among the list of things not to do, he includes: "Do not include easily dated equipment... Nothing could be worse than fabricating a model of a 'Pocket Nuclear Disintegrator' only to discover that some pharmaceutical company recently marketed a 'Pocket Enema' which resembles it." And this makes me think of the movie *FIRE MAIDENS OF OUTER SPACE* in which a one-handed mechanical adding machine stands in for a 'Navigation Computer', not to mention the display of a wildly futuristic item known as a 'Polaroid Camera'.

On the other hand Roy has some darn good advice, for writers as well as film makers: *“Refrain from giving a knife a title: ‘Auto-knife’ or ‘Slicy-Sun-Pow’ or anything as silly. It’s a KNIFE.”* Doors are simply doors, no matter how they open. Glasses are just glasses, even if they’re made of plastic. And so on. *“The names of common every-day items last a long, long time.”* Also, *“people tend to abbreviate words... do as Larry Niven does in CLOAK OF ANARCHY when he calls an aerial police surveillance and law enforcement device a ‘Copseye’. In short, make your words hold a minimum of syllables with a maximum of meaning.”* Excellent advice.

Andris Taskans presents **SOME THOUGHTS ON SCIENCE FICTION AND RELIGION**. The beginning is rather ominous, threatening to be more intensely serious than the average gadfly-minded fan (like myself) can bear:



“A few years ago, I became intrigued by the question of ‘The Death of God’, whether regarded as a true ‘departure’ of the Ultimate, or, in Martin Buber’s phrase, as an ‘eclipse of God’, or as simply the secularization of culture...”

Poor fellow! And it gets infinitely worse:

“Utilizing the opportunity given me by the editor of this journal, I would like to examine at leisure and at length the issues... What, for example, are the ramifications of science and technology on questions of meaning and existence? Is ‘faith’ possible in a religionless context? What does space travel ‘mean?’ Is science fiction a new mythology? Is man to become an Overman, or even an Overmind, or are these concepts merely misreadings of human nature due to the illusion of progress?”

At this point I began to get really worried, since there was but one more paragraph left in the article, and I feared Taskans had taken Roy’s advice to pack a maximum of meaning into a minimum of syllables to the point of creating a black hole singularity of concept that would suck my brain cells right out of my head never to be seen again in this dimension! If, that is, his leisured and at-depth examination of these questions was encapsulated in the final paragraph. Turned out not to be the case. He was merely describing what he proposed to write about in the next installment, and in the final paragraph he cheerfully invites his readers to help him compile a bibliography *“of science fiction novels and stories dealing either explicitly or implicitly with religious themes and topics...”* as a small preliminary measure to aid everyone in getting down to the nitty gritty of the lifelong pursuit of ALL the ultimate questions. I assume no one was crazy enough to take him up on this.

Frankly, I think Taskans was either working off his university frustrations by inflicting typical academic baffle-gab on his readers, or was parodying said baffle-gab to amuse his readers. For the sake of his sanity, I hope it was the latter.

This is followed by an essay by Johnston Smith, titled **RAH, RAH, RAH!** which is refreshingly straightforward and a lot more interesting, though it contains the seeds of its own destruction, logically that is.

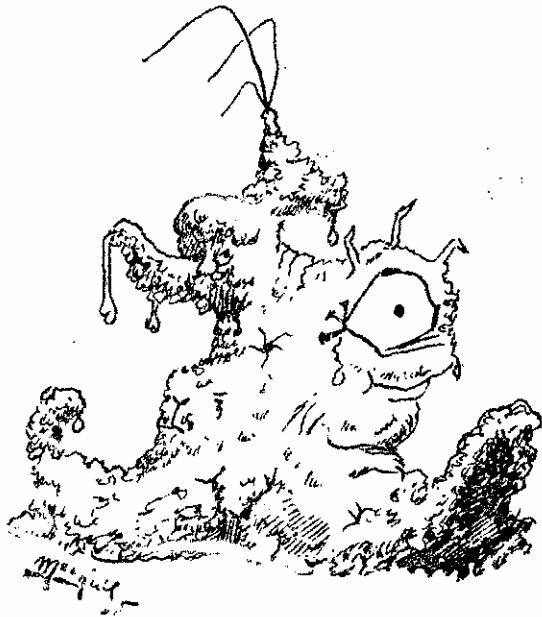
Basically, he admits his guilty pleasure is appreciating the writings of Robert Heinlein. Then he talks about the *“cognoscenti of the Midwestcons, Lunacons, Windycons, NoReallyTheWholeGoddam Worldcons (who) consider it bourgeois to dip into RAH...”* His argument is that fannish fans didn’t start to turn up their noses at Heinlein till RaH got popular with the masses, courtesy of STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, and the resultant dismissal of Heinlein is mere snobbery on the part of a bunch of elitists.

In other words, his central premise is that fans rejected Heinlein merely because he got popular with the mundanes.

Fine and dandy, but then he undercuts his own premise by praising Heinlein to the skies, especially commending him for his ability to create a compelling and entertaining plot, but admitting *“It’s only in his later works that he starts to peddle this solipsist polysexual claptrap; and to the extent that the later novels devote themselves increasingly to preaching, they lose out as entertainment, and thereby fail as novels.”*

Yes! Exactly! And THAT’S the reason so many fans rejected him. NOT because he had become popular, but because he STOPPED writing the kind of fiction they liked and gone off on a tangent they didn’t like. I can’t stand Heinlein’s later novels. I find them boring. It’s his early stuff that fires up my sense of wonder. Likewise the writings of Philip K. Dick. I guess there’s something about writers when they get old. They’re no longer satisfied to be entertaining, suddenly they’re in a frantic race to become meaningful, as if they want posterity to remember them as philosophers rather than as ‘mere’ storytellers. Sad....

Next Stuart Gilson contributes a wonderful article titled **A NOSTALGIC APPRAISAL OF THE PULPS**. He points out that most pulp magazines, forever hovering on the brink of bankruptcy, could afford to pay very little, and this plus the large number of pulps ensured that genuine talent was spread thin, with the exception of ASTOUNDING and WEIRD TALES, the two highest paying publications. But for the average pulp *“most writers would be under no obligation to establish themselves as profoundly literate craftsmen. Simply put, the markets were many and easily accessible.”* Yet good writers showed up anyway.



Artists fared worse, in terms of payment, and cover artists in particular were under pressure to produce garish, striking covers of the BEMS VS BRASS BRA variety to ‘stand out’ on the mag racks. Interior fillo artists were paid even less, but *“The pulp age was fortunate enough to have prospered at a time when many of the field’s greatest artists were at the height of their development. Finlay and Lawrence turned out some beautiful creations, the full imaginative scope of which is still being marveled at. Few artists displayed such meticulous and detailed precision in their work as these masters, and their presence in many a magazine was often its only saving grace...”*

And of course: *“Whatever their relative merits and faults may have been, the science fiction pulp magazines not only contributed to the general public’s growing awareness of science fiction as an important genre in literature, but as well, catalyzed the first fandoms through the letter columns; through encouraging open and intelligent exchanges of opinion between the first fans, regardless of how juvenile or naïve the magazine’s attitude may have been, the letter columns are rightfully considered as the progenitor of the first fanzines...”*

Bob France in **SWORDS-PLAY AND DERRING-DO** calls Lin Carter a good imitator of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Leigh Brackett a far better imitator of Burroughs, and Alan Burt Akers the most god-awful, execrable imitator imaginable. Of the three, I'm tempted to read Akers first...

Finally, in **AN EXERCISE IN FRUSTRATION**, the editor complains that the 20,000 student University of Manitoba library has NO science fiction section, whereas the University of Winnipeg, only a quarter of the size, has an extensive science fiction catalogue, including many out of print books, but unavailable to him because only students of UW are permitted to borrow them, and only on request. Seems when UW first tried putting SF works in the stacks where people were permitted to browse, more than 400 were stolen! Now that is definitely an insight in to just how popular science fiction is!

Randy Reichardt seems to feel his first attempt at a fanzine was a disaster. This, his second attempt, is darned good. Stuart Gilson, Barry Kent MacKay & Ted Parnell contributed wonderful art (some of it reproduced here) and all the contributing writers were of interest one way or another. A lot of good stuff packed into a mere 18 pages. I am happy to bring it to your attention.

The publishing history of Winding Numbers is as follows:

1975 - (#1 - Sep) (#2 - Dec)
1976 - (#3 - May) (#4 - Jun) (#4.5 - Dec)
1977 - (#5 - Jun)
1978 - (#5.5 - Aug) (#6 - Sep)
1984 - (#7 - Jan)

SUPER SCIENCE STUFF



ASK MR. SCIENCE!

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

Mr. DH, of Vancouver, B.C., asks:

WHY IS IT THAT ESSENTIAL FOOD GROUPS ARE CALLED "STAPLES?"

Mr. SCIENCE: In the 1870's those items said to be "the four essential food groups," (i.e. preservatives and artificial colours, salt, sugar, cholesterol) were shipped in large boxes with lids held in place by u-shaped metal fasteners, so that they could be inspected. Government examiners were sent to "pull the staples," thus giving rise to the expression.

Mr. KJ, and Mr. JH, both of Victoria, B.C., ask:

WHY DO FOOLS FALL IN LOVE?

MR. SCIENCE – Fools, that is, all persons with an IQ of under 157, lack the observational capacity to recognize pheromonal and chemical attraction for what it is, and instead believe themselves to be “in love.” Incidentally, the answer to that other often asked question, “does love make the world go ‘round’” is no. But it does make it go up and down a little.

CONVENTION STUFF

(BECAUSE WCSFA IS ALL ABOUT CONVENTIONS)

THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF VCON 4 PART THREE

THE 4th VANCOUVER SF CONVENTION – FEBRUARY 21-23, 1975:

by The Graeme

Last issue covered Saturday, 22nd February, 1975.

Sunday, 23rd February, 1975:

The day began at 9:45 am with a showing of 'TRANSATLANTIC TUNNEL' in the 16mm film room.

At 11:00 am Mike Bailey moderated a panel on THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF FANZINE EDITING with panelists Susan Wood, Elinor Busby and Frank Denton.

From Noon to 1:00 pm various NASA film shorts were shown.

Then at 1:00 pm Guest of Honour Robert Silverberg delivered his keynote address. Province Reporter Michael Walsh described the talk this way the following Monday: *Discouraged, disillusioned and visibly weary of it all, one of Science Fiction's most prolific and respected writers has decided to quit.*

"It's too confusing for me to work for a largely indifferent audience and for largely contemptuous publishers," Robert Silverberg told a hushed crowd of SF fans Sunday. "I'm going to step out... to give myself a prolonged sabbatical."

The Guest of Honour at V-Con IV, the fourth Vancouver SF convention, Silverberg, 40, made his surprise announcement to the nearly 200 convention members who attended his keynote address in the ballroom of the Sheraton Landmark Hotel. "These are nervous times," he said, "and I am not optimistic."

A past President of the SF Writers of America, Silverberg's departure from the scene is expected to send shock waves through the fan press and cause considerable controversy among his fellow writers. In what effectively became his farewell address, he said that a decade of dedicated effort has failed to turn SF into a respectable literature. The great experiment, he implied, is now at an end.

"The vibrations out of the New York publishing industry are very ominous," he said. Hard times, aggravated by shortages of paper and a shortage of money, are now with us. "No one's taking any chances."

In the case of his own chosen field, Silverberg said, publishers "are returning to the tried and true juvenile adventure fiction that SF once was." As a result he had come to the conclusion that "the glorious revolution of the 1960's -- that outpouring of talent and energy known as the New Wave -- has been very quickly undone."



Silverberg made these remarks to convention members in even, unexaggerated tones, without gesture or a prepared text. He described a situation in which many writers were striving to turn their craft into an art while publishers -- and a discouraging majority of readers -- continued to regard their work as "a category of crude, commercial fiction."

Hoping these conditions would change, he had attempted to "travel the whole route. Professionally, creatively, it has been folly," he said.

"I've never felt less sure of my value as a Science Fiction writer," he admitted. Now, "I'm tired of being pushed around between art and commerce."

His conclusion: "I choose silence."

Well, hmmm. Bummer.

Local fan folklore has it that V-Con IV was THE convention where Silverberg FIRST announced he'd quit writing, and Michael Walsh's article and the quotes from Silverberg's own letters seem to bear this out. On the other hand, Stan G. Hyde believes Silverberg first declared his intentions at Worldcon in 1974 (DisCon II in Washington, D.C.) and then repeated his declaration at 2 or 3 other conventions PRIOR to V-Con IV. Susan Wood alone heard Silverberg give essentially the same speech on at least three occasions... Whatever the truth of the matter, obviously it was on his mind for quite some time. Not to worry, his self-imposed exile didn't last. 'LORD VALENTINE'S CASTLE' was published in 1980.

Immediately after Silverberg's dignified but downbeat speech, at 1:30 pm, panelists Mildred D. Broxon, F.M. Busby, Michael G. Coney and John Park bravely tried to discuss SCIENCE FICTION IN THE YEAR 2000. No doubt the first comment was that Robert Silverberg wouldn't be writing SF at that time.

Then Jerry Wasserman of the UBC English Department delivered a lecture titled: VAN VOGT'S 'THE WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER' -- 1984 REVISITED, which sounds suitably dark-moodish. Not a light topic.

Then, as if by competitive contrast, Mason Harris of the SFU English Department delivered a talk on SCIENCE FICTION AS THE DREAM AND NIGHTMARE OF PROGRESS, relying mostly, I believe, on the works of Philip K. Dick. Mason had originally planned to give this talk at V-Con III, but scrapped it to deliver an off-the-cuff rebuttal to a talk by Crawford Kilian.

The convention then wound down, though for those who stayed there was a special showing at the MacMillan Planetarium in Kitsilano of VORTEX, a light and sound extravaganza, beginning at 10:30 pm. Tickets had been available for congoers at the registration desk for the special rate of \$1.30.

Overall, the Convention was considered quite a success, with 600 people attending (the hotel could have accommodated 650). Total income for the con was \$4,375.00, total debits \$3,559.63, which left surplus funds to be handed over to BCSFA to the tune of \$715.37.

Mike Bailey later commented: *"When the V-Con IV committee first met, one of the basic issues was to decide whether to attempt to promote a large convention or one with a controlled smaller attendance. The committee, concluding that experience was needed in organizing a large convention, opted toward size. Consequently, gaining experience was one of the objectives of the committee....Many attendees were expecting a professional and not an amateur convention. I don't know how to adjust for such an expectation. We are amateurs and will remain so. However, we could have used more help...."*

This was the first convention Ed Beauregard worked on the Executive. In Garth Spencer's history of the club (BBBF) Ed is quoted as saying: *"The outstanding characteristic of this committee was how inappropriately chosen the committee members were. The Treasurer could barely count, the Publications Officer was illiterate, and I was in charge of programming, though I had never attended a single convention and had little interest in the job. We somehow muddled through, and actually made a decent profit."*

Hey, any con which turns a profit is a success in my books.

PREREG FOR VCON 34!

VCON 34 -- (Oct 2-4, 2009) at the Compass Point Inn, Surrey, next to the King George Skytrain Station.

AUTHOR GUEST OF HONOUR: Tanya Huff (Wizard Crystal, Blood Books, Smoke Books, other series.)

ARTIST GUEST OF HONOUR: Miles Teves (a concept/character artist/illustrator/sculptor for films as diverse as *Ironman*, *Chronicles of Riddick*, *Van Helsing*, *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *King Kong*, *Galaxy Quest* & numerous others – a fantastic Artist Goh!)

CONVENTION RATE: \$45 adult, \$34 student, \$23 kids. This will stay the same until just before the con, when it jumps to the at-door price. Benefits to registering now include entry in members-only contests and that warm fuzzy feeling you get from being a part of something. Make cheques payable to "VCON 34" and send to:

VCON 34 Registrar
Box 78069 Grandview RPO
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V5N 5W1

Check out the VCON 34 website at < <http://www.vcon.ca/index.htm> > for updated info.

MEDIA MADNESS

RETRO FILM REVIEW: JUST IMAGINE (1930)

By The Graeme

Just imagine there exists a 1930 film portraying the future world of 1980, a future where people no longer have names, but have numbers instead, like J21, LN18, etc. In this film, the state decrees who marries whom according to its assessment of the relative worth of the individuals. Consequently the plot revolves around true love forbidden by the state (shades of 1984! Premonitions of 1984! And don't forget, 1984 was written over 20 years later).

In the film a man is rejected by the state as a poor choice for a particular female, a stolid good citizen being preferred. At first the man contemplates suicide, but by a miracle is given a chance to prove himself first among equals by piloting the first rocketship to Mars! There he discovers a bizarrely alien yet humanoid civilization! And just imagine the film making extravagant use of special effects, including an elaborate model of New York City which cost \$250,000 to make (a fortune in 1930). Doesn't it sound like a classic masterpiece of fantastic filmmaking? Wouldn't you KILL to see it?

There IS such a film. It's called JUST IMAGINE.

Imagine me sitting down to enjoy this grim spectacle of one man's frantic search for...

Well, actually, it's a musical comedy.

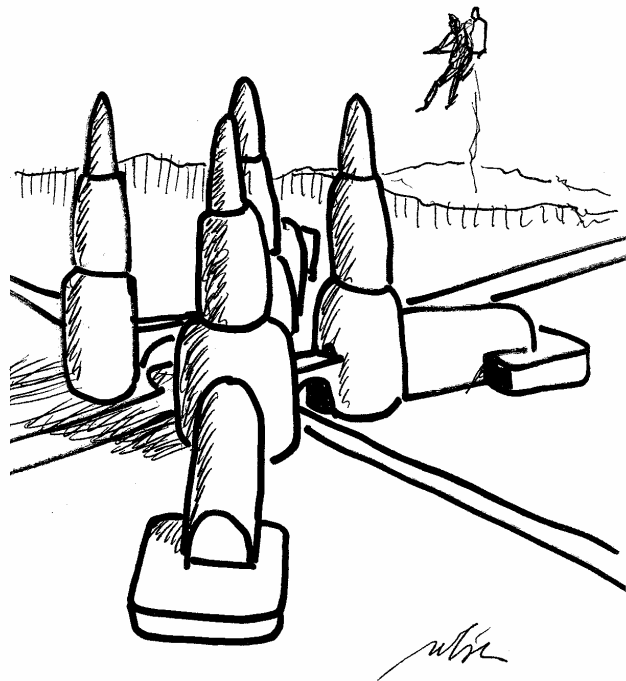
Okay, just imagine me settling down to watch a sophisticated (but grim) musical satire warning of the horrors of a future age of technological triumph, an intelligent American response to METROPOLIS, more realistic, yet enlivened with subtle humour...

Well, actually it's a sequel of sorts to the hit 1929 musical SUNNYSIDE UP, except that JUST IMAGINE bombed at the box office.

Okay, just imagine me leaning forward to take in a film too sophisticated for its day, the intellectual thrill of a lifetime, a masterful film we worth all those decades I've waited to see it...

Arrgh! Alas! Alack! Unfortunately it's a mindbogglingly inept paean to alcoholism, the last gasp of low IQ burlesque, a cacophony of conflicting musical styles. In short, the tears began cascading down my cheeks within nano-seconds of the film's beginning. Tears of gratitude. Do you know how hard it is to find a WONDERFULLY BAD FILM? This is the find of a LIFE TIME! It's excruciatingly awful! The perfect film! Thank God I lived long enough to see it!

How to describe it? Well, let's start with the burlesque and the alcoholism.



The subplot has to do with an ‘ordinary’ man the contemporary audience is supposed to identify with (but only if they’re sub-morons). Having been struck dead by a golfball in 1930, he’s brought back to life in 1980. The laboratory is quite beautiful, full of giant fluid-filled vacuum tubes, monstrous electronic gizmos and such, and the reanimation scene has a certain chilling mood to it. The mad scientist responsible for bringing the poor fellow back to life did it only to prove it could be done; having done it, he has no further use for the subject. When the latter complains, the scientist replies, “Well, if you’re unhappy, we can always kill you again,” or words to that effect. The hero J21 (played by John Garrick), and his party-animal buddy RT42 decide to look after the 1930 goofball partly out of pity, but mainly for a lark. It seems people in 1980 are not big on humanitarianism.



Anyway, Mr. 1930 is assigned the name ‘Single-0’ and the role of eternal-idiot-sidekick for the remainder of the film. Single-0 is played by a burlesque comedian by the name of EL BRENDEL (I kid you not) whose main claim to fame is his ‘happy drunk’ persona. In this future all food consists of pills, and all drink also. Single-0 rapidly acquires bottles of pills for every pocket, and remains forever after well and fairly soused. This is meant to be hilarious. Other characters are quite taken with drinking pills as well. The numerous jokes hinging on references to THE VOLSTEAD ACT put everything in perspective. PROHIBITION began in 1920. It was still in effect in 1930 (though to disastrous effect. Insurance companies revealed in 1930 that the death-by-alcoholism rate had increased 600% since prohibition had been introduced. This was a factor in the repeal of prohibition in 1932.) So the audience was full of law abiding non-drinkers who

regularly drank themselves senseless in Speak Easys. For some reason though, they didn’t find El Brendel very funny. Maybe it had something to do with the crash of the Stock Market just a few months earlier. Eventually the Depression would drive people to seek escape in light, fluffy comedies, but the timing for JUST IMAGE was disastrously wrong, and besides, it was evident to all that the jokes in the film were just plain stupid.

As for the music! On the one hand, you have sappy crooner-type ballads sung by male tenors (I hate this kind of music!), and on the other hand, a plethora of elaborate musical numbers reflecting the tail-end of the flapper era. Some of the latter aren’t too bad, but some are just weird, like the duet performed in a nightclub aboard a transatlantic dirigible, a song devoted to the sex life of flies! (Sung by RT42 and the heroine’s female sidekick (Marjorie White), whose number I forget, but who does an excellent live imitation of the cartoon character Betty Boop). And there’s a drinking song whose choreography will have your eyes bugging out like a Martian’s.

Speaking of Martians, there are two kingdoms on Mars, one ruled by Queen Lou Lou, the other by her evil twin Queen Boo Boo (this gives you an idea of the incredible depths of sophistication to be found in the script). In fact everybody on Mars has an evil twin, which makes for interesting wars between the two kingdoms, as no one seems to have any trouble in finding their doppelgangers in crowded battle scenes. Some interesting efforts are made to have the Martians – who are human in appearance – move in oddly stylistic ways, but the effect is peculiar. Both Queens have identical sidekicks, Boko & Loko, played by a big, hairy fellow wearing a cloth bikini sprouting enormous metallic knobs and a frizzed-up hair-piece with spikes. His first appearance before the Queen occasions the only good joke from El Brendel: “She’s not the Queen of Mars.... HE IS!” Nevertheless, Single-0 becomes quite taken with the pair of thugs, and kidnaps the evil one to take back to earth. Hmmm...



As for the futuristic technology exhibited in the film, much of it is quite charming. Everyone has their own hovercraft of course, essentially cloth-covered monoplanes with horizontal propellers (but no visible engines). I particularly enjoyed the scene when a stream of such craft were halted by a floating traffic signal and J21 pulled alongside LN18 (Maureen O'Sullivan) to clamber nonchalantly from his cockpit on to her wing to chat her up. Two-way television/phone hookups were a hoot, given that the user has to focus the screen every time, and what first swims into focus is a shot of the caller fiddling with the focus on HIS set. A foot-wide column of light springing ceiling-high from a tabletop is certainly the most unusual idea for a 'doorbell' I've ever come across. Airblown hand dryers are prophetic, and it's interesting to see automatic doors that whisk quietly aside on your approach which predates Star Trek's Enterprise doors by over 3 decades. Yet there is a curious lack of imagination evident in the takeoff of the Mars bound rocketship. Looking very phallic (and virtually copied for the FLASH GORDON serial 6 years later – though the FLESH GORDON rocketship is perhaps closer in design), the Mars ship leaps into the sky with lots of smoke and very little flame (fortunately for the heroine, who is standing 2 feet behind a rocket tube pounding on the hull yelling for J21 not to go. It's a little surprising she's not burned to a crisp), but most annoying of all, takes off to the sound of a child's pinwheel rocket instead of the mighty thunder one would expect. Most of the futuristic gimmicks are displayed for laughs early in the film, and once the heroes get to Mars all pretence at futurism is thrown aside for boffo yuks. Mars turns out to be a jolly expensive nightclub act more than anything else. (Not such a bad thing really.)

JUST IMAGINE gets full marks for guts. But its 1930 'zany' adult humour, while staggeringly gobsmacking and mindgibbling, just doesn't cut it, even by the standards of the time. And its emphasis on the joys of out-and-out boozing is positively embarrassing. Still, you've GOT to see it. It IS amazing!

UPCOMING NIFTY FILM PROJECTS:

REIGO: THE DEEP-SEA MONSTER VS THE BATTLESHIP YAMATO may finally be available in North America soon. This Japanese 'suitamation' film features a monster who appears to be a cousin of Godzilla, though sporting shiny red wrist-claws.

THE FORBIDDEN PLANET re-make may actually turn into a trilogy, with #1 about the spaceship Bellerophon's expedition to Altair 4, the 2nd about Morbius' discovery of the dead Krell civilization, and the 3rd an actual re-make of the original. I'm looking forward to these James Cameron films.

ANTICHRIST is the latest film from Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier. All about the nature of evil revealed in a small cabin in a forest setting. Said to be incredibly poetic and incredibly gruesome. Still being edited. Sounds horrible, actually.

ROBOCOP is going to be remade by Darren Aronofsky, whose previous credits include something called THE WRESTLER. Insiders state the new Robocop will have "steel balls." One hopes not in the literal sense.

IMAGO MORTIS is an Italian film directed by Stefano Besson in which a hapless university student discovers his professors belong to a bizarre death cult (killing students with boredom is my guess).

LESBIAN VAMPIRE KILLERS is about a Welsh town whose women have been enslaved by Lesbian vampires, so 2 guys are forced out onto the moors as a sacrifice. A spoof in the vein of **SHAUN OF THE DEAD**. Could be good. Or at least funny. One can hope.

MUTANTS is another zombie picture, this one focused on a pair of young lovers, the heroine unable to prevent her boyfriend from ever-so-slowly zombiefying. Sounds angst-ridden, but I hope not. Directed by David Morely.

METROPIA is a dark Swedish computer animation film about an energy-starved Europe whose population barely survives underground in a vast web of interconnected cities. The hero prefers the dying industrial wasteland above. The few clips I've seen indicate a limited animation style.

MONSTERS VS ALIENS is literally about an alien invasion with the Earth defended by a bunch of 1950's B movie monsters. Sounds wonderful! A Dreamworks animated film. Hopefully great fun.

DR. WHO MUTATES AGAIN!

I'm not a huge fan of Dr. Who, though I rather like the Daleks & some of the more whimsical villains. Years ago Harlan Ellison wrote an essay stating that Dr. Who was infinitely better than Star Trek, far more SF in its writing, more original concepts, more mature, more intelligent, etc. I can't say, not having seen very much of it. And the creator of Dr. Who, a BBC chap who retired to Ontario, always refused to be interviewed, not understanding or dismissing the fuss over what was intended to be an entertaining kids show and nothing else. An intelligent kids show, mind you.

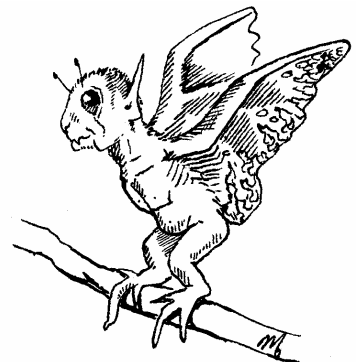
At any rate, no need for a debate. Star Trek was good for what it was, likewise Dr. Who. No reason you can't enjoy both.

Meanwhile, here's late-breaking news for them as will be interested, as revealed on the BBC web site. Seems the NEW Dr. Who (the 11th) will be a 26 year old actor name of Matt Smith, the youngest to date. He's been trained as an actor, and has appeared in a bunch of plays & TV shows, so he's not a newbie. Apparently he stood out from all the others at the auditions because he had "the correct Doctor-ness" about him. I have no idea what that means, but hope it bodes well for the show.

Smith's version of Dr. Who will begin filming in late summer, to be broadcast in 2010. The current Dr. Who, David Tennant, will show up in four Dr. Who specials in 2009.

Here is a list of all 11 TV Dr. Whos, none of whom is my favourite.

01. William Hartnell (1963-1966)
02. Patrick Troughton (1966-1969)
03. Jon Pertwee (1970-1974)
04. Tom Baker (1974-1981)
05. Peter Davison - pictured (1982-1984)
06. Colin Baker (1984-1986)
07. Sylvester McCoy (1987-1996)
08. Paul McGann (1996)
09. Christopher Eccleston (2005)
10. David Tennant (2005-2010)
11. Matt Smith (2010 - ?)



So which version of Dr. Who IS my favourite? Peter Cushing in the 1965 film DR WHO AND THE DALEKS.

FILTHY PRO NEWS

THE ONGOING SAGA OF PROMOTING ALYXANDRA J. SHAW'S FANTASY TRILOGY 'A STRANGE PLACE IN TIME'

By The Graeme -- her husband

(The idea is that any beginning author, or readers interested in how authors get started, will find this blow by blow on-going account of her evolution from a fan fiction author to a professional author informative and possibly even inspiring. Just be aware it didn't happen over night. Alyx has put years of hard work into this.)

The following interview recently appeared on the Fallen Angels website.

A warm welcome to Alyx Jae Shaw. Alyx, I am stoked to be interviewing you for Fallen Angel Reviews. I can't wait to get a glimpse into your amazing writing world. Let's jump right in.

When and how did you first realize that you wanted to become a writer?

Oh I came out of the womb writing. Seriously. Mom had a hell of a time with that old Underwood Upright...

When you started writing, how did you decide what genre you would be writing?

It decided for me. I read 'The Lord of the Rings' at age 12 and bang, that was it, I was a fantasy writer. I love fantasy because you can just run wild with your imagination.

What can you tell me about S.P.I.T. ? and explain it to our readers?

I can tell you it took forever to write because it was destroyed either accidentally or on purpose no less than eight times by various people, some of whom shall remain my Mom. That is actually where I came up with the unique form of immortality that the characters have, and when they make jokes about past lives they are in fact talking about previous incarnations of the book. I can tell you that I came up with the title while discussing existentialism with my best friend when eating lunch in a café that had been set up on a wrecked ship, that was cool. Basically 'Strange Place' is my answer to High Fantasy. I actually adore High Fantasy immensely, referring of course to books such as 'The Lord of the Rings', but what makes me crazy is how all the characters are so proud, noble and wise, and no one ever needs to go to the bathroom. Just ONCE I wished Aragorn would have said "Screw it, I'm going to Valinor. I don't get paid enough for this." I wanted to write fantasy but with characters that needed two cups of coffee in the morning.

The story is about a biker who accidentally ends up on a planet inhabited by Elves, Dragons,

Dwarfs, and the usual fantasy riff-raff, and gets stuck in a sort of quest. Sort of Monty Python Meets the Odyssey.

Have you decided how many books there will be in S.P.I.T.?

Yes. Three. Because if I put in one more it won't be a trilogy and I don't know the word for a trilogy with four books in it.

You have stunningly beautiful limited editions of your books available, how did that come about?

That came about through pure good luck. Laura Thomson, who is the owner/editor of Doppelganger Press had been an avid reader of my work for years. So when she started up her publishing house, she approached me and asked if I would do the limited edition. Of course I said yes. I would have been out of my mind to turn her down. I would like to take a moment at this point if I may to mention that I have met a fair number of authors who seem to consider it "beneath them" to speak to their readers or have anything to do with them. If that had been my policy I never would have become published in the first place because no one would have wanted to help me. I certainly would have never been accepted by Doppelganger Press.

Would you share the links for your website and Limited Edition books with us?

But of course! Website: alyx.wozupdoc.net

Live Journal: alyx-j-shaw.livejournal.com

Doppelganger Press Edition of SPIT: doppelgangerpress.com/spit/spit.html

Torquere Editions: alyx.wozupdoc.net/thebooks.html

Of all things you have accomplished, is there one accomplishment you are most proud of?

Well I once taught a Panther Grouper to roll over. That was cool. Uh... once managed to hit myself with a rock star's car, that was cool too. Basically... well I guess I would have to say my son. I mean look what he had for a mother and he's still sane. Yeah I would say he was my greatest accomplishment.

From what do you derive the most inspiration for your writing?

I don't know, really. Funny things set off sparks. I can create a whole scene from a word or a sound. I derive a great deal of inspiration from my animals, and I know I have a tendency to reverse-anthropomorphize my characters, meaning give them animal attributes... No not THOSE attributes you pervert! Good grief! Honestly did your mother teach you to think like that? ...I think I would have to say music. If I don't have music I can't write.

Since everybody needs a break, even when doing something they love, how do you like to spend your time away from writing?

SIMS rule!! LOL!! I adore SIMS! I am also hopelessly addicted to certain TV shows, like Canada's Worst Driver, and Metalocalypse. I'm also mad about scary movies.

I can't help myself, I have to ask, have you found that husband under the laundry yet?

Yes I did. I found him in the bottom of the hamper and took him out, but he seemed so unhappy when removed from his natural environment that I had to put him back. I occasionally throw a tuna sandwich in for him.

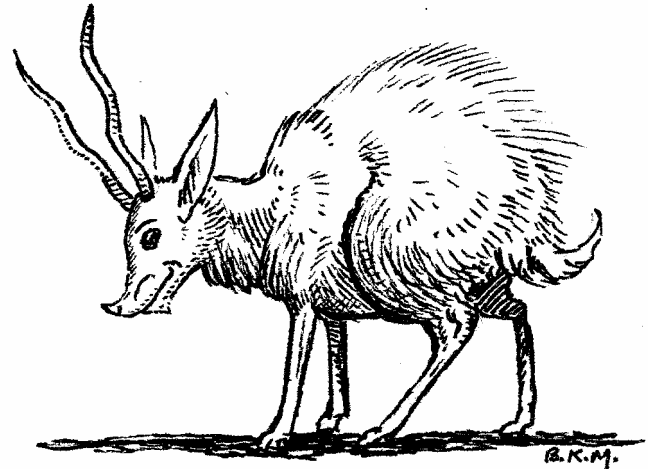
Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Yes. My recipe for Wassail.

WOOHOO, I LOVE Wassail, thanks for sharing! WASSS-SAAAAAIL!

The word, 'Wassail', actually is a bastardization of the Anglo-Saxon toast "Wass hael!", which means "Be well." Now you have your own bit of useless trivia to add to those pained silences while you are sitting with a pack of relatives wondering why in hell you invite these people over every year. Of course after a couple glasses of this stuff you probably won't care.

1 cup water (Stop yelling, it gets better!)
2 cups sugar
1 tablespoon nutmeg
2 teaspoons ground ginger
6 whole cloves
1/2 teaspoon Allspice
2 sticks cinnamon
12 eggs (Look just trust me on this, okay?)
4 bottles of sherry (I told you it got better.)
Three cups brandy



In a large pot, combine water, sugar, and spices and simmer over medium heat. In separate pots, also heat the wine and brandy. While that is happening, separate your eggs.

Beat the yolks until they are thick and sort of lemon-coloured. Beat the whites until they are thick and frothy. Now! Here comes the fun part. If you're me you can dress up in your ceremonial robes, light incense, and chant the lyrics to In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida while mixing this to scare the crap out of your Born-Again brother-in-law, who's dead certain you've hexed the gravy. Carefully begin mixing and stirring all the ingredients, saving some of the egg white and brandy for last. Then pull out the cauldron-sized punchbowl you will need. (I use the metal bowl I mix bread dough in.) Serve the whole strange frothing, steaming thing to your company. Instant family bonding!

Thank you so very much for taking the time to interview with Fallen Angel Reviews. It was a great pleasure and not to mention a whole heck of a lot of fun!

The pleasure was all mine! Happy holidays and Wassail!

Interviewed by: Dawnie

AUTHOR HAPPENINGS OF LOCAL INTEREST

(New information highlighted in violet.)

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

Don's 'Cyberjunk' website has recently begun renovation. See his other website under the name 'Donn Cortez' < <http://www.donnortez.com> > for a complete listing of books, stories, articles &

comics under both names, including the mystery *'The Man Burns Tonight'*, the thriller *'The Closer'*, four volumes of the CSI MIAMI series, and his classic SF novels: *The Quicksilver Screen*, *Steeldriver*, *Timberjak*, & *V.I.*

Currently Don is returning to his roots by working on a Sci-Fi trilogy, starting with his upcoming hardcover mystery/sci-fi novel *'Lucidity'*, which is about two 'Ectives' (emotive detectives) in the near future where emotions can be read, implanted, bought, sold, and stolen. **'Lucidity' is scheduled for release in 2009 by Fivestar Press.**

Lucky New York fans note that Don will be appearing at the < [New York Comicon](#) > at the Javits centre April 17-21, 2009. (Also Basil Gogos, legendary Famous Monsters of Filmland cover artist!)

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

Dave lives in Victoria, B.C. His latest books: *'The Alchemist's Apprentice'*, *'Children of Chaos'* & *'Ill Met in the Arena'*.

Dave has sold *'Speak to the Devil'*, the first book in his new swordsmen & sorcerers series *'The Brothers Magnus'*, to Liz Gorinsky at Tor Books. It will be published in 2009.

Book three in The Alchemist series, 'The Alchemist's Pursuit', will also be released in 2009.

Many of Dave's books, including long out of print volumes, are available for e-download at < <http://www.ereads.com> > .

Dave writes on his website: *I welcome the reissue of several of my long out-of-print books in Print-on-Demand format from Lightning Source. These are available on [Amazon.ca](#) and [Amazon.com](#), and should be available on special order from any bookseller.*

This includes 'The Cursed', a stand-alone novel: "A hundred years after the empire fell, people still dreamed of a Renewer who would restore peace and order, but the futile little wars went on..."

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

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

In his blog Gibson writes on December 2nd:

"I'd like to recommend the potato salad at Ping's. Vancouver's best-looking café, interior or exterior. And great potato salad."

Hmmm.... What does this portend?

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

Matt lives on Vancouver Island. The third Henghis Hapthorn novel, 'Hespira', will finally be out from Nightshade Books in February, 2009.

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

On his Website Matthew writes:

"I've sold another story to Gordon Van Gelder at The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction. 'Hunchster' is a non-Archonate story, another of my crime writer's meditations on time travel."

"Cory and Catska Ench's [painting](#) for the second half of my Nebula-short-listed Guth Bandar novella *'The Helper and his Hero'* (March 2007), has won the Chesley Award, given by the Association of Science Fiction & Fantasy Artists (ASFA), for Best Magazine Cover. I love that picture of Beowulf and the bug-eyed monster (minus the bug-eyes). When I sold all the Guth

Bandar stories as a fix-up novel, [The Commons](#), to Robert J. Sawyer Books, I asked Rob if he could get the Ench illustration for the cover of the book. He could and did, and I'm sure that arresting image caused more than a few people to pick the book off a bookstore shelf..."

PAULA JOHANSON

Paula lives on an island in British Columbia and a farm in Alberta. She has twice been nominated for an Aurora Award. Her latest book is 'Tower in the Crooked Wood', a young adult fantasy novel published by Bundoran Press Publishing House in November, 2008.

"Jenia is magically transported from her island tribe to become a slave under vicious rule – but only for a day and night. Jenia leaves her home to find the location of the tower to try to free the dying slaves and comes across a village with a culture very different from her own."

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

Eileen lives in the Lower Mainland area. Check out her latest books: 'Winter on the Plain of Ghosts: a Novel of Mohenjo-daro', 'The Alchemist's Daughter', 'The Sarsen Witch', and 'Wild Talent: a novel of the supernatural.'

Kelly Lasiter reviewed 'Wild Talent' for FantasyLiterature.net, saying "The drudgery of rural poverty, the decadence of absinthe-soaked artists, the glamour of the Paris world's fair, and the spiritual debates among London's occult circles are all handled with skill. When I finished Wild Talent I felt that I'd paid a visit to the late 19th century, that I'd been right there with Jeannie all along."

Read Kelly Lasiter's review at FantasyLiterature.net

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

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

On the issue of government repression vs. free-spirited bloggers, Kilian writes: "What happens if such a post leads to someone's being hurt or killed?"

"It's just happened here in British Columbia thanks to [Kick a Ginger Day](#), a half-witted online prank that led to some redheaded kids being assaulted by their classmates. The BC Teachers' Federation is highly angry, and I don't blame them."

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

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

Excerpt from 'Dance of Knives' describing Vancouver:

"Granville Street teemed with hawkers, shoppers, addicts, tourists, guards-for-hire, beggars, moneychangers and buskers. It was impossible to hurry through the noisy press, so Klale stared around in fascination. Store signs and conversations were in more languages than she could recognize, and she saw a lot of Slang, too. The local version of sign language was clearly a lingua franca Downtown, and she wished she could follow the speeding fingers, but with translation available by phone, languages had always seemed like a waste of time."

“Although it wasn't yet ten a.m., the spuddy carts were already lined up, vendors bellowing offers of hash browns and onions for a loonie, and beer or water for another two coins. Signs proclaimed "SAFE to DRINK! Our water filtered and boiled ten minutes!" ...”

“I'm Canadian. I write a kinder, gentler future urban hell.” – Donna.

NINA MUNTEANU < <http://sfgirl-thealiennextdoor.blogspot.com> >

Lives and teaches in Victoria, B.C. You can order her Sci-Fi novel *'Darwin's Paradox'* by Dragon Moon Press from Amazon.ca. Nina contributes frequently to her blog site.

Nina's latest book is *'The Fiction Writer: Get Published, Write Now!'* by Pixl Press with digital PDF and Print versions now available for [order and download](#).

“I borrowed from the wisdom of many authorities on the subject of writing and publishing, notably Robert J. Sawyer, Elizabeth Lyon, Ansen Dibell, Crawford Killian, Elsa Neal, Sol Stein, Margot Finke, Jack Bickham, and Marg Gilks.”

“The book is written in a casual, often humorous, style that aims to educate beginning and (even) established writers in the craft and mechanics of successful writing. It is aimed at helping the writer who is serious about publishing his or her fiction, whether it is a short story or epic novel. With this in mind, I provide real examples (e.g., fiction excerpts, query letters, rejection letters, etc.); I also take the writer through practical exercises and give a comprehensive reference list, together with an index for easy navigation.”

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

Spider & Jeanne live in the Lower Mainland area. See the above website for info on *'Variable Star'*, *'The Crazy Years'*, *'The Lifehouse Trilogy'* (a reissue of *'Mindkiller'*, *'Time Pressure'* and *'Lifehouse'*), *'Very Hard Choices'*, audio versions of their books, the exciting Stardance movie project, and Spider's latest podcasts.

Callahan's the game has been rediscovered! Download it free for PC from [The Joystick](#).

Spider On The Web, the FREE podcast, is updated twice a month with fresh content.

See [Spider on the Web Podcast!](#)

StarShipSofa Podcast launched its very first awards - The Sofanauts, and Spider was nominated in 2 categories: FLASH FICTION and BEST NARRATOR. We would love for Spider's friends and supporters to take a moment to vote for him at <http://www.micropoll.com/akira/TakeSurvey?id=1118390>

The polls will be open until January 23, 2009.

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

Robert lives in Mississauga, Ontario (but who is out here on the West Coast so often we view him as one of our own).

Rob is currently in the middle of writing a new trilogy about the World Wide Web gaining consciousness, working titles of *Wake*, *Watch*, and *Wonder*.

'Identity Theft' is his second & final collection of short fiction, with an overall introduction by Robert Charles Wilson and RJS's own notes on each story.

ABC has definitely committed to a TV series pilot based on his novel [Flashforward](#). **The pilot is scheduled to begin filming February 21st, 2009. “David S. Goyer (Batman Begins) and Brannon Braga (Star Trek) wrote the terrific pilot script, and David is directing; Rob is serving as a consultant on the series, and is slated to write one of the episodes.”**

“Flashforward tells the story of a mysterious event that causes everyone on Earth to get a brief glimpse of their future lives.”

“The novel, first published in 1999 by Tor Books, New York, and continuously in print since, won Canada's Aurora Award for Best Novel of the Year as well as Spain's *Premio UPC de Ciencia Ficción*, the world's largest cash prize for SF writing.”

ALYX J. SHAW < <http://alyx.wozupdoc.net/> >

(See also her live journal at < <http://alyx-j-shaw.livejournal.com/> >)

Lives in Surrey. Her novels *The Recalling of John Arrowsmith* & *The White Palace Awakens* (Books One and Two of her trilogy ‘*A Strange Place in Time*’), are available from online publisher Torquere Press: < http://torquerebooks.com/zencart/index.php?main_page=index > in electronic download PDF format for **only \$5.95 US**.

Book one is also available in Kindle electronic book download at Amazon Books for \$4.99, for which see: < <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/B0019VTTFG/shelfari-20> >

‘The Recalling of John Arrowsmith’ (Book One of her trilogy) is available in hard cover for \$150 US (red Japanese book silk cover, French-style sewn on cord binding) by mail order from Doppelganger Press: < <http://doppelgangerpress.com/> > and also book two, *‘The White Palace Awakens’* for \$260 US (illustrations in the second volume are by Eveline Koeppen of Leipzig, Germany, with front piece by S. H. Desjardins. quarter bound in Asahi crimson Japanese silk book cloth and handmade pastepaper using a French groove style binding structure).

No less than four interviews with Alyx have been posted on-line in the past month. The Fallen Angels site interview is printed in “THE ONGOING SAGA OF PROMOTING” article above.

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

Lisa lives in Richmond, B.C. with her wife, their son, four cats, and two pugs. Her latest novels (on the ‘Lady Penitent Trilogy’): Book 1 ‘*Sacrifice of the Widow*’, Book 2 ‘*Storm of the Dead*’, and Book 3 ‘*Ascendancy of the Last*’.

Lisa has also had a number of short science fiction and fantasy stories published in various magazines and anthologies, has designed a number of adventures and written short fiction for the Advanced Dungeons & Dragon roleplaying game's Ravenloft and Dark Sun lines, and also designed gaming products for Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Cyberpunk, Immortal, Shatterzone, Millennium's End, and Deadlands.

After working for more than 20 years as a journalist, Lisa now splits her week between her job as an editor at the *Vancouver Courier*, a weekly newspaper (for which she writes the column *History's Lens*) and writing fiction.

‘Vancouver - Stories of a City,’ a volume by Lisa Smedman now available from the *Vancouver Courier* (\$44.95), “expands upon a 12-part series of cover stories. In this award-winning series, journalist Lisa Smedman explores the history of our city, neighbourhood by neighbourhood. More than 300 pages long and packed with historic photos, maps and illustrations.”

C. JUNE WOLF < <http://cjunewolfden.blogspot.com/> >

June lives in Vancouver, B.C. Her latest book is ‘*Finding Creatures And Other Stories*’ published by Wattle & Daub. White Dwarf Books writes:

“Literary, science fictional, slipstream, and fantastic—this medley of stories is grounded in the present day, weaving backward to the life of Saint Francis, and forward to a time when Earth is a memory, and new humans are finding their place among the stars.”

“Wolf’s characters grapple with personal integrity and connection with others, with the imperatives to abandon fear and hate and to question cherished beliefs. A Haitian street kid with a mercurial coin, a skid-row waitress with a passion for paleontology, and aliens inadvertently

trapped in sculptures by Henry Moore, journey side by side with a northern Native man, who confronts harsh memories as he searches for a place to bury a dead spaceman, and two teenagers who build an old-style science-fiction machine with a very modern purpose.”

NOTE: Most of the novels mentioned above are available at **White Dwarf Books**, 3715 West 10th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C., V6R 2G5. Phone (604) 228 – 8223.

E-address: < whitedwarf@deadwrite.com > Web site < <http://www.deadwrite.com> >

LETTERS OF COMMENT

(Note that my comments are in red.)

(Further note you can send letters of comment to me at < rgraeme@shaw.ca >)

From: BILL BURNS, December 4th 2008

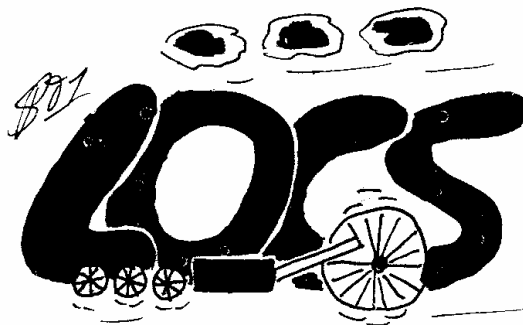
Looks good!

From: STEVE GREEN, December 5th 2008

Hi Graeme,

Many thanks for namechecking *Critical Wave #2.01* (like *WCSFAzine*, available via Bill Burns' monumental eFanzines site) and for mentioning my and Tom's candidature for TAFF; it's my hope that a westbound race to the Montreal worldcon will help raise the fund's profile amongst Canadian fandom. In the meantime, Dave Langford has posted a PDF of the ballot form at < <http://taff.org.uk/> >

Lloyd Penney and I share a background in newspapers, so it's no surprise I was interested to read his comments (and your feedback) regarding the generation of publicity in the mainstream press for conventions. I was a member of the 1997 Eastercon committee, which actively sought coverage in both regional and national newspapers – and, with hindsight, achieved very little in that respect. Indeed, among the few newspaper articles to cover a fannish event at length without resorting to clichéd puns and general sneering was my own piece on Comicon '79, held at a local hotel.



One of the problems is that journalists tend to be interested in what's happening, or has happened, rather than what will happen shortly, which is of limited use to convention organizers. The rare exception is when the event boasts celebrity guests, but how many sf/ fantasy writers are household names?

What is particularly frustrating for media film crews is the lack of visual spectacle. Aside from a few people in costume, some gamers rolling dice, and if timing is right, an SCA demo, there's nothing but talking heads to focus on. Masquerades, dances, concerts, etc tend to be too late in the day for media coverage.

Coverage of VCON 32 was pretty good, though they rounded up people in the hospitality suite to fill out the 'crowd' and at least one guy refused to put down his beer!

One time long ago I insisted on demonstrating (with the aid of a rubber glove) an aspect of 'The Sex Life of Godzilla' skit, namely how a Godzilloid penis inverts and erects, but it wasn't aired. I suspect its part of a C.B.C. party tape somewhere. Yep, it's tough to present the visual media with worthwhile imagery. Audio media no problem; plenty of intelligent pros & fen to be found at a sci-fi con!

All best -- Steve

From: TARAL WAYNE, December 5th 2008
(Not a loc, but an email with permission to quote.)

Alan Rosenthal was indeed from Toronto. He was a late member of the New Derelicts in the 70's and has remained a friend ever since. When I was at Ditto 8, I was staying at his place. I guess it was something like 1986 or '87 when he moved to Seattle. He never wanted to go into the family business, and had an engineering degree, so it wasn't hard to find a job with Microsoft. While he was in Toronto, living with Catharine Crockett, they published a few issues of a fanzine called Carefully Sedated.



You can bid and run a Ditto with only three fanzine fans, no problem. It's a small convention, no doubt likely to be smaller if in Canada. But you can add a couple of non-fanzine fans to the concom for extra help, if you need. Someone will likely be interested just because a con of any sort is a rationale to hang around and have a good time. If there aren't any current bidders, winning shouldn't be difficult.

As far as running the con goes, its a simple or as complicated as you want. Ditto is an extreme case of a relaxacon. There's usually a bit of program, but little is necessary. You don't have to pay for a GoH, don't have to have an artshow or dealer's room, don't need elaborate publications. About all you need is a con suite and some publicity.

Hmmm. Something to consider for the future mayhaps. Would the con suite be simply a meeting place? Or would fen expect all the accouterments of a hospitality suite? Munchies? Beer? Perhaps run as a private party? Hmmm.

From: AL BETZ, December 5th 2008

Hello Graeme:

Your revampization of WCSFAzine is most successful. I found it much easier to read. I think the brief description of each of the contents is a very good idea. That the readership is so small, I find surprising. But then, I always was interested in the early history of BCSFA and VCON.

The results were a bit skewed due to the shortness of the time period. The current readership of 48 is better, though still plenty of room for improvement. Potential readers need to know WCSFAzine is available, and where they can find it. I guess I need to promote more. Somehow.

As you know, there is currently going on a project to copy all of the VCON video, which began with VCON 6, to DVD. When this is completed DVD copies can easily be made for anyone

interested. There is also one video excerpt from VCON III, which came from a program on the local cable access channel of the time. The quality is rather grim, but at least it exists.

Ed Beauregard presented me with 13 DVDs of VCON footage at VCON 33, which I understand is the bulk of the video footage. Alas, about 1 in 3 are blank according to my computer. I've got it all written down somewhere and will eventually let Ed know which material is missing.

I did have 'fun' watching the A.E. Van Vogt GoH speech at VCON 6 in 1978. My ghod! The most boring speaker imaginable. Must have been the type of writer who uses his imagination exclusively in his fiction. Came across as a bit of a crank, actually. Quite a revealing 'tape'.

The audio situation is different. All major programming items from VCON III to about VCON 20 exist on open reel tape. The early conventions were recorded on 10 1/2 inch reels, and I no longer have a working open reel tape recorder that can play reels this size.

I'm sorry to hear that. I wonder if any of the retro-used electronics stores around town might have one? And what size are the rest of the tapes? Still playable?

All the best to everyone, Alan R. Betz

From: LLOYD PENNEY, December 16th, 2008

Dear Graeme:

Many thanks for WCSFAzine 16. I must admit that that front cover is making me feel old. A copy of Torus 8 is within easy reach, and it's hard to believe that zine is 18 years old.



The stress & strain of pubbing your ish.

From the beginning, I should detail who did what with Torus. Of course, this zine was pre-e-mail, so the printing costs were substantial, and at the time, I couldn't afford much. Keith Soltys was the true editor of the zine, and I was the local editor. I threw in a few bucks because that was all I could afford. Torus was a several-time nominee for our early Casper awards, but I haven't been able to find that information anywhere online. Michael Wallis and Michael Skeet were involved in the run of this zine, but it was mostly Keith that financed and edited the zine. I was proud to be a part of it, but I was never in charge of its publication.

I would be interested to see who reads this zine in Italy and Malaysia, and get some feedback from them. I do know there's fandom in Italy, but didn't know about any fandom in Malaysia. Let's find out more.

They checked out #15, but so far haven't come back to look at #16, so it doesn't look like they're going to be 'regulars.' Hopefully viewers who scope out every issue will eventually be moved to comment. I'd like to find out more too.

The list of CUFF winners...there's a couple of adjustments to make it complete. I have not been in touch with Sherry Neufeld in a while, and had thought that she had disappeared, but a quick Google shows that Sherry is on Facebook. I know that Murray wanted to pursue her for the CUFF funds she took...perhaps this is his chance. When she succeeded Yvonne and me, she was living in Saskatoon. Also, for the benefit of the list, Peter Jarvis lives not in Toronto, but in Hamilton.

Ah, I must correct the list in my Canadian Fancyclopedia. Hmm, I've been so busy with WCSFazine & Space cadet it's been months since I posted a new entry. Must try to get back into it.

It was probably a long time ago, but did I really write up those descriptions of the first seven issues of Torus? Many of the contributors were friends who rarely if ever wrote for fanzines. Heather Ashby, for many years, ran the Ad Astra con suite, Karen Wehrstein and Shirley Meier were published authors in the 90s, and with Terri Neal (plus me and Tanya Huff, and a couple of others) made up the Bunch of Seven, the SF writing group modelled on the Minneapolis Scribbles. Juane Michaud was a popular art show artist in Toronto, and illness keeps her away these days, Allan Burrows shows up at cons from time to time, Derek McCulloch is now an award-winning graphic novelist, Tony



Faned trading soul for a good annish.

Davis is much more into pulps, and Bev Richardson is a Maritimes fan and long-distance runner. I see that my essay on holographic cats was in issue 7; I believe that was my first article for a fanzine. If you're going to attempt it, you might as well publish it in your own fanzine. I knew Rob Sawyer back then, mostly because we were fellow students at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute (now University), and we met through Ryerson's literary journal, the White Wall Review. In my final year there, Rob was the White Wall editor, and he published two of my short stories. Around the time of Torus, Rob had just had published Golden Fleece, his first novel.

Yes indeed, you sent me the info to be incorporated in my Canfancyclopedia. Adding my own comments is a future project, but should prove easy enough, since the archive has a complete set.

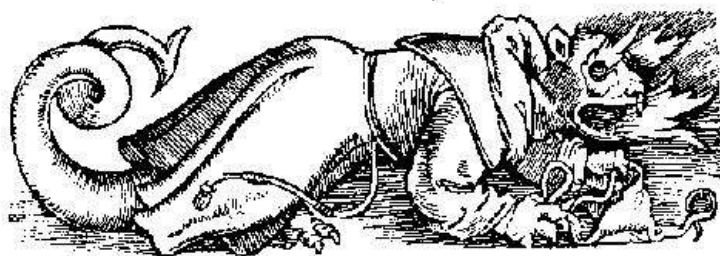
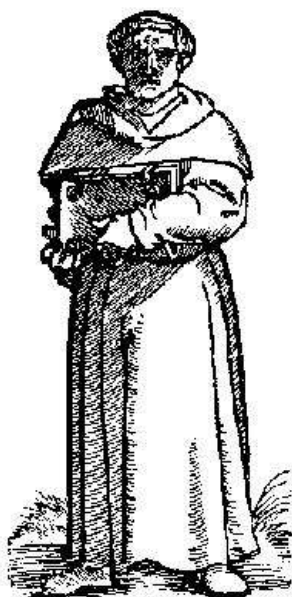
Of all the Derelicts, the only one I ever met was Al Lastovica. At some point, the actual time escapes me, Al emigrated to South Africa, and left much of his SF collection with a brother. At one Ad Astra where I was running the dealers room, Al contacted me, saying that he was coming back to Canada to sell some of his collection, and he bought a couple of tables. His tables were full of mint SF hardcovers, but all about 20 to 30 years old; a collector's treasure trove. I purchased what I could, but he also had some fannish treasures, programme books and progress reports for Worldcons from the early 50s. I snaffled the lot for \$10, one of my better investments.

Wow! I'm envious.

Yup, I'm on eFanzines.com at least once a day, and often more. I want to see what Bill Burns has put on lately, and I keep a folder on my desktop to keep track of what I've yet to loc. I add to that what I receive via e-mail, or download from club sites, and I copy everything onto a thumbdrive and write when I have the chance, like now.

Hmm, the short but effervescent career of Vaughan Bode, and he died of accidental strangulation...he did say he had a rainbow of fetishes. Perhaps he forgot his safeword. I've seen some Cheech Wizard strips, and he had a unique style.

Safeword? Wouldn't have done him any good, he was alone. Aside from Cheech Wizard he did wonderful lizard warrior characters, and a 'War is...' comic book spoofing the old 'Love is..' newspaper comic. Eg: "War is shelling your own headquarters because you don't like their smart ass attitude." Complete with appropriate drawing of lizard admirals grinning on the bridge of a battleship, the smoking ruin of their coastline fleet headquarters visible in the distance.



Too much blog! No book of VCON for you!

there to represent you and get your message across to the readers, but to inform and entertain the reader through the reporter's eyes. The reporter is supposed to be completely objective, but we're pretty aware that this is not going to happen, for the reporter also has to reflect the attitude of the reader, and give them what they expect. I may be a little negative on reporters, but after seeing what they can produce, even after you've given them press releases, you wish you'd never bothered with them. One person whose opinion I'd respect with this topic is former BCSFA member and current CBC reporter Eve Savory. I may have the opinion, but she's got the experience in spades, and could make some comments.

I could make some comments on Quebec separatists, and the parties associated with them...I found that when Lucien Bouchard left the Progressive Conservative party to form his own separatist party, the Bloc Quebecois, he knew only Quebec, and had never travelled. Once he lost a leg to flesh-eating disease, the outpouring of sympathy from across Canada weakened him, and when he travelled the length of Canada, he was a changed man, and in many ways useless to the separatist cause. Many Quebecois have realized that the separatists are campaigning to turn Quebec into the world's newest banana republic, and that they are stronger when they stay as a part of Canada.

And Rene Lévesque counted on the Asbestos industry to strengthen Quebec... Hah!

The letter column...I have found that even if you brief the reporters on what the convention's about, and groom them with the right attitude, you have to remember that the reporter is not

Work...I am still at SGS. When my three-month contract expired, after some reminding on my part, they simply extended my contract by one month to the end of 2008/December. They have promised that they will talk to me about my future before New Year's; if they do, that will be a pleasant surprise. I hope they will keep me; Yvonne's contract with the Ontario Realty Corporation is not being extended again, and she will be gone by the end of the year.

I hope the new year grants you both permanent employment. All the best luck to you both!

Yvonne and I hope that Christmas for you and Alyx will be a happy and comfortable time. In these uncertain financial times, make sure you're warm and not alone. Company can be the best present you have. Take care, and happy new year!

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

From: PAUL JOHNSTON December 22nd, 2008

Hey - I was reading the Leslie Crouch memories of Torcon in your July ish...

By total accident, I stumbled onto this box on which was scrawled "SciFi Memorabilia" in a London, Ontario book store. Bought the whole thing for 30 bucks

Mostly it was programs, correspondents and posters all by a guy (a scifi distributor, I think) named Sam McCoy. McCoy is mentioned in passing by Crouch's Torcon memories....

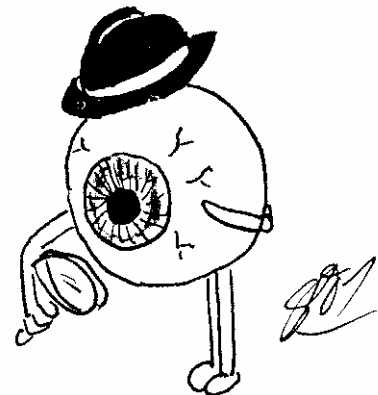
Do you know anything about Sam McCoy? The box includes programs and material for a number of Worldcons (Chicago, 1940, Pittcon in 1960, and Torcon)...and other precious material from scifi eras past. It tails off around 1980....

If you know anything, I'd appreciate it. It's like finding remnants of a lost culture..

Wow! Now I'm really envious. What a find! I would be very interested in any sort of article you could put together with this material, particularly anything to do with Canadian fannish activity, correspondence with individual fans, etc. Possible?

Meanwhile I see if I can find out anything about Sam McCoy. Perhaps one of you readers out there knows something? If so, drop me a line at < rgraeme@shaw.ca >

Ian Johnston



From: DAVE HAREN, December 24th, 2008

Dear Graeme,

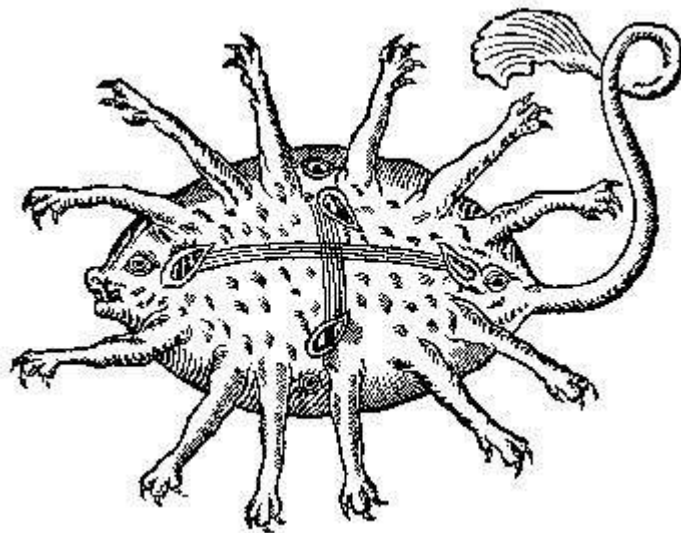
I used to know a lot of really good jokes about senility.

I saw you were needing feedback and I am supposed to be getting some to you occasionally, rather than being buried in stuff that is less than fun.

However I did get an Iron Man DVD, for an old Starship Troopers fan the sight of the prototype MI suit was really fun to watch.

On the InterNet front, Librivox has a series of short Science Fiction stories available on the InterNet archive. These are voicebooks so the lazy can enjoy without lifting a finger.

The InterNet archive also has a couple of pretty good movies of the ancient variety hidden away. Type "Fay Wray" in the search bar and lo they even have a two color technicolor one. Lots of laboratory gadgetry, wax museums, and vampires. A sorely missed part of fandom probably had his own copies. He lives on in movie bit parts, as character (and what a character) in various books, some you may be arrested for letting children see thanks to Phil Farmer. Forrest J. Ackerman is still alive in a large number of ways.



The Fay Wray film must be 1932's **Dr. X** with Lionel Atwill. Loads of fun. Max Factor did the creepy "synthetic flesh" makeup. ...

Yes, Forry will live on, at least in the memories of those who were inspired by him. And when we're gone... the occasional collector may take note...

Anyway, wishing you and yours (all of fandom too) a happy holiday.

Dave Haren

From: DAVE HAREN, December 26th 2008

Hi Mr. Cameron,

I went looking for Aelita (the movie). I found it at www.archive.org

The copy they have has been modified by making it into a musical but even so it has some priceless footage in it.

A musical? A silent film turned into a musical? Unbelievable. Did they write original lyrics for it suitable to the plot? I ask because I was unable to find it at the site above.

But I did find the 1910 version of Frankenstein! Wanted to see that 'lost' film before I died and now my wish has come true. Short, silly, and a lot of fun. I'll probably review it in an issue of SPACE CADET before the year is out.

I also stumbled upon the first two years of Astounding 1929 and 1930. which are also public domain now. The format is relatively inconvenient unless you're running a Unix box and know how to do a command line multifile fetch. No matter, the covers are in glorious colour (garishly clashing the way pulps should be) and are in .JPG format. I can send them all to you if you like. That would save you the trouble of scanning through the .PNG images of the text to find them.

Sounds complicated. I'm so ignorant about computers I still think of them as glorified typewriters. So I don't even know what you are talking about. Thanks for the offer, but you needn't bother. Got too much on my plate right now.

I'm so enthused, two years worth of what my dad called "mind rotting trash" to get the sense of wonder gears working again.

Did you know it was an early issue of ASTOUNDING that first stirred Forry's sense of wonder? I forget which issue number, but the cover featured a spacewrecked explorer confronted by a giant intelligent crayfish. I own a copy and will probably review it in SPACE CADET at some point in an attempt to see what, apart from the cover, Forry found so appealing.

Up till now a couple of 1949 Astoundings were the oldest in my library, I may have to print these out in an 8 1/2 by 11 format to give them a chance to turn brown again in this century.

Warm Regards, Dave

INFORMATION RESOURCE!

Permanent: Upcoming Conventions / Local Events / Local Clubs

Rotating: Foreign clubs

Next Month: Canadian Sci-Fi Facebook Sites

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

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

RUSTYCON *GENERAL SF* JAN 9-11, 2009 SEATTLE, WA: < <http://www.rustycon.com/> >

RADCON 5A *RELAXACON* FEB 13-15, 2009 PASCO, WA: < <http://www.radcon.org/news.php> >

POTLATCH 18 *GENERAL/LITERARY SF* FEB 27 - MAR 1, 2009 SUNNYVALE, CALIFORNIA:
< <http://www.potlatch-sf.org/> >

DAK-KON XIV *GAMING* FEB 28 - MAR 2, 2009 COURTENAY, BC:
< <http://members.axion.net/~murdock/tourney.html> >

CORFLU ZED -- CORFLU 26 *FANZINE FANDOM* MAR 13-15, 2009 SEATTLE, WA:
< <http://www.corflu.org/> >

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FANTASTIC IN ARTS *ACADEMIC* MAR 18-22,
2009 ORLANDO, FLORIDA: < <http://www.iafa.org/> >

STARGATE SG-1/ATLANTIS *MEDIA* APR 2-4, 2009 BURNABY, B.C.
< <http://www.creationent.com/cal/sgvan.htm> >

EMERALD CITY COMICON *COMICS* APR 4-5, 2009 SEATTLE, WA:
< <http://www.emeraldcitycomicon.com/> >

NORWESCON 32 *MAJOR REGIONAL SF CON* APR 9-12, 2009 SEATAC, WA:
< <http://www.norwescon.org> >

SAKURACON 2009 *ANIME* APR 10-12, 2009 SEATTLE, WA: < <http://www.sakuracon.org/> >

CALGARY COMICS & ENTERTAINMENT EXPO *COMICS* APR 25-26, 2009 CALGARY,
ALBERTA: < <http://www.calgaryexpo.com/> >

2009 EATON SF CONFERENCE *ACADEMIC* APR 30 – MAY 3, 2009 RIVERSIDE, CA:

< <http://eatonconference.ucr.edu/> >

WORLD HORROR CON 2009 *HORROR* APR 30 – MAY 3, 2009 WINNIPEG, MANITOBA:

< <http://www.whc2009.org/> >

ZOMPIRE *UNDEAD FILM FESTIVAL* MAY 15-17, 2009 PORTLAND, OREGON:

< <http://www.zompire.com/> >

CONCOMCON 16 *CON RUNNERS CON* JUN 5-7, 2009 SURREY, B.C. < <http://www.swoc.org/ccubed/> >

ANIME EVOLUTION *ANIME* JUN 12-14, 2009 VANCOUVER, B.C. < <http://www.animeevolution.com/> >

FIESTACON / WESTERCON 62 *MAJOR REGIONAL SF CON* JUL 2-5, 2009 TEMPE, AZ:

< <http://www.fiestacon.org/> >

SPOCON *GENERAL SF* JUL 31 – AUG 2, 2009 SPOKANE, WA: < <http://www.spocon2009.com> >

ANTICIPATION (WORLDCON 67) *WORLDCON* AUG 6-10, 2009 MONTREAL, QUEBEC:

< www.anticipationsf.ca >

VCON 34 *GENERAL SF* OCT 2-4, 2009 SURREY, B.C. < <http://www.vcon.ca/index.htm> >

WORLD FANTASY CONVENTION *FANTASY* OCT 29 – NOV 1, 2009 SAN JOSE, CA:

< <http://www.worldfantasy2009.org/> >

LOCAL EVENTS

Couldn't find anything interesting for January. Maybe next month.

LOCAL CLUBS

B.C. BROWNSCOATS (FOUNDED APRIL 2004, FIREFLY & SERENITY FANS):

< <http://www.brownscoats.ca/> >

B.C. RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL: < <http://www.brenfest.com> >

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

Founded 29th January, 1970. **Membership is now free!** BCSFA holds a monthly social gathering at the home of the Editor, a book discussion on a monthly basis at the 'Our Town Café', and offers free monthly on-line issues of BCSFAzine (or, if you have no computer access, a paper version at cost, availability severely limited).

ADDRESS:

BCSFAZINE EDITOR (submissions, letters of comment, trades) – BCSFAzine, c/o Garth Spencer, P.O. Box 74122, Hillcrest Park, 4101 Main Street, Vancouver, B.C. Canada V5V 3P0.

Email < garthspencer@shaw.ca >

BCSFA MEETING/PARTY: Saturday January 10 @ 7 pm at Garth Spencer's place, 82 East 40th Avenue (at Main), Vancouver, B.C. Phone him at (778) 865-2372 for directions.

BOOK DISCUSSION: Thursday January 15 @ 7pm at the "Our Town" café, 245 East Broadway, Vancouver. The topic book will be 'DUNE' by Frank Herbert.

ARTICLE SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Friday January 16 – See Garth at Fred or send to Editor's Address above.

BCSFAzine PRODUCTION: Friday January 30 -- See Garth at FRED for your paper copy. Trying to reduce the number of paper copies as much as possible.

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

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

FANCOUVER: VANCOUVER SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY MEETUP:
< <http://scifi.meetup.com/278/> >

F.R.E.D. MEETINGS – Every Friday @ 8:00 PM. Weekly social meeting for SF fans, founded May 3rd, 1979. Usually held at Boston Pizza, 1333 West Broadway @ Hemlock (2 blocks East of Granville), Vancouver.

For details & info: < <http://www.facebook.com/group.php> > or Ryan Hawe @ < luxdoprime@yahoo.com >

MONSTER ATTACK TEAM CANADA:

< <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterAttackTeamCanada/?yguid=8788> >

MONSTER FIGHTERS ONLINE CLUB (MATC):

< <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/MonsterFighters> >

THE 13TH COLONY – VANCOUVER’S BATTLESTAR GALACTICA FAN CLUB:

< <http://13thcolony...> >

USS MAJESTIC NCC-78601 (REGION 10 STARFLEET -- VICTORIA):

< <http://www.uss-majestic.org/> >

VANCOUVER DOCTOR WHO MEETUP GROUP: < <http://drwho.meetup.com/115/> >

VANCOUVER FIREFLY/SERENITY MEETUP GROUP:

< <http://firefly.meetup.com/12/> >

FOREIGN CLUBS

BALTIMORE SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY (USA): < <http://www.bsfs.org/> >

BRITISH SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (UK): < <http://www.bsfa.co.uk.bsfa/website/default.aspx> >

CINCINNATI FANTASY GROUP (USA): < <http://www.cfg.org/> >

DENVER AREA SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (USA): < <http://www.dasfa.com/> >

KANSAS CITY SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY SOCIETY (USA): < <http://www.kcsciencefiction.org/> >

LOS ANGELES SF SOCIETY (USA):

< http://www.lasfsinc.info///index.php?option=com_content&ask=view&id=187&Item=533 >

MELBOURNE SCIENCE FICTION CLUB (AUSTRALIA): < <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~msfc/> >

NEW ENGLAND SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (USA): < <http://www.nesfa.org/home.html> >

NORTHWEST SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY (USA): < <http://www.nwsfs.org/> >

OMAHA SCIENCE FICTION EDUCATION SOCIETY (USA): < <http://www.osfes.org/> >

PHILADELPHIA SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY (USA): < <http://www.psf.org/> >

PHOENIX SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY (NEW ZEALAND): < <http://phoenix.sf.org.nz/> >

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST SF & FANTASY SOCIETY (UK): < <http://www.qubscifi.org.uk/> >

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (USA): < <http://www.basfa.org> >

SCIENCE FICTION FAN CLUB SOLARIS (RUSSIA): < <http://www.sf.perm.ru/eng/solaris/index.html> >

SCIENCE FICTION & FANTASY ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND: < <http://sffanz.sf.org.nz> >

SCIENCE FICTION SOUTH AFRICA: < <http://www.sfsa.org.za/> >

SPACED OUT SF CLUB FOR GAYS & LESBIANS (AUSTRALIA): < <http://www.spacedoutinc.org/> >

WASHINGTON SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION (USA): < <http://www.wsfa.org/> >

COLOPHON

WCSFAzine Issue # 17, January 2009, Volume 3, Number 1, Whole number 17, is the monthly E-zine of the West Coast Science Fiction Association (founded 1993), a registered society with the general mandate of promoting Science Fiction and the specific focus of sponsoring the annual VCON Science Fiction Convention (founded 1971).

Anyone who is a paid member of VCON 33 or who has paid a membership fee of \$5.00 to WCSFA is a member of WCSFA till noon, Friday, October 3rd 2009 (when VCON 34 registration opens). No other criteria applies. Said membership involves voting privileges at WCSFA meetings.

Current Executive of WCSFA (effective October 21st 2008 Annual General Meeting):

PRESIDENT: *Danielle Stephens.*
VICE PRESIDENT: *Palle Hoffstein.*
TREASURER: *Tatina Lee.*
SECRETARY: *Keith Lim*
VCON 34 CHAIR-- *Danielle Stephens.*
ARCHIVIST: *R. Graeme Cameron.*
MEMBER-AT-LARGE: *Deej Barens.*
MEMBER-AT-LARGE: *Garth Spencer.*

Since anyone can download WCSFAzine, the act of reading WCSFAzine does not constitute membership in WCSFA or grant voting privileges in WCSFA. Therefore you don't have to worry about WCSFA policies, debates, finances, decisions, etc. Unless you want to. Active members always welcome. Currently, easiest way to join WCSFA is to attend VCON 33. See info page

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

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

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

WCSFAzine is not intended to be an information newswire service, or an industry promotional outlet, but rather an eclectic ongoing anthology of bits and pieces of nifty rumours and misinformation

as viewed through a fannish lens. You can expect the focus to be on the West Coast, but with a peripheral vision including the entire world of fandom. Anticipate info on upcoming books, fannish events, local clubs and conventions, film reviews, short essays, weird cover art, spin doctor publicity announcements, peculiar speculations and astounding bits of trivia to put you in touch with your fannish heritage.

Anyone (even non-members) may submit short articles, mini-essays, letters of comment, art fillers (small pieces of art) and/or cover art to the Editor at:

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

Or: < rgraeme@shaw.ca >

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