

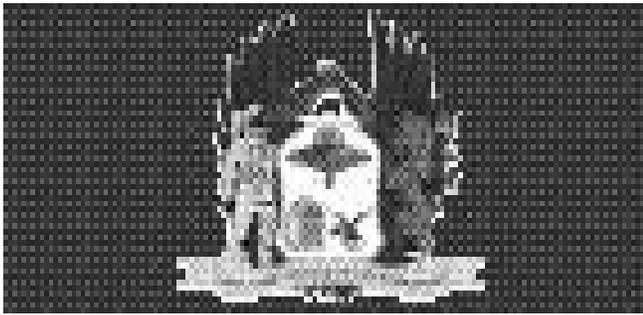
BCSFAzine #333

Vol. 29 No. 2

Feb. 2001



"Signs of Spring" (C.D. Gibson)



Contributor's Deadlines - Feb. 16, Mar. 16, Apr. 20, May 18, June 15, July 20, August 17, Sept. 21, Oct. 19. Send your submissions, comments, locs to **Garth Spencer at P.O. Box 15335, V.M.P.O., Vancouver, B.C. CANADA V6B 5B1, or e-mail me at hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca.**

Saturday February 10th, 7:00 p.m.: FREFF (Feeding Frenzy) at the Queens Cross Neighbourhood Pub, 2989 Lonsdale, North Vancouver; a very English drinking establishment, highly recommended by pub crawlers.

Graeme's tentative schedule of video lectures at the Space Museum begins:

"SATURDAY FEB 17TH: - 2:00 p.m., Vidlecture on 'SF Films of the Silent Era.' Followed at 3:00 p.m. by BCSFA (or other) club meeting/event."

Saturday February 24th, beginning 7:00 PM: BCSFA Video party at Steve Forty's house, 1129 Spruce Avenue, Coquitlam. Showing *Galaxy Quest*, *Free Enterprise* (a funny send-up of Star Trek fandom with William Shatner - has good reviews), and possibly *Top of The Food Chain* (said to be hilarious) -- if not, maybe *The Matrix*. A pet free/smoke free event. A BYOB and bring a snack to share event. Starts at 7:00 pm.

Saturday, March 10, 7:00 p.m.: Feeding Frenzy at the Mandalay Restaurant, 1310 Burrard Street, Vancouver; Vancouver's only Burmese restaurant.

"SATURDAY MARCH 17TH: - 2:00 p.m., Vidlecture on 'Robots in SF Films.' Followed at 3:00 p.m. by BCSFA (or other) club meeting/event, or, bearing in mind this is a special event day, some sort of ongoing event/display/table manning by any or all of the clubs.

"SATURDAY APRIL 21ST: - 2:00 p.m., Vidlecture on 'Visions of Mars.' Followed at 3:00 p.m. by BCSFA (or other) club meeting/event.

"SATURDAY MAY 19TH: - 2:00 p.m., Vidlecture on 'The Way the Future Should Have Been' (sort of 2001 disappointment theme), followed at 3:00 p.m. by BCSFA (or other) club meeting/event.

"SATURDAY JUNE 16TH: - 2:00 p.m., Vidlecture on 'Teenagers From Outer Space (and other SF films aimed at teenagers).' Followed at 3:00 p.m. by BCSFA (or other) club meeting/event."

F.R.E.D. - Every Friday: The weekly gathering of BCSFAns and all others interested in joining us for an evening of conversation and relaxation, with pool table

option. At the Burrard Motor Inn opposite St. Paul's Hospital (Downtown Vancouver) 6 blocks south of Burrard Skytrain Station. 3 blocks west of Granville (where many buses run). #22 Knight/ McDonald bus along Burrard. Begins 8:00pm. On Fridays before holidays, moved to Bosman's Motor Inn.

BCSFA Membership Rates:

New	\$26.00
New Family	\$32.00
Renewal	\$25.00
Family (2 Votes)	\$31.00

The above prices includes subscription to *BCSFAzine*. Make cheques payable to WCSFA (the West Coast Science Fiction Association) c/o 86 Warrick Street, Coquitlam, B.C. V3K 5L4. (*Why to WCSFA, not BCSFA? Long story...*)

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BCSFAzine is also available by e-mail as an Adobe Acrobat .PDF file.(Please e-mail hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca if you wish to receive the magazine by e-mail.)

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Interior art:	Colin Upton (p. 8)

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PLAIN SPEAKING

A Guest Editorial by R. Graeme Cameron

Cool News! Claudette Martin, the director of the Space Centre at the H.R. Macmillan Planetarium, has accepted my proposal that I give a monthly video lecture on assorted SF cinema themes beginning in February in the Space centre theatre.

On scheduled weekends, I will give a one-hour video lecture, open to members of the public who have paid admission to the Space Centre, followed by a one-hour open house/event opportunity in the Planetarium auditorium. People can either pay \$2.00 to attend the lecture only, or the full admission price which will include the lecture and everything else the Space Centre has to offer (moon rock, Saturn 5 engine, simulator, computer games, etc.). At the end of the lecture I'll invite the public to attend a BCSFA (or other sponsor club) meeting in one of the rooms downstairs.

The meeting room requires no admission, so BCSFAns can skip the lecture and just come to the meetings where we can put on panels, debates, lectures, etc. to attract new members. Now and again there'll be special SF days at the centre where participation by all clubs will be welcome.

I have declared BCSFA a sponsor and participant (in my capacity as President trying to revive the club) and I hope BCSFAns support me in this.

Monster Attack Team Canada has accepted and will be a sponsor and participant.

Videomatica has agreed to be a sponsor and will provide video clips from films not in my collection.

The S'hariens and the V-Con Society have indicated they agree to be sponsors and participants as well. I assume the current VCon ConCom will also join.

This is an unparalleled opportunity for all the above named organizations to gain wide exposure to the public on an ongoing basis. It will be especially useful for selling memberships for the upcoming VCon and gaining fresh blood (new members) for the clubs. All kinds of exciting possibilities here!

Claudette Martin writes: "I'm really looking forward to working with the Science Fiction groups. The only thing I can't emphasize enough is that the more lively and fun the event, the better it is...."

For a long time I have been dreaming of some miraculous means of acquiring widespread public and

media exposure for all of us without having to spend any money. That Claudette Martin contacted me (via Fran Skene) seeking to give us that very dream is indeed a miracle. I can't imagine a better set-up than this. Making use of the Space Centre/Planetarium facilities on a monthly basis free of charge? Space Centre media releases and newsletter info about us free of charge? A fantastic deal!

Fact is, this is the best opportunity we're ever likely to get to promote and expand our organizations. We have a confirmed schedule worked out re: vidlectures, but nothing for the meetings afterwards. The first media release is going out at the end of February. I'd like to hear to hear people's ideas and proposals for the meetings soonest.

Here follows the vidlecture schedule:

Saturday Feb 17 - Science Fiction Films of the Silent Era.

Saturday Mar 17 - Robots in Science Fiction Films.

Saturday Apr 21 - Visions of Mars in Science Fiction Films.

Saturday May 19 - The Way the Future Should Have Been.

Saturday Jun 16 - Teenagers From Outer Space.

If the series proves popular, it will continue beyond June. The vidlectures run from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m., the meetings from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.. I hope I have your enthusiastic support for this project.

Cheers!

The Graeme, your President



LETTERS OF COMMENT

Harry Warner, 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD
21740, U.S. (Dec. 13, 2000)

You deserve congratulations on the first BCSFAzine under your guidance. My old eyes remind me to thank you for the generous size of type on most of its pages.

((I kind of thought that would make a difference.))

I hope you get good response to your plea for material from BCSFA members. Almost invariably, when some long-silent club member lifts up his literary voice and writes something for a clubzine, it proves to be superior material, particularly welcome for its difference in syntax and perhaps in subject matter from the stuff overworked fanzine hacks ground out. Or grind out, rather; my fingers are very sore from cold weather chapping and they are demonstrating their resentment at being forced to type by changing what they are supposed to write.

((Yeah, we heard about the weather back East. Unbelievable.))

((Actually my hope was not only to stir up more participation by members, but to raise our awareness of what fan activities are going on around us, and what interesting things we might be doing; or to raise Vancouver fans' mutual awareness, generally. As a recent lamentable event has shown, sometimes unawareness about fan activities can be crippling. At least I want to think it was simple unawareness that beset the chair of AKA-Kon.))

Donna McMahon's book reviews continue to be good combinations of plot summaries and reviewer's opinions. I suspect that I wouldn't have had her ability to read to the finish any of the three novels [reviewed in the December issue -GS], although I might have read the whole thing in the case of *The Stars Compel*, simply because Roessner is an old Hagerstown family's name, and I might feel it my

civic duty. It isn't a name frequently encountered, so I wonder if Michaela could be a descendant of one of the several generations of Roessners who operated bakeries and wholesale candy businesses in this city for well over a century.

((Hm. My first thought is, there must be a stronger sense of family roots going down some depth, in towns on the eastern side of this continent. My second thought is, it's actually unusual that both the Hagerstown Roessners, and Michaela Roessner's novel, have culinary connections.))

Your club does indeed dispose of election matters more efficiently than the United States' federal government does. I still feel a strong sense of relief because I didn't carry out my original intention in early November to stay up until I learned who had been elected President.

((That's dry, Harry, that's very dry. And fully appreciated. It's a bit surreal to see an American presidential election so evenly divided between two candidates, but then we have more surreal things happen in the Canadian Parliament on a regular basis. Fannish and, in historical fact, BCSFAn elections are usually decided by acclamation and by apathy, as far as I can make out. Is that surreal or not?))

It makes me feel a bit foolish to fill out this information form when I'm not a BCSFA member, but I'll do it for the sake of proving that a manual typewriter can be used for this purpose, while most computers can't.

((Point taken.))

Lloyd Penney, #1706 - 24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C
2B2, January 16, 2001

Many thanks for issue #322 of BCSFAzine. I'm playing a desperate game of catch-up, so here goes with a loc right now...

Did the BC provincial laws change when it comes to incorporation? I would expect there's plenty of non-profit societies with Ontario with Ontario in its name; strange that BC wouldn't allow it. And as you say, how would you proven able to put your message in front of 70% of the province's population? As time goes on, I think I understand when there had to be another reorganization, but is this done in trying to follow changing provincial regulations?

((No ... I believe the B.C. Society Act is unchanged since the first time I looked at it, which I think was mid-1980s.))

When you use the term "convention coordination committee", I had thought you meant some kind of

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steering committee that helped *all* conventions coordinate their efforts with each other. I think Vancouver Island had some kind of steering committee at one point, but I never knew the island had more than one convention at a time. Now I see that CCC means simply the convention committee, or concom; and yes, every con here has that, plus a central group that helps to set policy. Ad Astra has a Board of Directors, and Toronto Trek has a Senate. I think individuals or small teams operate the other conventions, I'm not certain.

((No ... I did mean a group specific to a given con, or series of cons; but I did also mean something separate from a given year's convention committee, and I meant something dedicated to the registered-society, limited-liability functions.))

((I was part of the Vancouver Island inter-club committee you're referring to. It was actually limited to the three clubs in Victoria at the time, and in effect, limited to protecting our fledgling convention from being associated with the spectacular fiasco which some spectacular loons insisted on creating, in the early 80s. As it worked out, both my friends' convention and the inter-club committee died stillborn. Which taught me that no idea, however good in principle, amounts to much if it just doesn't motivate people.))

Our CUFF trip report...we've sold about one quarter of our print run. Could you print up the information I sent out by e-mail in the next issue?

((Should appear in the news column this issue.))

Now *there's* a name I haven't seen in years...Colin Upton. I remember when Colin drew some great art for fanzine covers and interior illustrations. I think we printed some of his art in *Torus*. Maybe he could be prevailed upon to provide some for this zine...it's good advertising, after all...

((I have some and will print some and see how he reacts. Next up: Taral Wayne.))

Donna McMahon provides a fine list of authors, and as much as I have enjoyed the work of Barbara Hambly, I would even say I prefer the work of Laurie R. King. I have four Holmes and Russell novels, but haven't checked to see if there are more. I agree, Laurie King's Holmes is deeper than that of Conan Doyle, and it is somehow comforting to see an aging Holmes find solace in his beloved apiary, and in a woman his intellectual equal.

A short loc, but it's about all I can do for the moment...thanks again, and I'll see you next issue.

VCON 26/CANVENTION 2001 is looking for the following concom members: Co-Chair/Secretary, Registration Co-ordinator, Publicity Co-ordinator, Teardown Co-ordinator, Transportation Co-ordinator, Publications person Onsite Registrar. NOTE: Teardown volunteers will receive a VCon 27 preregistration. Volunteers for *all* departments are always appreciated! Contact Chris Sturges at 294-9851, chair@v-con.org, or 235 Liberty Place, Burnaby, BC V5C 1X5.

WORLD HORROR CONVENTION 2001 will be held MAY 25-28, 2001 at the Seattle Marriott Sea-Tac in Seattle, Washington. GoHs: Richard Laymon (U.S.), Simon Clark (U.K.). Editor GoH: Jessica Amanda Salmonson. Publisher GoHs: Barbara & Christopher Roden. Artist GoH: Charles Vess. TM: Jack Ketchum. Rooms \$89/night for up to 4; phone (206) 241-2000 or (800) 228-9290. Attending memberships U.S. \$75 for a limited time, to World Horror Convention. For more information see www.whc2001.org or write WHC 2001, P.O. Box 5171, Bellingham, WA 98227, or email whc2001@uswest.net.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS – German-language semipro SF market: Wilko Mueller, our contact in Germany, is still looking for story submissions! He writes (Jan. 4/01): "it would be nice if you gave your writing members the information that I am currently looking for stories on the topic of '2001 - A Space Odyssey' (what else?) and 'Dragons' for two special story issues I think I can manage this year. Since I am a bit short on time ... I am not able to translate general SF or fantasy stories for our fanzine, only for the special issues just now. I can give more information if someone contacts me via email."

Wilko also asks if one Lawrence Shimel, who contributed to his fanzine, is a member of BCSFA? "He mailed a story to me and I lost his email address. So I can't tell him that I wasn't able to translate it because I can't get a copy of the film *Casablanca* he is constantly quoting from. You understand, I have to use the German lines from the film if it is to make any sense to a German reader."

Contact Wilko Mueller at:

Wilko.Mueller@t-online.de, Home page: <http://www.wilkomueller.de> (an English homepage is available there); Club page: <http://www.solar-x.de>.



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NEWS (AND SOME OLDS)

A CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS to the next *Fictons* club SF anthology will be announced next issue by Doug Finnerty. Watch this space!

A CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS to another fiction anthology, *completely unauthorized* by BCSFA, should also appear next issue. Doug has scrupulously decided that *Fictons* should not carry fanfiction – however you define the term – and I have decided there ought to be a place for faanfiction, as I define it, so next issue I will look at his *Fictons* submission guidelines, and issue my own guidelines for *Confabulation*, all fiction by fans, about fans, whether in completely fannish situations or in interaction with the prepackaged predigested stock characters from well-known SF series. Keep watching this space!

A BCSFA MEMBER'S HANDBOOK also occurred to me, in another fit of madness. Members deserve to know what BCSFA is, and does, and what the deal is with VCon and the V-Con Society. It might be helpful to have some background on our members, on the past history of our club and convention, and indeed of SF fandom.

That's my idea. What ideas do you have? Let me know at hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca.

Canadian Unity Fan Fund Stuph

“**The 1998 CUFF Trip Report** is now available! *PENNEYS UP THE RIVER and Other CUFF Tales* by Lloyd and Yvonne Penney: a trip report in fanzine form, in the fine tradition of fan funds going back to the 1950s. How much is it? \$10...Canadian, American, Australian, don't care...all money raised from sales will go to CUFF, the Canadian Unity Fan Fund. Send an e-mail with a message of your intentions to Lloyd and Yvonne Penney at penneys@netcom.ca, and then send \$10 ASAP to #1706 - 24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2. Make cheques payable to Lloyd Penney.”

Murray Moore, of Mississauga, Ontario, has won the 2001 fan fund by acclamation; he garnered more than sufficient nominations to stand as a candidate, well ahead of the deadline, and no-one else stood for candidate. We expect to see him at VCon 26!

Oh, there's the Ottawa SF Statement ...

Sharon Fall, the editor of *the Ottawa SF Statement* since 1999 (one of our trades), recently established contact with us. We discovered that BCSFA has been sending its newsletter to the wrong address for a couple of years. Sharon also shared with me a recent OSFS editorial about apathy in the Ottawa club, which sounded rather like something a former BCSFA president wrote, a couple of years ago ...

NEW MUSICAL RELEASE by Spider

Robinson: “My first CD, ‘Belaboring The Obvious,’ is now available. It consists of me reading Chapter One of CALLAHAN'S KEY, plus all 4 of the songs I recorded with Amos Garrett and others for the ‘Callahan's Crosstime Saloon’ computer game. It can be purchased for \$18.99 +S&H – and that's in CANADIAN DOLLARS, a terrific bargain for Americans. I'm terribly proud of it, and grateful to Jeanne, who produced the whole project.

“To order, either surf to www.spiderrobinson.com and follow the link, or (for those who still have qualms about giving credit card numbers online, or don't have a computer) phone Indie Pool toll-free at 1-877-FOR-MY-CD, give THEM your credit card number, and tell them you want ‘Belaboring The Obvious’ by Spider Robinson. (MP3 soundclips, jewelbox-art, and a new essay on the entire project are all available at the www.spiderrobinson.com website.) Vancouver residents can also purchase copies at White Dwarf Books or the downtown Chapters outlets.”

NEW AWARD

Peter Halasz, one of our out-of-province members, has sent an announcement of “The Sunburst Award for Canadian Literature of the Fantastic”, which should appear this fall.

“The Sunburst Award for Canadian Literature of the Fantastic is a prized and juried award. Based on excellence of writing, it will be presented annually to a Canadian writer who has had published a speculative fiction novel or book-length collection of speculative fiction any time during the previous calendar year. Named after the first novel by Phyllis Gotlieb, the award consists of: a cash award of \$1000 and a medalion which incorporates a specially designed ‘Sunburst’ logo. The finalist will receive his or her award in fall 2001. ...

“The work must be literature of the fantastic, which includes science fiction, fantasy, horror, magic realism, and surrealism. The work must be a novel or novel length short story collection. The author must be Canadian, that is a Canadian Citizen (native or naturalized; resident in Canada or residing outside Canada) or Landed Immigrant in Canada. Translations into English are considered on an equal footing with works written originally in English. ...

“The jurors for the 2001 Sunburst Award are John Clute, Candace Jane Dorsey, Phyllis Gotlieb, Monica Hughes and Leon Rooke.

“FOR MORE INFORMATION: Please contact the committee secretary, Mici Gold at: Mici@sunburstaward.org or write to The Sunburst Award, 106 Cocksfield Avenue, Toronto, Ontario CANADA M3H 3T2. More information is available at www.sunburstaward.org.”

CONVENTIONS

FEBRUARY 2001

Feb 16 - 18: RadCon 3A at the Doubletree Inn in Pasco, Washington. GoHs: (Scientist) Dr. Steven D. Howe, Writer GoH: Michael Stackpole, Artist GoH: Roberta Gregory, Fan GoH: Bob Ladd, And a large jungle cat from Cattales. Featuring Critter Crunch! Artshow, Dealer and Masquerade information online; see URL <http://Radcon.yi.org>. Rooms: Contact Doubletree Inn, 2525 N. 20th, Pasco, WA; telephone reservations at (509) 547-0701. Memberships \$20 to February 2, \$25 thereafter. Registration form also online. Write to Radcon, PMB#162, 2527 West Kennewick Ave., Kennewick, WA 99336-3126, U.S.A.

Feb. 25 (Sunday), 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.: Portland Comic Book Show at the Memorial Coliseum at Rose Quarter in Exhibit Hall, in Portland, OR. The largest dealer room in the Northwest, with 165 tables. Present: Armin Shimerman; Andy Mangels; Steven Grant; Anne Timmons. Tables available beginning Jan. 1, 2001; call Second Genesis at (503) 788-1031 for table packet and reservation form. Admission (8 and older): \$6.00 at the door.

Feb. 23-25: Potlatch 10, at the Ramada Plaza Hotel International in San Francisco, CA. An all volunteer, non-profit, literary convention; proceeds to Clarion West. Supporting memberships \$10. Memberships \$35 to February 1, 2001; \$40 at the door. Write c/o Mary Kay Kare, P.O. Box 3042, San Ramon, CA 94583; email info@potlatch-sf.org; more information at <http://www.potlatch-sf.org>.

MARCH 2001

March 9 - 11: Gamestorm 2001, Portland's Gaming Convention in the Red Lion Coliseum Hotel, Portland, Oregon. Convention room rates as low as \$64 per night. Memberships \$25 to February 15, 2001, \$30 at the door. Web page <http://www.pdxgames.com/>. Mail to GameStorm P.O. Box 764, Portland, OR 97207, or email David Lohkamp (chair) at lohkamp@hotmail.com.

March 16-18: Lepracon 2001 at Mickey O'Reilly's Inn in Wenatchee, Washington. Guest Author: Elizabeth Anne Scarborough. Guest Artist TBA. Guest Fan: David Bigelow, with Betty Bigelow. Dead Guest of Honor: Ernest Hemingway. For masquerade info. Go to www.geocities.com/tiger_meep/GrandMasque.html or email tiger_meep@yahoo.com. Rooms \$62 for a single bed, \$72 for double beds; call (509) 884-1474 for reservations. Preregistration fee, \$15. See <http://iguana.penguinpowered.com/lepracon2001/> for more information, or email LittlePeople2001@juno.com, or write Lepracon 2001, PMB 352, 2527 W. Kennewick Ave., Kennewick, WA 99336.

APRIL 2001

April 12 - 15: Norwescon 24 at the Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport at SeaTac, Washington. Guest of Honor: Connie Willis. ArtGoH: Bob Eggleton. FanGoH: Charles N. Brown. Rooms: \$96 flat frate for up to four people (family suites and presidential suite available by contacting Norwescon); phone (800) 222-TREE for reservation or write Doubletree at 18740 Pacific Highway South,

SeaTac, WA. Memberships \$55 at the door; memberships limited. (No mailed registrations accepted after Feb. 28.) See <http://www.norwescon.org>, call (206) 270-7850 (hotline), email info@norwescon.org, or write Norwescon 24, P.O. Box 68547, Seattle, WA 98168-0547, U.S.A.

April 27-29: SakuraCon 2001 at the Holiday Inn in Everett, Washington. (An anime con.) Memberships U.S. \$40 to March 31, 2001. (Children 6-12 half-price.) Mail to Sakura Con Registration, 900 Meridian East #19-407, Milton, WA 98354; URL www.sakuracon.org.

MAY 2001

May 4 - 6: VCon 26 at the Radisson in Burnaby, British Columbia, theme - 2001: A Space Oddity - Humour in Science Fiction. Guest of Honour Lynne Abbey. Gaming Guest of Honour James Earnest, President of Cheapass Games. Artist Guest Pat Turner. Besides creating last year's Web site, and the gorgeous art for the Web page, Pat is a cover artist for Baen Books!

VCon 26 is very happy to host Convention 21, and the 21st Prix Aurora Awards. For more information on the Auroras, see Dennis Mullin's Aurora Web page at <http://www.sentex.net/~dmullin/aurora/>.

The Radisson Hotel in Burnaby (4331 Dominion Street, Burnaby, B.C. CANADA V5G 1C7 off Canada Way, just west of Willingdon) offers 275 rooms and 16,000 sq. ft. of convention space over two floors. Room rates: \$89/night for one to four occupants. Phone 800-333-3333 for reservations, or email reservations@villa.bc.ca - don't forget to tell them you're with VCon!

(For more information see www.radisson.com/burnabyca/)

Membership rates: Can. \$25, U.S. 20 Jan. 31, 2001: Can. \$30, U.S. \$25 from Feb. 1 to April 30: Can. \$35, U.S. \$30 at the door: Can. \$45, U.S. \$40. Contact information: Chair, Chris Sturges at chair@v-con.org, phone (604) 294-9851. See website: www.v-con.org or write Vcon 26, c/o 235 Liberty Place Burnaby, BC CANADA V5C 1X5.

May 18 - 20: Anglicon 14 at the Radisson Hotel SeaTac Airport in SeaTac, Washington. (English SF media, hence the name; a convention of long standing in the fannish community.) GoH: Robert Trebor. Call (206) 244-6000 for reservations or visit online at www.radissonseattle.com. Memberships U.S. \$45 to May 8, \$55 at the door. Write to Anglicon 14, P.O. Box 75536, Seattle, WA 98125, or phone (206) 789-BRIT, email anglicon@rocketmail.com, or see www.webwitch.com/anglicon.

May 18-20: Keycon in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Author Guests of Honour: Spider & Jeanne Robinson. Artist Guests of Honour: Phil & Kaja Foglio. Fan Guests of Honour: The Wild & Hairy Guys. interests. Adult Memberships Jan. 3 - Apr. 30, 2001: \$40.00; Adult Memberships May 1, 2001 - at the door: \$50.00; Children's Memberships anytime: \$25.00; LARP Pass (Includes Friday and Saturday Nights) \$30.00. c/o Pendragon Games & Hobbies, 516 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg MB R3C 0G2; tel 204-772-5415; email pgh@pangea.ca.

A CLOUD OF WITNESSES

by Garth Spencer

being a report on AKA-Kon (a new Vancouver convention, held on the American Thanksgiving weekend, Nov. 26-27, 2000 at the Sheraton Wall Centre in Vancouver, B.C. Guests: Jessica Calvello and Pam Lauer, the voice actors for The Dirty Pair; Steve Bennett, head of Ironcat Studios; Tiffany Grant; Doug "Golden Boy" Smith (a satirist); Toshifumi Yashida of Viz Producer; Samantha Evangeline of Succubus Studios; David Williams of AD Vision; Amanda and Jason Lee; Tajayuki Goto, animator and president of Production IG.)

Two new conventions appeared in Vancouver in the fall of 2000, AKA-Kon (focused on Japanese animation) and Gatecon (focused on the Stargate television series). Presently I began to wonder when reports on these cons would appear. In December 2000, a number of informal reports on AKA-Kon appeared on the Internet.

Due to space restrictions I decided to present a summary of these reports. While I was at it, I learned how differently anime cons are run from other SF cons, or even media cons. I learned that anime cons, or at least AKA-Kon, featured a "comic and industry room", something separate from the dealers' room; that a group costuming skit is held, known as "cosplay"; that a dance is called a "J-pop room".

There seemed to be a consensus on several facts, and a lot more inferences and opinions. For whatever reason, AKA-Kon was scheduled for *Sunday and Monday*, if you please, on the American Thanksgiving weekend. The mascot or graphic identity for the con was "Aka-chan", a sort of scantily-clad anime nymph, drawn by a graphic artist who was a member of the sponsoring group.



Several attendees also stated the following, which I would like to verify: that the convention was sponsored by "AKA Productions", or "AKA Studios", consisting of three people – the chair, the co-chair, and the graphic artist; that this group took out a \$10,000 loan to finance the convention, and reserved a 400-room block at the Sheraton Wall Centre; that only about 500 members showed up, so AKA-Kon ran up a serious debt.

To the good: Facts

Stephan James "Freon" Cox, who is known as something of a party animal in anime fandom, had some fun:

I see anime cons as one big party. ... I had the pleasure of helping out in the so-called 'J-Pop' room. (I even got to spin some tunes on Monday; mostly my collection of dance music ...) In the dealer's room, I bought many *shoujo* keychains to proudly hang from my Old Navy backpack. I drank FIVE LITRES of Canadian Dew through the course of the con. And I had the pleasure of meeting Clark Anime, a nice girl named Katherine, and 'Grog' (who is, like, the biggest fanboy of Freonfics in the Northwest). It seems even Clark Anime, the hearty souls from 'Bizarro Vancouver', have adopted me as one of their own. I had fun, and I learned a lot of social lessons as well. And Vancouver is a great place if you like sushi!

I don't understand all the foregoing, but he sounds positive.

Edward Wallace, who serves as treasurer for SakuraCon (and its sponsoring organization ANCEA), also enjoyed himself:

Although the event only ran Sunday and Monday, Saturday felt like a fun con day because so many friends from Sakura Con, Clark Anime, and the Canadian anime clubs (mostly VJAS) were there to hang out with until late. The giant hotel ... was lavish, including supplies of snacks and drinks in the rooms (not free). The elevators were fast. Within a few blocks I found two bargain music stores, a comic store, two movie theatres and plenty of restaurants. ... Most of the function space [on Saturday evening] was being currently

used by a cancer meeting, and many of us were concerned that this would mean terrible delays and hurt the con. ...

While most guest receptions are at night, this one was a breakfast buffet at 10 a.m. The food was good and music videos were shown on a big screen ...

Daniel Harrison and his party (from SakuraCon, an established anime convention in Washington state) found registration open on time; but there were no schedules, con books, or other giveaways with the memberships. Pre-registrants did get a package of promotional pamphlets from Bandai (a North American company that dubs and subtitles anime films).

Harrison reported that the comic and industry room was the biggest and most popular room, because the guests were there, signing autographs.

To the bad: Facts

The three video rooms were to include materials from AD Vision (a Texas anime studio) – none of which arrived. In the event, some fans volunteered their collection for the video program.

As Cox reported on programming:

Panels. Since there were no schedules, it was hard as hell to tell when there was one. Steve Bennett didn't even know that he had one ... It was scheduled for two hours, and he was saying 'What the hell am I supposed to talk about for two hours???' Schedules arrived only after it was mentioned people were milling about and getting perturbed. They consisted of printouts from the web site with a map, but the map didn't show which panel room was which. Nevertheless, the panels were well attended. There was supposed to be a cell painting panel, but it was cancelled and moved to Monday.

Several matters corroborated by multiple attendees raise more than policy questions, they raise questions of taste. The committee took the guests to dinner ... eight blocks' walk away ... in the rain ... to *Hooters*. Repeatedly. (Do I have to explain the sexist *Hooters* restaurant chain to any readers?) The report is that the guests were *not* impressed.

The taste of some of the chair's remarks at the opening ceremonies was also questionable. Some attendees reported tasteless jokes at the beginning, others reported rather too much coarse language.

Harrison reports that the concom paid out \$1,000 for an "AKA-Chan" costume (the mascot of the con-

vention) and a model to wear it; he reports that "her bare BUTT was showing except for a strip of cloth!", and that the costume would not have been allowed at SakuraCon.

Cox commented:

It seems that Aka-Kon couldn't even consider itself a model of 'organized chaos'. It was all about 'hurry up and wait' for major things such as cosplay and the dealers' room. Most of [the] staff did not get their badges in time on the first day and were reduced to wearing 'Aka-Chan Tattoos'. ... In the video gaming room, the saddest thing was that there were more Atari 2000 games than there were for the other, more modern consoles. The Kon Room, supposedly a hospitality suite, had no soda and was only open to staff members (except during the 'shojo pajama party'). ...

The ugly part about the con was its lack of professionalism ... The tactless, tasteless humour during opening ceremonies and cosplay was somewhat uncalled-for. ... And in this age when anime is getting more mainstream with more and more families with children getting into it, the mascot known as "Aka-Chan" should not have been flaunted as eye-candy for rabid fanboys.

Inferences and Opinions

Some problems for AKA-Kon were the result of committee decisions, such as the decision to have a "kon room" but to make it a closed party. Another contributor comments, "the chairs ... seemed unable to recognize that getting a Friday off work is a lot easier than getting a Monday off work." Perhaps this explains why, as my contributor points out, pre-registration included only 80 to 90 people, and perhaps 20 showing up only for Sunday. Edward Wallace also pointed out, "Attendance predictably dropped on Monday. Not

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only was it a work/school day for most people [attending], but it was Canadian election day to boot.”

Some problems, as the foregoing shows, only appeared at the convention. Harrison and his party found the concom had set up nothing by dinnertime Saturday, and found the featured guests were *very* happy to see them (I guess SakuraCon is that well-known): happier, it appeared, than they were to see the AKA-Kon committee.

Harrison reported that only four dealers showed up in the dealers’ room. Five had been scheduled.

The chair alleged to one attendee that the Sheraton Wall Centre was responsible for *losing* all 2000 of the schedules and con books stored with them, which should have been distributed at registration; that they tried to stop the Aka costumer from being in public view; and that only the signed hotel contract prevented the hotel from turfing out the convention.

Other problems with AKA-Kon appeared months before the convention was held. When I first began soliciting reports, I was told that local anime clubs first heard of AKA-Kon in August 2000, and were thrilled. However, when the clubs contacted the con chair ... she claimed that she had tried to contact local clubs, and had gotten no response. Mystified, the heads of the clubs quizzed their members; *none* had been contacted by any AKA-Kon representative. Much scratching of heads followed. At this point Lorna Appleby (who is now working on the VCon 26 committee) made an effort to improve public relations between the con and the clubs.

About this time, the chair was claiming the head of one club (VSWAT – see below) was sending her hate mail, blackening her name on a bulletin board, and was unpopular with various companies in the anime industry. To make a long story short, the head of VSWAT got a vague apology that conceded nothing. Subsequently, the chair started badmouthing the head of the Vancouver Japanese Anime Society, at which point the clubs pulled their support. After an argument at a committee meeting, the chair began a smear campaign against Lorna. (I’ve heard something like this story before somewhere ...)

It seems infinitely improbable that an AKA-Kon 2 will be held, not only due to the probable financial loss from this con, but because of the serious ill will the chair has incurred. Daniel Harrison wrote:

AKA-Kon’s attendance was better than expected but not nearly the amount of people they



needed to break even. I believe despite the numbers the con will fail, and this is why:

- 1) The chair said AKA-Kon didn’t meet their room block.
- 2) They are thousands in debt (this from Rob and Chad [Ma])
- 3) The guests were not thrilled about a lot of stuff.
- 4) The industry were complaining about the disorganization.

Yet an AKA-Kon 2 is in fact being planned for November 2001.

For our future reference, I think we could stand to correspond with the anime clubs in the area:

VJAS – The Vancouver Japanese Anime Society, an anime club run from Douglas College, run by Will Chow and Chad Ma. (Will Chow runs one of the few anime stores in the Lower Mainland, Anime Jynai. He is the president of VJAS, which has about 300 or 400 members)

VSWAT – The Vancouver Sleep-is-for-wimps Anime Team, run out of Port Coquitlam by Ryan Matheuszik

Alternate Realities Club – An anime club out of SFU; they put on a yearly “Showcase” in the summer, a weekend of anime at SFU Harbour Centre, but featuring no dealers or guests. Run by Jen Wong. See <http://www.sfu.ca/ar-club/>

And by the way, I’m *still* waiting to hear what happened at Gatecon.

FANZINES IN REVIEW

by Ted White

Fanzines are a basic part of science fiction fandom, having been in existence as long as fandom itself – the past 70 years. Fanzines are a reflection of many fans' interest in the printed word and amateur publishing. The publication you are reading this in is a fanzine, but a specialized one. A variety of other fanzines are also available – many of them by request – and this column will cover some of them each issue.

All fanzines are published as a hobby and lose money. Their editors appreciate money to defray their expenses and sometimes list single-copy or subscription prices, but they appreciate even more your written response – a Letter of Comment, or LoC. Feedback – better known in fandom as “egoboo” – is what fanzine publishing is all about.

Check out the fanzines below and broaden your participation in fandom.

ANSIBLE (Dave Langford, 94 London Rd, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, United Kingdom; ansible@cix.co.uk; monthly single sheet newsletter; available in the U.S. for a self-addressed, stamped envelope sent to U.S. agent Janice Murray, Box 75684, Seattle, WA 98126-0684)

Ansible has been appearing regularly for 20 years; the December issue is #161. Dave Langford writes and edits *Ansible* with clarity and wit and has been winning Fan Writer Hugos for it with an almost monotonous consistency for years – if not decades. This is a newsletter with a British accent which covers both fan and pro events, cramming an amazing amount of wordage into its two double-columned pages. There is actually more real news in an issue of *Ansible* than can be found in most issues of *Locus*.

Here's an example:

“Stephen King suspended publication of his ‘download free, pay on the honour system’ serial *The Plant* as of 9 November. His assistant Marsha DeFilippo first said this was because only 46% of readers paid up (success beyond the wildest dreams of anyone else publishing in that way); in a later statement she insisted that reader response had nothing to do with it. Some think King grew tired of a project that in his terms never generated more than small change, supposedly around \$375,000.”

TRASH BARREL (Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606-2308; available “on request,” but a stamped self-addressed envelope wouldn't hurt)

Trash Barrel typically runs only two to four pages of typewriter-typed double-columns, and although it's printed by Xerox copying, it has the look and feel of older-fashioned, mimeographed fanzines. This fanzine is devoted to nothing but listings (with a sentence or two of description) of fanzines. They are almost too brief to be called “reviews,” and they don't make exciting reading, but the latest issue (dated “Nov. 2000” and unnumbered) has 52 fanzines listed, in alphabetical order – making it a good place to find out about a wide variety of fanzines for anyone wishing to explore this aspect of fandom.

IDEA (Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315; idea@toad-hall.com; available for Letters of Comment; query about single-copy availability)

Idea falls at the opposite end of the fanzine spectrum from *Trash Barrel*. The new #12 runs 78 pages and is an ambitious “genzine” or general, unspecialized fanzine. Geri uses a high-tech mimeograph to produce this very attractive fanzine, but the text is all computer-set and looks virtually photo-copied. The front cover (both sides) is produced on a colour inkjet printer and presents eight full-colour photographs of such notable fans as British TAFF-winner Maureen Kincaid Speller. Inside are articles by American TAFF-winner Ulrika O'Brien, Dave Langford, Martin Hoare (who often accepts Langford's Hugos at Worldcons for him), Rob Hansen, Jeff Schalles and Geri herself – and a 30-page letter column. Discussions fill the letter column and invite your responses (there's nothing like seeing your own letter in print!).

That's all the space I have this issue, but I'll be reviewing more fanzines here in issues to come.

(Fanzines received by BCSFA since our last issue: *Con-TRACT* Vol 13 No. 1, Jan. 2001, from John Mansfield; *Opuntia* #47, Jan. 2001, from Dale Speirs; *Pulsar* #266 and #267, Dec. 2000 and Jan. 2001, from the Portland SF Society; *Westwind* #254, November-December 2000, from the Northwest SF Society)

THE ADVENTURES OF NICO IORMETTI AND NIKKI STURGES IN SEARCH OF THE LOST VCON STATEMENT

When we last saw our intrepid adventurers, they had led an expedition into the lost world of VCon 25 finances, where vast, lumbering line items roamed the mist-shrouded revenues and expenses, unknown since the dawn of VCon 26. Both the last con's financial statement and this con's progress report were waylaid by black-robed, marauding Unforeseen Events and carried off to the Lost World. Bringing them forth has been fraught with many perils, and many obscurities, as these ancient records are fragmentary and incomplete ...

*VCon 25 Profit and Loss Statement
for the period ending October 25, 2000
(Revised January 6, 2001)*

REVENUE	
Preregistration	\$ 3,229.55
Registratoin	3,530.80
General revenue	973.99
Nat'l Convention Grant from ConAdian	1,000.00
Book Sale	89.00
Art show	15.00
Art show auction	18.00
Dealers/displays	76.00
Raptor auction	108.00
Kidcon	34.00
Hotel room paid by guest	172.50
Hospitality	1,195.00
Donation from S'harien	200.00
Turkey readings	180.00
Dead Dog party	246.03
Camarilla (from kissing auction)	<u>240.00</u>
Total Revenues	\$11,307.87
EXPENSES	
Hotel	\$ 3,922.31
Hotel down payment	500.00
Bank service charges	50.25
Bank package fees	65.00
Returned cheques outstanding	238.85
Membership credit	20.00
VISA imprinter fee	17.16
VISA service charges	6.00
Guest airfares	2,157.12
Guest of Honour dinner	337.82
Bacchanal	365.00
Hospitality advance	750.00
Dead Dog party	1,113.11
Postage, stationery and photocopying	588.07
Payable to CUFF	180.00
Printing	<u>415.45</u>
Total Expenses	\$10,726.14
TOTAL PROFIT	<u>\$ 581.73</u>

NOTES:

These numbers are not finalized, as the data is incomplete. Some minor discrepancies are due to exchange rates and bookkeeping of USD (U.S. dollars). Bookkeeping records are inconsistent and/or unavailable in some cases.

Dealers' Room and other revenues accounted for in General Revenue acct. extrapolated from information available (see Cash Reconciliation and other revenues and expenses).

Paul Carpentier owes \$49 for GoH dinner. VCon may owe Paul Carpentier \$30 Cdn. for printing June 20, 2000.

No source document for grant available at time of statement preparation – confirmation needed.

*VCon 25 Cash Reconciliation
for the period ending October 25, 2000
(Revised January 7, 2001)*

Canada Trust account #00751-501403 (balance as per Doug Finnerty)	\$3,281.98
VCon monies in VISA account #46-01211	1,049.97
Cash on Hand	<u>18.28</u>
TOTAL CASH	\$4,350.23
<i>Less:</i>	
outstanding: cheque #0016	\$ 50.00
cheque #0017	1,000.00
cheque #0018	<u>337.82</u>
	(\$1,387.82)
<i>Less:</i>	
owed to WCSFA	(\$ 452.39)
owed to R.G. Cameron	(588.07)
owed to VCon 26	(1,160.22)
owed to CUFF	<u>(180.00)</u>
	(\$2,380.68)
TOTAL OWING	(\$3,768.50)
TOTAL VCON 25 CASH AVAILABLE	<u>\$ 581.73</u>

NOTES:

Totals do not include any NSF cheques, service charges, other bank and VISA account fees from June 30, 2000 to October 31, 2000.

Numbers are as accurate as possible given information available

Nico Iormetti