

BCSFAzine #346

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**The monthly newsletter of
the British Columbia Science Fiction Association**

Something to interest everyone!

Vol. 30 No. 3 * March 2001



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BCSFazine

Something to offend-interest everyone!

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This month's cover artist: Taral Wayne

I simply could not add fillos to this issue, because the clipart from CD-ROMs overwhelms my computer's memory. I am now soliciting line-art .TIFs from all you artists out there!

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not instead of *
Paul Valcour's new editorial @dress for the Ottawa
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** Where are the Dezotells now? ** - their email BCSFazine bounced back

MEMBERSHIP EXPIRIES

Only I had a membership expiry last month. No-one else's membership expires until April (Cindy Turner).

Plain Speaking

Several topics are on my mind this month, which are loosely linked. One of them is the way we still talk about “fandom”, when in fact there seem to be *several*, quite separate fandoms. Another is what this means for BCSFA, and for VCon, and for enterprises such as the upcoming Canadian SF & Fantasy Awards. One more topic, which ties into both of the preceding ones, is Dale Speirs’ recent review of *Bowling Alone*, a book on popular culture.

Which Fandom Are You In?

Consider: anyone who enters a fan group these days probably enters an anime or fantasy/role-playing gaming group. It’s still possible to enter a *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, *Tracker*, *Highlander*, *Stargate SG-1* or other media fan group, or a comics club, or a costumers’ group, or (just possibly) to encounter fanzine fandom, or a writers’ workshop. You may correct me if I’m wrong; but somewhere in the last twenty to thirty years, we crossed a watershed, and anyone who encounters fandom now will *only* enter a subfandom – they will *not* go on to participate in a whole range of other fanactivities.

Sometimes I wonder if BCSFans quite know where the most activity and interest lies in fandom, these days, and whether we’re offering them anything? Which fandom are *you* in? *I am* interested in your response.

Canfandom and Its Enterprises

Now consider the Convention – the rotating honour of hosting the Canadian SF Awards presentation. The next Convention will be Con-Version 19, in Calgary (see www.con-version.org). Paul “Ogre” Bushell, chairing this con, wrote to me in early February:

“Con-Version membership prices have dropped so hopefully you will be able to attend this year. Memberships are \$40 until July 31 (no incremental increases!), \$50 at the door. Hotel prices are \$99 per night at the Westin, but since we are downtown, if you stay anywhere else, it is easy to get downtown. The hotel has given us one free night for an early bird raffle. For all those that book rooms at the Westin prior to the end of May (date to be confirmed) they will be a draw for one night free. We will be getting our booking codes up on the website very soon.”

Concerning Convention procedures, he also wrote: “If you have any questions, or any suggestions, or comments you can send me, it would be appreciated.” I referred him to Graeme and to Murray Moore right away.

Later in February, I had email correspondence with Danita Maslankowski, Con-Version’s Aurora Awards co-ordinator. I offered what information I could to support the Aurora Award balloting this year, and referred her again to Graeme and also to Paul Valcour. (Unfortunately I have no name or contact information for the Aurora Awards co-ordinator for Convention 20, Toronto Trek in 2000.) I kept emphasizing that other people would have more and better address databases.

Have I failed to advertise to you adequately the fact that there is an upcoming Convention? (Does it represent your interests?)

Canzine Issues

Now consider the following: John Mansfield is ceasing to publish *Con-TRACT*, the bimonthly newsletter listing conventions across Canada.

Con-TRACT has been running since 1988 on a bimonthly basis, first via regular post and then through the Internet. John’s major concerns were to list SF, gaming and other conventions across Canada, especially for hucksters and for convention committees, and to examine critically how they were run. He was in a position to do this, not only because he played a leading role in the Winnipeg SF Society and the annual convention, Keycon, and not only by chairing the Winnipeg Worldcon; in my research on Canadian fanhistory I found his name appearing at the founding of various Canadian SF clubs, ranging as far apart as Fredericton and Calgary, starting in 1966.

There have been a number of national fan periodicals -- published or attempted or at least talked about -- since at least the 1970s. *Con-TRACT* assumed some of the functions of a national newszine after the demise of *MLR*, *Xeno-File* and (apparently) *Under the Ozone Hole* in the early 1990s; they themselves had carried on after *The Maple Leaf Rag* and *New Canadian Fandom* folded in the late 1980s. (John’s wife Linda Ross-Mansfield herself published such a periodical, *Northern Lights*, up to the early

Letters of Comment

"Paul M Carpentier" <paulc@mail.telebyte.com>, Jan. 31, 2002

Garth, I'm not sure how you did it, but that was one of the best *BCSFazine's* I've seen you do. This, despite the fact that it looked like a frantic attempt to impose email forwards and press releases as content.

Maybe it was the full cover art coming through in PDF. Maybe it was the page numbers matching the pages. Maybe it was your keen sense of trying to be understood, leading to some strange, and some triumphant, editorial addenda. I don't know, but I liked receiving the ish, just the same. Thank you.

(Editor responds: Well, gosh! [shuffles his feet] I sure am happy to be appreciated.)

Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, MD 21740, U.S.A., Jan. 30, 2002

The plump new issue of *BCSFazine* is at hand, filled this time with thought-provoking material.

You probably won't gain popularity by "Plain Speaking", but your conclusions about fannish habits seem supported by what I've observed from a distance all over North America nowadays. Incidentally, I live in a city where the last mayor and council election resulted in votes from 11% of the registered voters. This probably represents about 6% of the city's adults, since scads of them have never registered to vote or have been dropped from the voting lists for failure to cast ballots in too many successive elections.

(Editor responds: yeah, although I keep being surprised at people's objections to my opinions plainly expressed, I guess in fact I am setting myself up for real hard times.

(I did in fact want to provoke some response, and some thought, with the last editorial. And I'll keep on doing it: in the specific case at hand, because we can either get real about practising democracy, pay attention and get involved .. or we can give it up as a bad job; as a more general principle, because we cannot afford to just drift through life, without giving some hard thought about hard questions, whether in fandom or in mundane life.

(Why would most North American constituencies be as apathetic and uninformed about public

business as they are?)

I haven't reached my 80s as yet, at least on paper. I was 79 on December 19th, and I didn't know until until I read this issue that I share that birth date with Yvonne Penney. But I have this theory that I've flunked a number of years down through the decades, and was forced to repeat them. That would account for the fact that I feel so much older than I really am, according to the records.

(Editor responds: You've given me a couple of questions to ponder.

*(First, and everybody should at least read this question – **shall we revive the notice of club members' birthdays? Would you care to send me your birth dates?***

(Second ... I've been saying for some years that the speed of time seems to vary according to how much attention we're paying, or how much we're trying to get done. And we've heard for some years that you're as young as you feel. Now, you tell me you feel older than the official records say; and I know I think and act as if I were still in my twenties, although I'm forty-five now. [I actually forgot to tell everybody my birthday was the same date as the Perihelion Party, January 5th.]

(I'm sure I should tie this in with my theory that the Fountain of Youth legend placed the fountain on the wrong side of this continent, and that a consortium of film and television studios monopolizes access to it, and grants limited access to selected celebrities. Or maybe I have poor perception of people's ages, and just don't notice any signs that Cher, Meg Ryan or Kathleen Turner have left their twenties; La Turner, for one, is not convincing to me if she plays a woman old enough to have grown children.)

I imagine that Cinderella's adventure is related to the "lost prince" stereotype. It still turns up repeatedly in modern science and fantasy novels. I wish I could remember one startling variation on this theme's title and author. I read it several years ago; in this book the hero who doesn't know who his parents were, and seems to be destined for some sort of greatness, decides about midway through the story that he really doesn't care about his ancestry, and we never hear anything more about it.

(Editor responds: Well, sure. It was precisely "Cinderella" and the occasional lost-prince stories

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in SF and fantasy were what got me to noticing this stereotype.

(Maybe I should draft a satire on this theme.

(On one of the few recent occasions when I talked with my parents, one of them had discovered an interest in tracing our family tree; a computerized database of all of her sisters and her cousins and her aunts, forbye. I was interested mainly to track down medical information on our forebears, but for some reason that doesn't occur to genealogists, as far as I know. What other importance has genealogy, I wonder?)

Somewhere I once speculated about the existence of dinosaur fossils. I ventured the thought that about six thousand years ago, God grew angry with his universe and destroyed it, but because he is a conservationist he built a new universe from fragments of the old one. That would account for the discrepancy in Earth's age in the Bible, and in scientific theories. It would also explain such things as earthquakes: because they result from *[stress?]* failure of old

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hunks of other planets that didn't fit together quite tightly when used to build this one.

(Editor responds: Hey, maybe I should get you to write some of the material when I revise the Royal Swiss Navy Handbook! Or you could contribute to my Department of Silly Ideas ...

(Addressing solely the theological aspect of this argument, you seem to make an interesting underlying assumption, that the creator can lose his judgment to exasperation, or that he can make mistakes in the first place that try his temper.

(I've been studying worldbuilding for some time myself – the science-fictional exercise that parallels conventional planetology – and in recent years I've been thinking about some theological matters as well. The idea that the Earth is only a few thousand years old, but was created ancient, also makes some interesting underlying assumptions about the creator, for some special values of "interesting".

(The real reason for earthquakes is that the Earth farts.)

There must have been misunderstood people or misinterpreted events that have caused primitive people all over the world to think that vampires were animals, and that such things exist. Deformed men and women of low mentality are mostly locked away in institutions nowadays, but some of them must have roamed homelessly in primitive times and resembled, to some extent, canines. Apparently dead men and women today occasionally will revive before embalming and those that did so a thousand years ago might be considered the living dead.

(A point, a distinct point. I just made a glancing reference to porphyria in my article, but one of the effects is to give a sort of canine appearance to people. I still have to wonder about revived people, who report near-death experiences, after spending hours rather than minutes showing no heartbeat or EKG signs; because one of the first things I learned about wilderness survival, even in the bush not terribly far from a Canadian city, is that the human brain starts to starve for oxygen and suffer some serious damage, after only five minutes.

(Interestingly, when I first read this paragraph my eye skipped the word "deformed" and seized on the phrase "of low mentality", I guess because the homeless population, here as elsewhere, was increased in the past twenty years by, among other things, a lot of mental institutions closing their doors; even before the massive move to privatization and corporatization and government cutbacks, there was a movement to stop warehousing everybody who Didn't Fit In, who had mental problems or just low intelligence, and integrate them into the community. Well, the homeless ones aren't warehoused anymore, but sure God they aren't integrated into the community.)

I can't remember ever having read previously about the British *Rocket to the Moon* project that Graeme chose for reprinting. There really should

be someone in fandom with the interest and the energy to try to track down projects like this from fan groups. Right now in SAPS various members are trying to determine if *The Musquite Kid* still exists in movie film. It was a parody on fandom and Westerns, done many years ago by California fandom. I have two amazing audiotape productions from England, *Last and First Fen* and *The March of Slime*, which are hilarious and sound as if professionals had done the speaking parts. One of them has choral passages which you'd swear came from a couple hundred singers, apparently through re-recording the same thing on top of itself, time after time. Forry Ackerman used to show at conventions a parody of science fiction movies he'd pasted together from fragments of a number of low-budget Hollywood productions. If such artifacts still exist and aren't dubbed onto videotape and CD, they may become useless because nobody will still have working open-reel audiotape recorders and 8-mm or 16-mm movie film projectors.

(Editor responds: "This is a job for Our Fearless Leader and for Famous Mr. Ed!")

(I am put in mind of productions like the audiotape Cattlefarm Galactica, from Calgary fans in the mid-80s or earlier; or a deliberately cheesy home movie, Dawn of the Living Socks, by my friends in Victoria about that time.

(I seem to recall that some studio critters put an end to Graeme showing B-movie film clips at his lectures – there was a complaint about copyright infringement, meaning that they objected to his showing even parts of films from his collection, while the Planetarium was charging admission to the viewers. Graeme can clear up the details, I think in fact the studio critters could not threaten legal prosecution, but so they did anyway. Forry Ackerman might have been in the same position if his showings involved paid admission.)

Brad W. Foster, POBox 165246, Irving, TX 75016, Feb. 11, 2002

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Great surprise to see BCSFazine #345 show up in the mailbox this week, as it has been close to a year since I last got issue #333, and I figured it had somehow folded or something. Knowing the vagaries of fannish publishing, I even figured I had once again cursed a long-running zine by actually submitting some art to it, and thus caused it to fold!

(Editor responds: Uh, no, actually, I just figured I was supposed to send contributors copies of the issues to which they contributed. Just those issues. Another wrongo?)

Double surprise to see the enlarged fillo on the front cover. (Hey, didn't I say the same thing back when issue #332 showed up?) That must be one you've had around for a while for some other use, as it's not either of the two I had mailed you back in January '01. Were you able to make use of any of those in any of issues #334 through 344 that I've just not seen? ... you keep finding things I've no record of having sent!

(Editor responds: see above. I'm trying to find stuph I put in a pile of paper and mislaid, including fanart. Fortunately I am getting my memorabilia and impedimenta indexed and organized now. I'm also trying to find the time and funds to scan to disk a bunch of illos I have located.)

I got into a bursts of fill-finishing at the end of the year. I usually have tons of little doodled ideas sitting around that I sketch out through the year, but takes some time to sit down and actually turn them into finished drawings. So the two enclosed here are the freshest of the fresh out of the inkwell so far. My big project for the next month is to **FINALLY** get my website up and running, after something close to three years of promising it. At least, that's the idea!

(Editor responds: will it be clear to people when the illos they're looking at are only for display, or previously published, or available for download? Since my last day job I'm a bit aware of copyright issues.)

By the way, in the locs here where you and Harry get into the Harry Potter "witchcraft" controversy, you have to bear in mind that of course people with fundamental religious beliefs will be bothered by such things. After all, if they are going to believe in all the good stuff of their religion, they believe in the bad as well, and to them it's *not* fantasy. To admit that it is, would be to put the thin end of the wedge into questioning *all* of their beliefs, and there will be none of that going on, by God. I mean, the next thing you know, we could be thinking for ourselves around here!

(Editor responds: Oh, yeah, I know all that. I just had this underlying feeling that everybody out in the boonies got over fundamentalism, like about the time I was born, forbye ...)

Lloyd Penney, 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON
M9C 2B2, <penneys@netcom.ca>, February
20, 2002

Thanks for issue 345 of BCSFAzine. The deadline's almost here, and time's short at my end, too, so here's a loc to fill space.

BCSFA just had its 30th anniversary? Round figures seem to be in vogue these days. The Ottawa SF Society is celebrating 25 years, and the club in Melbourne, Australia is marking 50 years. So many clubs die young, but those who do survive seem to do so for a long time. (How do I know this? I get their clubzines, too.)

I'd been in apas a long time, but not in any of the major ones like FAPA. With computerized communities like Yahoogroups available, and the various Usenet areas like rassf, have apas become the refuge of the older fan? I think Graeme tried his best with CanFAPA, but it just didn't last very long. Would a Usenet area or private listserv serve more efficiently? I've certainly enjoyed apas like TAPA and APAPlexy in the past, but I think I prefer the wider audience that fanzines can provide. Sure, I can reach hundreds on Usenet or listserv, but as you said, there's an upper limit as to the people you can communicate with.

As always, my fannish education continues, and Harry Warner is dead right when he says that every subfandom has its own jargon. As I explore other fandoms, and find out what's there, I find words and phrases like *Bardic circle* (filk), *yiffy* (anthropomorphics) and *j-pop* (animé). More and more words crop up over time, and I have to wonder if there has been some written record of history for each of these fandoms? I've read such a history of filk fandom, and there are Trek fandom histories, too.

My loc ... when I was talking about DoasyoupleaseCon 1, I wasn't referring to any particular convention, but the kind of convention some people seem to want. I don't think special interest cons outnumber general convention just yet, for many areas don't have or attract the numbers for anything beyond the general con. I remember the contempt media cons and litcons used to have for one another; I don't think that feeling is so prevalent any more. I still think that no matter what fandom we're involved with, we get hooked on SF first, written or visual, and specialize later.

Ad Astra 2002 was two weekends ago now, with guests Guy Kay, Julie Czerneda, John Howe and Ted Nasmith. As said before, Yvonne and I had been committee members for the past 20 years, since 1982, and this year we weren't, although it wasn't entirely voluntary. We were quite busy, as

we did stage two parties, and were working with the Los Angeles in 2006 Worldcon bid, of which we're now Canadian agents. Yet, I could see that the convention seemed to be lacking. Programming seemed unimaginative, and fell into the trap that many conventions fall into, the unconscious assumption that most attendees are budding writers with a novel in progress. Most panels were stuck in that rut, and there was little to offer any other interests.

(Editor responds: other conventions just naturally assume, without thinking about it, that most attendees are gamers. Or Star Trek fans. Or scriptwriter wannabes. Or something other than readers.)

... When I wasn't in a suite running a party, I was in the dealers' room at the LA bid table, and the dealers' room also contained club tables and the flyer tables. Actual dealers were a little rare, and only a few did decent business. There were a few parties besides the LA bid party, the art show was small (so I heard, never got to it myself), and many of the people I was looking for never made it to the convention. The programme book was large, but listed that half a dozen people left the committee this year, which can't possibly instil confidence in the senior committee. I heard that attendance was about 600, but it was difficult to tell in the hotel, which had its function space on several floors. We also shared the convention space with a gathering of the Ontario branch of the Liberal Party of Canada,

which only added to the surreal atmosphere. Next year's convention is Ad Astra XXII, March 21-24 (four days!), 2003, at the same hotel, the Colony Hotel downtown, and main ProGoH is Michael Moorcock. I've also heard that Ad Astra may be combining itself with Orion, a local gaming convention, to create a big event for SF and gaming fans.

(If you're interested in supporting this bid to bring Worldcon back to Los Angeles, to Anaheim where it was held in 1984 and 1996, contact me at penneys@netcom.ca. I can get you more information about the bid, and tell you how much a pre-supporting membership is in Canadian funds.)

I'll wrap my loc a little early (enjoyed the rest of the issue, but no comment), and say that I got some voicemail from Hope Leibowitz, the only fan who has attended all Corflus, and she gave me the results of this year's FAAn Awards. I think there might be one more result which Hope didn't give me, but here's what she did...

Best fanzine	- Wabe
Best fan writer	- Alison Fairbairn
Best fan artist	- Dave Hicks
Best new fanzine fan	- Max
Best letterhack	- Lloyd Penney

And, I'm a happy guy. Take care, and see you next issue.

We also heard from: Andrew Porter, Don Bassie

DINING OUT

Delphine Kelly

December Feeding Frenzy at the ALTO DURO (Portuguese):

"Green" wine on tap (surprisingly good); Portuguese buns (fresh and delicious); Potatoes, boiled or fried; Portuguese sausage (delicately flavoured, not too hot or spicy); Kale soup (delicate flavours); Steak and eggs (good); Salt cod (SALT cod! Take my word for it. Don't eat here if you're on a salt-free diet!)

Music: Loud! Female singer. Old popular songs in English and other languages.

Summary: Non-spicy food, inexpensive and filling. Large portions. Good for a light meal (soup and bun) with wine.

January Feeding Frenzy at THE REEF (Caribbean):

Jonnycake (a popular fried bread); Jerk chicken (hot and spicy); Exotic vegetables (maybe; looked like the salad mix from Safeway, but the dressing was unique); Lamb, goat, marlin, snapper (all good, served with rice and beans, and coleslaw)

Music: On tape (Calypso?). Not too loud for conversation.

Summary: Exotic atmosphere and spices. Good food. Inexpensive. For adventurous tastes.

LOCAL EVENTS, NORTHWEST CONVENTIONS, AND BCSFAZINE DEADLINES

With this issue I am consolidating the lists of club events, and *BCSFazine* deadlines, with the list of upcoming conventions in the region.

MARCH 2002

March 15-17: **Trumpeter Salute 2002** at the Bonsor Community Centre, 6550 Bonsor St., Burnaby, B.C. (A gaming con.) Contact Steve Allen at 604-889-4970 / big_dog@telus.net or Eric Hotz at 604-619-6925 / erichotz@direct.ca.

March 16: **VCon 27 Benefit Auction** at Steve Forty's place, 7 p.m. Graeme adds: "I want to take a few minutes of the auction meeting at S. 40's to call for nominations to the BCSFA executive."

March 17: **St. Patrick's Day**. Remember, it's not easy being green.

March 20: **Spring Equinox**

March 21-24: **Left Coast Crime 12** at the Doubletree Hotel Columbia River in Portland, Oregon. Theme: "Slugs and Roses". GoH: Laurie R. King. FanGoH: Don Herron. TM: G.M. Ford. URL <http://www.spiritone.com/~jlorentz/leftcoast/>. Write to Left Coast Crime 12, P.O. Box 18033, Portland, OR 97218-0033; tel. (503) 281-9449; email wrigcros@teleport.com.

March 22: *BCSFazine* 347 deadline

March 24, 11-5: **Vancouver Comicon** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Special Guests: Igor Kordey, artist of *Cable*, *X-Men*, *Moment of Silence*, *Batman/Tarzan*, *Star Trek: Gorn Crisis*, *Tarzan: Rivers of Blood*. Sandford Tuey and Scott Lee, creators of *Galactic Gladiators*. Free giveaways and hourly door prizes. Buy, sell, and trade comic books, action figures, sport, non-sport, and gaming cards, and other collectables. Admission: \$3.00 per person; free for kids under 14. Dealers Tables: \$45 per centre table/\$50 per wall table. For more information please call 604-322-6412 or e-mail lswong@uniserve.com. Also see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>.

March 28-31: **Norwescon 25** in SeaTac, Washington. Guests of Honor: Writer, Jack Vance: Fan, Andrew Porter; Spotlitged Publisher, Wizards of the Coast. Our theme: "In the land of the Emerald City". Norwescon is a large regional Science Fiction and Fantasy convention in Washington State. Norwescon will attract over 100 professional guests and 2500 fans to the Seattle-Tacoma area. Memberships at the door \$60. Contact Information: Norwescon 24, PO Box 68547, Seattle, WA 98168-0547, Email: info@norwescon.org. See <http://www.norwescon.org>

APRIL 2002

Apr. 1: April Fool's Day. Should you or your fellow practical jokers be captured or apprehended, BCSFA will disavow any knowledge of your actions.

Apr. 5: *BCSFazine* 347 production

Apr. 5-7: **Weekend with the Night Owl**, a "multi-fandom" (actually media-oriented) relaxacon at the Landis Hotel & Suites in Vancouver, B.C. (Davis x Hornby), sponsored by Blackfly Presses. Focus includes *Dark Angel*, *Stargate SG-1*, and *Sentinel* fandoms; membership includes tour of filming sites; a group dinner offered for an additional \$C30. Registrations US\$30 to K. Simpson at Blackfly Presses, Yonge and Eglinton Postal Service, 2300 Yonge St., P.O. Box 67064, Toronto, ON M4P 3C8, attention: HauntFox.

Apr. 5-7: **Anime Oasis** at the Best Western Inn in Boise, ID. Guests: Stacie Renna (voice of "Iria"), Studio Happy Chicken, Yume no Senshi (a cosplay group). Memberships \$35 at the door, payable to Jeremy Lopett, Anime Oasis, 420 North 9th Ave., Nampa, ID 83687.

Sunday, April 14th, 11 AM to 4 PM: **Toy, Model & Collectables Show** at the Heritage Hall, 3102 Main Street (Main & 15th Ave.), Vancouver, BC. Buy, sell, and trade character toys, action figures, Beanie Babies, toy cars, Star Wars, model kits, trading cards, comic books, Barbies, games, and more! Admission: \$2.00 (\$1.00 for kids)

under 14). Dealers' tables: \$35.00/\$40.00. For more information about either show, please call 604-322-6412 or e-mail lswong@uniserve.com. See also

<http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

Apr. 19: *BCSFazine* 348 deadline

APR. 26-27: **Dak Kon VII** in Comox, BC; Vancouver Island's wargame con. Advanced Dungeons & Dragons; Warhammer 40,000 Tournament; Magic; the Gathering Tournament; Warhammer Fantasy; 6th Edition Tournament. Info: Members.home.com/baddog117/dakkon.htm

Apr. 26-28: **SakuraCon 2002**, an anime convention at the Seattle Airport Hilton & Conference Center, 17620 Pacific Hwy S, SeaTac, WA 98188-4001. Guests will include: Hiroki Hayashi; others TBA. (This is the fifth outing for what is without a doubt the anime convention in the Seattle/Tacoma region.) Registration US\$45 to March 31, US\$50 at the door, children 6 to 12 half-prize. Write to Sakura-Con-Registration, 900 Meridian Alocaion East #19-407, Milton, WA 98254-7019, tel. (253) 503-2233 x 1675, email lappleby@backtalk.org, or see URL <http://www.sakuracon.org>.

Apr. 26-28: **Game Faire 2002** at the Student Union Building, Spokane Falls Community College, Spokane, Washington. (A gaming con.) More info coming; see URL <http://www.gorillabobs.com/gf2002.html>

MAY 2002

May 3: *BCSFazine* 348 production
May 24: *BCSFazine* 349 deadline

May 24-26: **Enfilade!** in Tacoma, Washington. (A gaming con.)

Sunday, May 26th 2002: **V-Con Society meeting**. The primary purpose of the meetings (except for the last one – which is the AGM) is to review the progress of VCon 27.

May 26: **Vancouver Comicon**. For more information please call 604-322-6412 or e-mail lswong@uniserve.com. Also see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

May 31-June 2: **ConComCon 9** at the Ellensburg Inn, Ellensburg, Washington. A conrunners' convention. Major sponsor this year, SWOC (?); Presenting sponsor, ANCEA (?). Memberships: preregistration US\$25 to May 1, US\$30 at the door. C-Cubed, POBox 44976, Tacoma, WA 98444. Tel. 253-503-2232 x 8779.

JULY 2002

July 7: **Toy, Model & Collectables Show**. For more information please call 604-322-6412 or e-mail lswong@uniserve.com. Also see <http://mypages.uniserve.com/~lswong/Comicon.html>

July 26-28: **VikingCon 19** at WWU in Bellingham, Washington. **Lots more information in this month's news!** Call BSFFC, 360-647-5229 and leave message, or write BSFFC at Viking Union 202, Box V-1, Bellingham, WA 98225 or call 360-650-0666. **Their website is now up** at www.vikingcon.org

AUGUST 2002

Aug. 9-11: **ConVersion19, a.k.a. CanVention 22**, the Canadian National SF Convention. The Calgary Metropolitan Centre & Westin Hotel, Calgary, Alberta. SF/F/Anime/Gaming/Costume convention. PRIX AURORA AWARDS AND BANQUET. Guests: George R.R. Martin (Guest of Honour), James Alan Gardner (Canadian GoH), Geoffrey A. Landis (Science GoH), Lar deSouza (ArtGoH), Robert J. Sawyer (Toastmaster). Local guests include Rebecca Bradley, Dave Duncan, Marie Jakober. More guests to be announced!

Memberships are \$40 until July 31 (no incremental increases!), \$50 at the door (full weekend pass). Check www.con-version.org for more information and updates. URL <http://www.con-version.org>. Write Con-Version, P.O. Box 20098, Calgary Place RPO, Calgary, AB T2P 4J2. Fax (403)277-4251.

Aug. 23-25: **Dragonflight** at Seattle University, Seattle, Washington. (A gaming con.) Special guest: Steve Jackson. Sponsored by Metro Seattle Gamers (Ballard). Preregistration for the current Dragonflight: to MSG members, \$20; for non-members (this includes \$10 for membership), \$30. Write to Dragonflight, PO Box 776, Seattle, WA 98111-0776, USA. Send mail to webmaster@dragonflight.org with questions or comments or see URL www.dragonflight.org

FANZINES

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 fanzine below and broaden your participation in fandom.

::

NONSTOP FUN IS HARD ON THE HEART #5
(Dwain Kaiser, P.O.Box 1074, Claremont, CA 91711; e-mail to dgkaiser@hotmail.com; available for “the usual” – trades, contributions or letters of comment – but send the guy a buck for his postage when making an initial query)

Nonstop Fun is a good journeyman fanzine. Once upon a time fandom was full of good journeyman fanzines – one or more could be counted upon to arrive in the mail weekly, if not more often. These days such fanzines are rare and to be prized.

They're also a good place for newcomers to fanzines to get their toes wet. They won't overwhelm you or intimidate you with their brilliance; they're more likely to make you feel like this is something you can do and want to do too. They are easy to participate in.

The fifth *Nonstop Fun* runs a solid 52 pages of readably large computer-set type mimeographed impeccably by the LASFS superGestetner on a light turquoise paper. There are a few colour-printed pieces (art and photos) and most of fandom's best artists are well-represented in these pages but the late William (Bill) Rotsler gets the place of honour: in addition to a generous helping of his art throughout the zine, Rotsler is remembered appreciatively by Earl Kemp in the centrepiece article, “Just My Bill, An Ordinary Guy.” Several of Rotsler's short

THIS SPACE AVAILABLE FOR FILLOS

written pieces are also reprinted.

The issue opens with a photo tribute to the late Jack Harness. In his editorial Kaiser talks about a “mini-vacation” in nearby Nevada – and illustrates it with a color photo of himself on a jet ski. Following the “Rotsler section” there are a couple of pages of filk lyrics – “This Old Fan” and “Talking LASFS Blues.” Then there's Jim Schumacher's “The Good Ol' Daze,” about Los Angeles fandom in the late '60s – in which Rotsler also figures prominently, “Las Vegas Adventures 2001” by Lyn Pederson, “The ValSFA Chronicles,” a story by John Welsh, and 17 pages of letters by fans whose names will be increasingly familiar to you as you read the fanzines I've reviewed here in the past year.

There are hundreds, if not thousands, of fans out there in Greater Fandom now. But the number of fans who are active in fanzines is much smaller – between 500 and 1,000 worldwide. And of those fans perhaps 200 are regularly active in English-language fanzines. Thus the same 20 or 30 names will crop up over and over in the letter columns of various fanzines, and fairly quickly they become easily identifiable individual voices, people you begin to think you know (at least a little) and with whom you want to discuss various topics. And that's what fanzines are really about: unambitious venues for discussions, essays, arguments and conversations. Sound interesting? Get a copy of *Nonstop Fun*.

—Ted White

OUR TRADES

Garth Spencer

With this issue I want to start reviewing the fanzines we receive in trade. I should apologize to all our trades, because I haven't featured reviews of their zines since ... well, since the last VCon, I think. I may, accidentally, include fanzines sent to me for my personalzine; bear with me.

Burnaby Writers' Society newsletter, Jan/Feb. 2002 (6584 Deer Lake Ave., Burnaby, B.C. V5G 3T7); also visit the BWS website at www.bws.bc.ca. A basic newsletter – legal-length, double-sided – for a writers' group, featuring workshop meetings, readings, who sold what to whom, local resources, events and contests; and the newsletter lists not only contests, but some genre market information, which is a particular interest of mine.

The Ottawa SF Statement 26:1, Jan. 2002 (Paul Valcour ed., Ottawa SF Society, c/o 456 Gladstone Ave., Ottawa, ON K1R 5N8, osfs_editor@ottawa.com) looks a lot spiffier now than when I first clapped eyes on it, in the early 1980s; not only is it photocopied rather than mimeographed, but the layout is a lot cleaner and more consistent. This issue features a little club news, a little fan news, lots of reviews of film, books, cons and fanzines, and listings of regional events and upcoming cons. Apart from Pres. Joel Polowin's editorial, Paul Valcour's lament for the disappearance of *Con-TRACT*, and Ted White's review of *Plokta*, this issue doesn't feature a lot of personal opinion.

Pulsar #278, Jan. 2002 (Portland SF Society, POBox 4602, Portland, OR 97208) is a half-size (5.5" x 8.5") newsletter – the same fold-a-letter-sheet format I favour most of the time – but somebody keeps forgetting to staple it in the middle. This issue describes regular upcoming club meetings (second Saturdays, followed by a restaurant gathering), an "alt.porsfis" meeting-cum-birthday-party at a member's house, and editorial discussion of the January crunch, when Rustycon, the PorSFis meeting and the SCA's Twelfth Night event occurred at the same time. A local event calendar, convention listing, and notice of elections is followed by club minutes.

A very basic newsletter, then – but very useful, if you're trying to find meetings or track

down decisions or learn what the upcoming issues will be. This edition is distinguished by John Bartley's article on Portland Neighborhood Emergency Team Training. *Pulsar* newsletters are generally distinguished by fannish interior illustrations, and by running ads – for local stores, and also for members' services – which I don't often see in your basic newsletter.

Could we take some lessons from *Pulsar*? Do you have goods or services you want to advertise? (Come to think of it, I have ...)

Opuntia 50.1A, Jan. 2002 (Dale Speirs, POBox 6830, Calgary, AB T2P 2E7) has an interesting numbering system, which goes with Dale's interesting rotation among several functions – one month his zine principally runs letters, another month it mainly consists of fanzine reviews, and the whole-number issues are devoted to small-group history, such as histories of fandom.

This issue runs letters responding to Dale's article on the history of *very* early amateur journalism, on the Medicine Hat Zine Party, on Lloyd Penney's mixed results on showing SF fanzines to mediafans, conreports, etc.; Dale Speirs' short fanzine reviews; and reviews of mail art, which I don't really comprehend. This issue is also distinguished by book reviews: of a Benedict Arnold biography; of *Alpha Beta* (by John Man), about civilization's arguably greatest invention: the alphabet; and of *A Fish Caught in Time*, the discovery of the surviving coelacanth.

Also he tells us about Benoit Girard's and Franz Miklis' World Wide Party (every June 21st at 9 p.m. local time).

De Profundis #349, Jan. 2002 (Marty Cantor ed., Los Angeles Science Fiction Society, 11513 Burbank Blvd., N. Hollywood, CA 91601, U.S.A.) Now here's something I haven't seen in donkey's years (although *De Profundis* was on our trade list when I took up the reins ...)

This is your basic letter-size two-column meetings-calendar-minutes newsletter, albeit in *very* small type on *PINK* paper. *PINK* reminds me vaguely of a Philip K. Dick routine, but I can't remember whether *PINK*ness is Good or Evil. Ted White syndicates his fanzine column here, too; Los Angeles Filkers Anonymous placed an ad; zines in trade, new books and videos in the club library, an obituary for John Stanley Woolston and a William Rotsler mini gallery are included.

Media File

Ray “Dr. Media” Seredin

Special Edition:

Geeks Dress as Freaks – The Media’s Image of SF Conventions.

Sorry I haven’t written much in the past few months. However, having seen airliners slamming into American national landmarks with scores of people dying, *and* fellow Canadians fighting in the war to defeat the lunatics who like seeing airliners slamming into landmarks, *and* my mom having a major stroke, *and* moving down to Vancouver to help look after her ... my mind was away from fandom for quite a while.

Before I go any further I would like to say a big “THANK YOU” to BCSFA members Kathleen Moore Freeman, Philip Freeman, their two kids Arlene and Madeleine, and Barb Dryer for their wonderful help in mid-December when the hospital moved my mom down here and before I found a place to live down here. Thanks for letting me stay in you home over a delightful Christmas, and to Barb for tracking down the Freemans. These people are the reason I love fandom.

The topic today first came up after I returned home from a Orion Consulate New Year’s party in 1999, and turned on “Saturday Night Live”. They had this animated sketch called “Fun With Real Audio/The Talk Show Guest From Hell”: a real-life comic does late-night talk shows, who is so boring he can send bricks to sleep; each host pulls a lever, and he keep falling from show to show, until they run out of talk shows. After being dropped from the last, late, late-night talk show, he lands on a *Wedding Story* episode, taking place at “The Tri-States Tri-Annual Sci-Fi Convention”, with a bride dressed as Joanna Pencroft from *Mysterious Island*, the groom as the Tom-Baker-era “Doctor Who”, the two bridesmaids as Princess Leias, the best man as a “ST:TNG”-era Klingon warrior, the Minister as a priest from the 1984 *Dune* movie, and everyone else there as everyone from *HR Huff’n’Stuff* to *Xena: Warrior Princess*. To top this scene, William Shatner walks through repeating “Get a life!” from the classic 1986 live-action sketch.

(For the people wanting to know how it ends. The Klingon makes a hole in the floor with his

phaser; ‘The Talk Show Guest From Hell’ keeps falling to lower forms of TV programming until he lands in a place much worse than Hell, called *Jerry Springer*.)

I wasn’t laughing at the sketch itself (though it was funny), but at the person who made it; this person very likely has never been to a real science-fantasy convention lately.

First of all: even if a real *Wedding Story* episode took place at a so-called sci-fi convention not everyone there would dress as their favourite “Science-Fantasy” character. (Note: My old boss at Seven-11, who’s a big fan of the series, told me that in the nine years it’s been on, no episode takes place at one.) No-one can just walk into a Zeller’s and buy a Klingon warrior costume from the “Eccentric People Who Go To Sci-Fi Conventions Department”. Costuming takes tons of time. A Klingon warrior costume takes weeks, if not months to make. A Tom Baker costume is quite easy, *if* you get your mother’s scarf and spend all your free time hanging around the local Value Village for the right combo. Viewing the video taken at VCon 26, I worked out that only about 1/5th of the members at a typical convention are in costumes. So, even at a large convention like Norwescon, with 2,500 members, only about 500 will be dressed in “Science-Fantasy” costumes; the other 2,000 will dress in blue jeans and T-shirts like everyone else.

Second, besides the bride, the groom, the bridesmaids, the best man, the priest, William Shatner and the Talk Show Guest From Hell, everyone there looked like the poster boy for *Pen & Pocket Protector Monthly*. They spell it out G.E.E.K.S.. If you took away their costumes and dressed them in regular street clothes, they would look like the lunch room at Microsoft; however, unlike real men and women working for Bill Gates, they would have a hard time getting laid with just each other.

OK, this was true a bit, back in 1987 when I first started to go to cons. Yet today’s fandom members are mainstream folks. Though many science fantasy followers work in high-tech industries, most work in very ordinary jobs. In BCSFA alone we have a cook, a childcare worker, a metal worker, an accountant, a teacher and a handful of members between jobs, or retired. To my knowledge, most of our members look like your so-called “regular person” not

like SNL “geeks dressed as freaks”.

The main problem is that mainstream media are interested in just getting ratings from their coverage of a science-fantasy convention. They say “Let’s film all these weird people in those weird costumes, interview a geek or two and forget the other members who looks ‘normal people’ “.

If you believe Statistics Canada’s 1996 census, 7.5% of Canada’s total population watches, reads or goes to movies of the science-fantasy genre. If this is so, why does VCon attract only about 350, and not the other 360,400 genre followers who live in BC? (Note: If we did get 360,750 members to a VCon we would have to take over both Victoria and Duncan to house them all.) I feel that mainstream media images of science-fantasy conventions make the other 360,400 followers into “Closet Fans”. They enjoy genre TV, movies, books and magazines, but they don’t want to go to conventions, because

they’re afraid of being surrounded “geeks and freaks.”

Faced with these facts, I have a new life goal. Get at least 1% of the other 360,000 science-fantasy genre followers living in BC to a VCon once in their lives. I hope by using my camcorder to record the 280 who are just normal people or people who dress as their favourite “Sci-Fi” characters, only for the weekend. I hope that some broadcaster like “Space: TIS” will use the footage to show a SF convention is not a gathering of “Freaks and Geeks,” just a gathering of people who happen to like the science-fantasy genre.

That’s all from me for now, I wish you the best and I’ll be seeing you.

Ray “Dr. Media” Seredin, lungbarrow@shaw.ca

(Editor comments: or else the people who Just Read The Stuff neither know about, nor show much interest in conventions ... -GS)

NEWS

THE MIGHTY FALLEN

Jon Gustafson in Moscow, Idaho is ailing, like far too many of our friends in fandom. You are probably aware that Jon has given years of service to the Moscow fan community (the Palouse Empire SF Association), and to Moscon, their annual convention; and that for some time he has offered both art appraisal services, and a CD collection of fanart.

Vicki Mitchell writes:

“I moved Jon to Good Samaritan Village last Thursday. He is supposed to be receiving physical, speech, and occupational therapy. At times, he seems fairly clear-headed and rational, and you can carry on a reasonable conversation with him. At other times, he is confused ... His MRIs showed two very small strokes, and something else the doctors don’t quite understand. They want to repeat the scans in about three weeks ...

“Anyone who wants to send Jon a card can just send it to the house:

621 East F. Street, Moscow, ID 83843.”

late Jan. and early Feb. 2002

CUFF NEWS

Murray Moore’s 2001 CUFF trip report – titled *A Trip Report Found in a Plain Manila Envelope*, sub-titled *Being a True Account of the Adventures*

in May 2001 of Murray Moore of Mississauga Who Traveled to Exotic Vancouver and to Fabulous Seattle – is now available at \$5.00, Canadian or U.S. This is a 10,000-plus-word trip report, featuring “more than 20 cartoons by Scott Patri, and a sheet of full-colour photographs of fans and pros at VCon: Steve Forty, Robert J. Sawyer, Timothy Anderson, Candace Jane Dorsey, Garth Spencer, Clint Budd, Donna McMahon, Fran Skene.”

Murray adds:

“I don’t usually name drop. But I have decided the following people will want to know their name appears at least once in my 2001 Canadian Unity Fan Fund (CUFF) trip report. Culled from the index of my CUFF report are these names of B.C. and Alberta fans and pros: Betz, Al; Brechin, Andrew; Budd, Clint; Cameron, R. Graeme; Coney, Michael; Patri, Scott “Honcho”; Dorsey, Candace Jane; Duncan, Dave; Esparo, Daniela; Forty, Steve; Johnson, Frank; Kernaghan, Eileen; McKee, Charles; McMahon, Donna; Murdoch, Andrew; Robinson, Spider; Runte, Robert; Russell, Sean; Savage, Gillian; Skene, Fran; Speirs, Dale; Spencer, Garth; Tentchoff, Marcie.

“Satisfy your curiosity about this index entry: Cumberland, dick all to do in. Refresh your memory of the Shove It Up Your Mundane Elron Award. Check the K listings: Kay, Guy Gavriel; Kernaghan, Eileen; King, Mackenzie; King, Stephen. Also included: nods to DaVinci’s Inquest and to the Lawrence Gough Willis and Parker

series. Plus, as the line goes, a whole lot more. But it's true."

"All proceeds go to CUFF, either \$5 Canadian or \$5 U.S. U.S. dollar cheques are good. All cheques payable to CUFF, please. Copies will be mailed to CUFF supporters in April."

Write to Murray Moore, 2001-2002 CUFF Administrator, at 1065 Henley Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1C8.

Murray Moore, 17 Feb 2002

LIFE AFTER FURDOM?

Coming next summer will be the new novel by science fiction writer Rudy Rucker. Unlike most SF books, this one will be illustrated by familiar furry fan, **Taral Wayne**.

The book is scheduled as a hardcover for June by Tor Books, a noted name in SF. (The usual practise is to follow this by a cheaper paperback about a year later.) Called *Spaceland*, in it a business man is drawn into a plot by one higher dimensional power against another, when he is given a miraculous device to market that works through the 4th dimension. 18 drawings illustrate the action and concepts throughout the novel.

The drawings are closely based on the author's own sketches, bringing them the finish and clarity the artist is known for.

Rudy Rucker's novel, *White Light* was published in 1980, and was the first of several in that decade. A professor of mathematics, the author's career is reflected in all his work.

Taral Wayne, the reader ought to know. (However... he was a founding member of *Rourbrazzle*, a habitual contributor to *Gallery*, six-time Hugo nominee as an artist, GoH in our early Confurence, and artist behind the *Beatrix* series of comics.) He is currently working on a story for *Mayhem Country*, and an illustrated version of Paul Kidd's *Hot Buttered Mice* for Mu Press.

Taral Wayne, 3 Feb '02

YOU, TOO, Could Run Our Club!

Fearless Leader Graeme writes:

"As I emailed Garth ... I want to take a few minutes of the [March] auction at S. 40's to call for nominations to the BCSFA executive. If any nominations are unopposed, the new executive [will be] acclaimed at the March [BCSFA] meeting. If there are competing candidates, hold an election for the contested positions at a following

meeting yet to be determined.

"The auction is liable to be the biggest meeting of the year in attendance terms, so we must take advantage of it by calling for nominations at that meeting. A meeting held separately for a call for nominations would likely get fewer than 10 people. The VCon auction is likely to get more than 10 people. It's our best shot at turnout for nominations. Yet, if run properly, the nominations won't take up more than a few minutes. An informal meeting can then follow, without hindering the auction in any way."

The Graeme, Jan. 30/02

THE UNCANNY:

EXPERIMENTS IN CYBORG CULTURE

A science-fictional model exhibit at The Vancouver Art Gallery from Feb 9 to May 26, 2002; 750 Hornby Street Vancouver, tel. (604)-662-4700; URL www.vanartgallery.bc.ca

Stan Hyde, of the Monster Attack Team Canada, writes in his latest newsletter:

"... I (along with some help with Scott Farquhar and Angelo Loperfido) have been building kits and doing bases for toys to be featured in this show at the Vancouver Art Gallery. I'm awfully excited about it myself – because of the coolness of the theme, not just because I helped contribute to it. A write-up from the web site follows:

"Today we see the cyborg everywhere around us – Arnold Schwarzenegger's Terminator, Star Trek's Borg, William Gibson's cyberpunks and Nintendo's GameBoy. THE UNCANNY is a wide-ranging exhibition that explores historical and contemporary representation of the cybernetic body – the combination of human and machine – in the visual arts and popular culture.

"The exhibition proceeds from the premise that the image of the cyborg has traditionally provided our culture with a visual metaphor for the anxiety that accompanied the growing presence of the machine in western culture. Modern culture's representation of the cyborg shuttles between a celebratory fascination with the machine and an intense anxiety around masculinity and mechanical equipment.

"Key historical works will include a 19th century automaton, 19th century scientific photography and early 20th artworks by Marcel Duchamp, Pablo Picasso, Fernand Léger and Francis Picabia. The exhibition will also include contemporary works by Tony Oursler, Moriko Mori, Gary Hill, Takashi Murakami, Lee Bul, Survival Research Lab and many more. Both the

NILS HELMER FROME:

CANADA'S FIRST FANZINE EDITOR

Richard Graeme Cameron

Compiled by R. Graeme Cameron for the BCSFA Archive Website "The Canadian Fancyclopedia". What follows is a sample of the kind of info you can find at: < members.shaw.ca/rgraeme/home.html >

Nils Helmer Frome was Canada's first SF faned, first leading fan, and quite possibly, Canada's first fan on record. He published *Supramundane Stories* (the first Canadian fanzine) & *Fantasy Pictorial* out of Fraser Mills, B.C. in the late 1930s.

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

Michael Dann wrote: "Helmer was very much a loner as a child and throughout his life. He seems to have had few, if any, close friends, spending most of his time collecting science fiction, reading history, drawing and writing." After high school he attended Vocational Art School in Vancouver.

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

Here is Moskowitz's list of publications he agented Frome's work to and saw published in the late 1930s & during the 1940s: Moskowitz's own *Helios & Fantasy Artists*, Alex Osheroff's *The Science Fiction Scout*, Robert Madle's *Fantascience Digest*, John V. Baltadonis' *Science*

Fiction Collector, Litterio Farsci's *Golden Atom*, John Giunta's *Scientitales*, Louis Kuslan's *Cosmic Tales*, Beak Taylor's *8-Ball/Canadian Fandom*, Francis Paro's *Fanfare*, Bob Studley's *Sciental*, Oswald Train's *Science Fiction Adventures*, J.J. Fortier's *Stunning Scientifan*, Walter Marconette's *Scienti-Snaps*, Olon F. Wiggin's *Science Fiction Fan*, & James V. Taurasi's *Vadjong*. In addition, Harry Warner Jr. contacted Frome direct for material to use in his zine *Spaceways*, as did Les Croutch for *Light* (#115 April 1942 for example, its cover a Frome line drawing of four nymphs or dryads). Those searching for Frome's work should note that he sometimes used the pen name 'Herkanos', especially in his letters of comment.

After graduating school Frome found work in various lumber camps and mills, which may explain why he stopped publishing *Supramundane Stories*. He did, however, maintain a high level of fanac, as Moskowitz's activity on his behalf attests. This may have been in compensation for being continually trapped in a working environment where his interests in art & SF were not held in high esteem. According to Michael Dann "He seems to have been unhappy with his life.... had emotional problems dealing with people... seems to have resulted from his being a loner and from a creative mind that quickly became bored.... due to his above average intelligence and his inability to communicate on the more mundane level."

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

Still, he found time to send out a stream of art, commentary, fiction & articles. One example of his fiction is 'The Mirror', published in *Canfan* #10 in May 1946. The first paragraph reads: "As the car gasped its last and finally expired, John Sloan cursed the fate which had stranded him there on that lonely road, with night coming on, and an uncertain storm muttering to itself in the distance." And the last: "The curious mirror cast back the reflection of the figure of an old man, his ruthless countenance painted by the fire, now slack in death. He was sitting crumpled there in the midst of the house he had stolen....Alone." A common theme in his life it seems, being alone.

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

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

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

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

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

itself survives.

This entry would have been even longer had I possessed *Howard Phillips Lovecraft And Nils Helmer Frome: A Recollection Of One Of Canada's Earliest Fans*, edited by Sam Moskowitz and Kenneth Faig, put out by The Moshassuck Press, Glenview, Illinois in May of 1989. According to Moskowitz it contains: "the H.P. Lovecraft letters to Nils H. Frome...the letters of Frome to me; unpublished fiction and articles by Frome... the actual interview with Frome's half-brother by Michael Dann & Brenda Yvonne from *New Canadian Fandom*; a reproduction of both issues of Frome's *Supramundane Stories*, complete; the first published Frome; a selection of Frome's drawings...and miscellaneous items totalling 160 pages."

Apart from the reproduced *Supramundanes*, the letters would be especially interesting to read. Moskowitz wrote: they "gave me a good account of his publishing, dates his periodicals actually appeared, titles of some of the pieces he mailed me, facts about his life, his philosophy and his successes and his disappointments. I reproduced these letters in the Frome book, only in a much more readable form than his microscopic script in green and blue inks, which makes H.P. Lovecraft's notes look like large-type books."

Now follows a description of his published fanzines.

Supramundane Stories #1

(#1 - Oct 1936) - 32 pages printed on a multigraph mimeo Frome had earlier purchased from San Francisco fan C. Hamilton Bloomer (who had used it to print the first American multigraphed zine *Tesseract*). The cover, done by Frome himself, depicted a Vampire.

According to Sam Moskowitz: "Another high quality periodical of the time... Frome illustrated it by hand, and although he possessed no little artistic ability, he showed a disquieting dislike for uniformity by illustrating every copy of the magazine differently. For the particular fan collector it would have been necessary to obtain every copy of the periodical in existence in order to own all the variations." Moskowitz acquired no less than 6 copies!

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

The R. D. Swisher checklist confirmed it

wasn't just the art that was different with every issue. "Probably one of the most unusual fanzines ever issued was the first issue of *Supramundane Stories*... No two copies were identical. Each and every one contained different illustrations, articles, ads, set up of stories. Cover and illustrations done by hand. No two copies of this issue are identical. Some pages dated Oct, some Dec-Jan."

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

#1 contained two short stories: 'Cosmic Vampire' on pages 2 to 16, and 'The Thought God Calls' pages 17-21.

Supramundane Stories #2

(#2 - Feb 1938) - 24 hektographed pages. The cover by Frome was some sort of forest landscape. Because it was hektographed, every copy of this issue was identical.

#2 contained the following fiction, 'Nyarlathotep' by H.P. Lovecraft, pages 1-2 & 4, 'Blurred World' pages 5 & 6, 'The Mystery Of The Mist' pages 7-10, & 'The Strange Case Of William York' pages 15-20.

Moskowitz described #2 as containing "superior material", including "Notes On The Writing Of Weird Fiction" by H.P. Lovecraft, a news item provided by August W. Derleth (who later founded Arkham House), poems by Clark Ashton Smith, and prose (articles? Fiction?) by J. Harvey Haggard, Duane W. Rimel, Lionel Dilbeck, & others. It also contained some sort of contribution from Moskowitz himself, who by this time was acting as Frome's "unpaid agent" for distributing his art & writings to assorted fanzines.

Supramundane Stories #3

(#3) was never published or even prepared. But Frome had acquired the short story 'What The Moon Brings' from H.P. Lovecraft for #3, and when his publishing plans collapsed, sent it to American fan James V. Taurasi for publication in the 3rd annish of his *Cosmic Tales*.

Fantasy Pictorial

Hektographed portfolio of art, probably exclusively Frome's art, at least 12 pages and at least 50 copies, pubbed out of Fraser Mills, B.C., in early 1938.

Sam Moskowitz & Will Sykora, prominent American fans, were planning a convention in Newark, New Jersey, to be held May 21st, 1938, and dubbed "The First National Science Fiction Convention" (actually the fourth SF convention held in the US). The hall rented for \$3, but they needed more start up money. Moskowitz con-

GARTH SPENCER offers word processing, proofreading, and copy-editing services to interested writers. He can work from standard cassette dictation tapes or handwritten mss., to standard fiction-submission, or specified nonfiction submission formats. Either inkjet printouts or PC disk copies can be available on demand. Please allow a week's lead time on assignments longer than 20 pages. Call or email Garth Spencer at 604-325-7314, garthspencer@shaw.ca.

ceived of a kind of one-shot APA, wherein fans would send in 50 copies of special editions of their regular zine, or one-shots, and receive copies of all the others. One copy of their own zine, plus any excess copies if fewer than 50 fans contributed, would be sold to raise funds.

Inspired by news of this, Frome probably selected items from his personal portfolio and hektographed the 50 copies (which is near the absolute number of copies you can achieve with that process anyway — probably why Moskowitz picked that number, most fans using hektography in that era) and sent them off as quickly as possible. In return he would have received a bounty of reading material, including: Marconette's *Scienti-Snaps*, Wiggins' *The Science Fiction Conventioneer*, McPhail's *Stf and Non-sense*, Taurasi's *Wonder Fiction Annual*, Sykora's *The Scientifilmaker* and much else. Frome must have been thrilled when all that arrived in a single bundle at his Fraser Mills post office box.. A faned's dream. This could well be the last zine ever published by Frome as the second (and last) issue of *Supramundane Stories* had already been published in February of 1938. But Frome remained active in fandom, if no longer functioning as a zine ed, in that he regularly contributed art to Crutch's *Light* and early issues of *Canadian Fandom* through the early 1940s and was still listed in the Canadian fan directory in 1952.

This info brought to you by the BCSFA Archive website. If you want to learn more obsessively detailed info about Canadian fanzines and fandom, check out:

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

Richard Graeme Cameron <rgraeme@shaw.ca>, 21 Jan 2002

CRANK THEORIES

by Garth Spencer

part VIIth and last

Crank Theories in Popular Fiction

There is a saying that the golden age of science fiction is about 13. At that age, we're pretty naïve and uncritical, and almost any influence might imprint on us – science fiction, God, chess, martial arts, even Frank Sinatra (God help us).

Granting the role that science fiction can play in exercising our imaginations ... isn't an author obliged to mark clearly, somehow, where science *ends* and speculation, or outright crank theories, begin? (Considering how many defenseless uncritical naive minds are out there)

Heinlein's and Piper's ideas about language

There are some ill-informed ideas about language structure that I had to unlearn, after reading short novels by Robert Heinlein and H. Beam Piper. Examples:

"I saw a man shot once on Mimir, for calling another man a son of a Khooghra," Jack said. "The man who shot him had been on Yggdrasil and knew what he was being called."

"I spent a couple of years among them," Gerd said. "They do build fires; I'll give them that. ... I learned their language, all eighty-two words of it. ..."

"Can they generalize?" Ruth asked.

"Honey, they can't do nothin' else but! Every word in their language is a high-order generalization. *Hroosha*, live-thing. *Noosha*, bad-thing. *Dhishta*, thing-to-eat. Want me to go on? There are only seventy-nine more of them."

(Piper, *Little Fuzzy*, New York: Ace, © 1962)

This seems to echo a persistent idea going around, that there are "primitive" languages spoken today, on modern Earth. In point of fact every extant human language seems to be capable of expressing as much as any other human language, even if you have to work up a phrase rather than a single word to translate it. If anything, the languages of hunting-gathering societies, with little traditional technology, have *more* specific terms for everything in their environment; the main difference from the languages of agrarian or industrial societies is a lack of *ge-*

neric terms, for classes like *fish*, *fowl*, *tree*, and so on.

"Do you speak the Kragan language, general?" she asked. "I understand it's entirely different from the other Equatorial Ulleran languages."

"Yes. That's what gives the Kragans an entirely different semantic orientation. For instance, they have nothing like a subject-predicate sentence structure. That's why ... they are entirely non-religious. Their language hasn't instilled in them a predisposition to think of everything as the result of an action performed by an agent. And they have no definite parts of speech; any word can be used as any part of speech, depending on context. Tense is applied to words used as nouns, not words used as verbs; there are four tenses – spatial-temporal present, things here-and-now; spatial present and temporal remote, things which were here at some other time; spatial remote and temporal present, things existing now somewhere else, and spatial-temporal remote, things somewhere else some other time."

(Piper, *Uller Uprising*, New York: Ace, 1983)

About the time that Piper was writing, SF writers were thinking about the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: the linguistic hypothesis that the language we speak somehow shapes and channels our thought. Constructed-language enthusiasts are still playing with this notion, to this day. Whether it holds any water or not, I leave for you to decide.

James Hogan's Giants trilogy

Some more odd notions, about language and technology for instance, that show up in some of James P. Hogan's novels.

Hogan may be best-known for his "Giants" trilogy, in which a succession of scientific puzzles are solved, leading to the discovery of a whole hidden history of the human race, an unknown and destroyed world in our solar system, and a previous intelligent race, native to that world.

There are some logical problems with the story, though, and I don't mean problems with Hogan's projection of 21st-century technology. The first puzzle that Hogan's characters face is a dead and dessicated spaceman found in a cave on the Moon ... who seems to be *50,000 years*

old. This fully-human corpse bears an ancient, miniaturized handbook and a sort of digital watch ... and the investigators proceed to decipher everything they can, from the body and from these two artifacts. Hogan makes reference to computerized frequency analyses of the texts, leading to decipherment of the language.

Now, let me just pose you some questions. Just suppose that remains, including texts, from a previously unknown ancient civilization landed in the hands of the specialists best prepared to evaluate them; wouldn't you expect some time lag, extending to a few generations, before the specialists could get over their disbelief? Leaving that aside, how can you *get* from frequency analyses of the signs in previously unknown script, to decipherment of a language? (You may object that the Russian frequency analysis of Mayan steles was followed, relatively quickly, by their recent decipherment. I await corroboration.) As to ancient artifacts: I would be surprised if any contemporary solid-state technology remained functional more than twenty or thirty years; in fact, a pressing concern today is that digitized records have far less lifespan than magnetic tapes, tapes have rather less lifespan than contemporary paper records, and contemporary paper has so high an acid content, even 200-year-old documents – with far lower acid content – are more likely to outlive contemporary records. How likely is it that we could happen on devices as much as 50,000 years old, and make them yield information?

The same problem comes up later in the Giants trilogy, when the same investigators turn up remains of a spacefaring species on Ganymede, approximately *25 million years old*, and *again* recovers a lost language and the records in that language.

Robert Wilson & Robert Shea: Illuminatus!
Umberto Eco: Foucault's Pendulum
Michael Flynn: The Country of the Blind

One of the less amusing fixations in popular culture has been paranoia, and the perception of vast, powerful conspiracies manipulating public affairs.

The gist of *Illuminatus!* and *Foucault's Pendulum* seems to be how absurd, foolish and ineffectual are cranks, and conspiracy theorists, and conspirators themselves; and how divided they can be, among themselves.

Michael Flynn, in *The Country of the Blind*, makes a further point: setting up a secret society with a conspiratorial goal is essentially like the children's game of "Egyptian telephone", where

you whisper a message to a person sitting next to you, and they to the person sitting next to them, and so on around a circle. By the time the whisper gets back to you it will be unrecognizable. Similarly, a conspiracy's agenda will be progressively distorted as it goes from the initial group to new members ... either because they reinterpret it according to their understanding, or modify it according to their own agendas. The end result is that any conspiracy will divide, or simply break up, beyond a limited number of members.

The bottom line seems to be, we can expect a number of conspiracies in any society at any time ... but it is pretty unlikely that even one of them will be vast, or powerful, or long-lasting, or very effective.

Perhaps the best way to expose crank theories is to send them up. Satirize them. Make them look silly. This is essentially what Robert Wilson and Robert Shea did with American conspiracy theories of the 1960s and 1970s, and what Umberto Eco did with similar European ideas of the 1980s and 1990s.

CONCLUSIONS: Signs of a Crank Theory

By this point you probably have your own take on the stories I have presented. On my own I concluded that crank theories share the following signs:

- Going beyond the facts / extrapolating too much from too little data
- Poor standards of evidence
- exceeding credibility, not just conventions
- Unsupported leaps of logic
- Poor standards of reasoning
- inconsistency of reasoning
- jumping erratically between topics
- Poor standards of rhetoric (e.g. 5/5/2000)
- dragging in irrelevancies, not just tangentials; not only not strengthening, but actually weakening the case

Other writers have drawn other conclusions, in *Popular Delusions and the Madness of Crowds*, in * and in Robert Parks' *Voodoo Science*. As Robert Parks points out, sometimes the bizarre things reported in science news let laymen imagine that just anything is possible.

The bottom line seems to be, though, that we *want* to believe there are mysteries; that miracles can happen; that the impossible, sometimes, is possible.

continued from page 1

1980s.) But *Con-TRACT*'s function as a con listing, and apparent space constraints, militated against assuming all the functions a national newszine might perform.

We have now to see who can, or will, step into the gap. There are a number of individuals and newsletters tracking at least upcoming conventions, and the major ones are online – the *Locus* convention list, *Con-Temporal*, Lloyd Penney's convention list for the "Made in Canada" website, and Jack Beslanwitch's "SF Northwest" website.

Question: were you aware of *Con-TRACT*? You should be, if you go to conventions, or work on concons.

Of more concern to me: were you aware of, and are you particularly interested in fandom across Canada?

Bowling Alone

Now consider: Dale Speirs' latest *Opuntia* reviews a recent popular-sociology work, about social changes in participatory entertainment. It isn't just fandom that seems to have changed over the last generation or two. All sorts of formerly participatory leisure activities have suffered dropping levels of active involvement.

Maybe all of the foregoing is old news to you. Maybe it's just baffling and doesn't add up, to

you. To me it means either a natural change in the form of activity in leisure interest groups ... or the impending *death* of active fandom; of conventions, and by extension, of awards and national fan publications and, ultimately, the kind of group activities that fans used to give a damn about.

When I entered fandom I sensed some assumptions that lay underneath the whole shebang. When I encountered fanzines, and conventions, I went along with the assumption that an interest in SF or fantasy was a social thing. When I encountered the Canadian SF & Fantasy Award, and the Canadian Unity Fan Fund, again I went along with the assumption that the one served to promote fiction by Canadian SF and fantasy writers, and that the other served to show some fans a Well-Known Fan from elsewhere in Canada; and that these enterprises were needed and wanted.

There are days, though, when I wonder if these assumptions are true anymore; or whether they ever were.

Do you know what "Well-Known Fan" means? Do you know what a fanzine is? Do you know, or does it matter to you, what science fiction and fantasy has been published in Canada this year? I am interested in your response.

Anyway I wanted to ask, should we start holding meetings in bowling lanes? Maybe the one on Arbutus? We could even start our own bowling league ...

Writers' Workshop at V-Con 27!

Get your original Science Fiction/Fantasy manuscript (approximate limit 5,000 words) critiqued by pro writers. \$10.00 mailing and photocopying cost. Important: this is open only to pre-registered members of VCon 27. One manuscript or several poems per person.

Deadline for submission is September 1 (postmarked).

Guidelines: Participants receive, in advance, copies of manuscripts from the others in your group. Manuscripts will be critiqued by both pros and participants. You are expected to attend your assigned workshop. (Let us know your availability at time of submission if you won't be at V-Con the entire weekend.)

Short stories, novel chapter(s) with a page of background info, SF poetry, and scripts for stage or screen are eligible.

Send manuscript (with name, address, phone number and email address on the first page) in the format appropriate to the genre (with numbered pages) and the \$10.00 fee (make check or money order out to Fran Skene) in a 9" x 12" envelope to: VCon 27 Writers Workshops, c/o Fran Skene, 109-8460 Jellicoe Street, Vancouver, BC V5S 4S8.

More info: phone Fran at 604-433-8817 or email fskene@axion.net.

From Frances Skene <fskene@axionet.com>, 6 Feb 2002

Book Reviews

(reprinted from the *Vancouver Sun* of Saturday, Feb. 16, 2002)

Reviewed by Donna McMahon

Craig Nova, *WETWARE*, Random House, 2002

A well-known Canadian science fiction writer recently described the difference between literary fiction readers and science fiction readers. She passed a story she'd just written to a literary friend. The friend read it and said she was sorry, but she didn't understand the story. The characters did incomprehensible things and the setting seemed especially peculiar and unrealistic – like no place she knew of. The writer replied, "But this story is set on the planet Mars. It says so in the first paragraph." "Oh," said the literary reader. "I thought that was a metaphor."

Conversely, science fiction readers will have great difficulty with *WETWARE*, the ninth novel by literary author Craig Nova. Because this book is set in the near future (2026) and its protagonist is a geneticist working in the biotech industry, it might be mistaken for science fiction. Not, however, by science fiction readers.

Hal Briggs works for Galapagos Wetware. Fresh from his success at designing subhuman slaves to do dangerous or unpleasant work, he is now building a sentient human prototype to carry out more complex tasks—espionage and law enforcement, for example. The idea is to build pseudo-people who will carry out orders without hesitation or moral scruple, but Briggs decides to hack a few extras into their code, such as the ability to appreciate beauty. Then he gets carried away and adds more, giving the woman musical talent and an irresistible impulse to find and love Briggs himself.

Briggs, of course, knows he will be caught sooner or later. What he doesn't know is that he isn't the only one making illicit changes to this project. And when the prototype man and woman go missing, nobody, including him, knows what will happen.

John Irving, who is a big fan of Craig Nova, says that he "demonstrates a knack for finding evil in both the common-most and most unexpected places" and excels in "the discovery of human weakness when and where it is a most unwelcome discovery." I certainly could not dispute this. *WETWARE* is the sort of modern novel where depressed, alienated characters spend long periods of time contemplating the banality, futility and brutality of modern existence until they either meet a gruesome death, or drift off in enigmatic directionlessness.

Literary aficionados who enjoy reading finely crafted prose and decoding its complex symbological and metaphorical underpinnings may like this book a great deal. Further, the action is generally well paced, some settings are very vivid, and some details, such as poisonous corporate politics, are convincingly portrayed.

Genre readers will notice that there are no characters to like or empathize with in this book, that the setting is current day with only a few bits of unconvincing futuristic wallpaper, and that the plot sputters out. (Nova will build a threat over many chapters and then eliminate it almost instantly, or even let important action take place offstage and simply be announced by a character.) SF readers will also wonder why the creation of a race of subhuman slaves has had no visible economic, social or political impact on the world, or how one scientist working alone in a poorly equipped basement can make a vaccine for a newly discovered plague overnight, or even why anybody in an age of genetically optimized drugs would bother smoking opium.

And readers with even a cursory understanding of biological science or biotech companies will simply guffaw. For example: our protagonist types genetic code as if he's a computer programmer (something that, if it ever becomes possible, lies centuries ahead) and his project creates two different human beings almost perfectly on the first try. Cloning Dolly the sheep – a simpler task by orders of magnitude – took years of effort and many failed attempts.

In the 1940's and 50's science fiction often conveyed a naive faith that science would solve all humanity's problems. This was inevitably followed by the New Wave backlash of the 1970's with a slew of books about how greed drives science and we're destroying our planet. In 2002 this isn't news. The cutting edge of SF is asking the big questions: Does human nature really make war inevitable? How can we organize five billion people so that individuals have dignity, freedom and choice? How do we balance technological development with ethics, or rationality with faith?

The literary community likes to moan about how literary authors are underappreciated by average readers. But the real culprit is these writers' obsession with gloom, futility and the angst of the overeducated/underemployed classes, which make literary novels irrelevant to

anyone who wants to look ahead for plausible hope or inspiration, or even just sit down for a good, entertaining read.

I'll stick with *real* science fiction, thanks.

NEWS

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historical and contemporary sections of the exhibition will be supplemented with popular cultural representations of the cyborg ranging from 19th century illustrations and prints to contemporary film and Japanese anime, literature, comic books and illustrations.”

Stan Hyde, MATC #15, 2 Feb. 2002

Our New Handbook is Out

Steve Samuel volunteered to HTMLize the second edition of the *BCSFA Member's Handbook*, which I have updated and expanded with some overview articles by Robert Runte of Lethbridge. The Handbook has now been posted at <http://www3.telus.net/dh2/bcsfa/>. All BCSFA members are urged to download their copy of the *Handbook* from Steve's website.

Dead-tree versions of the *Handbook* will also be available to non-members from **Stop Press** (which is me) at a *positively unbeatable* nominal price.

A PROPOS DE RIEN: One More Manic Idea from Garth

In the middle of our correspondence, I found myself babbling to Steve:

“I am getting more politicised. Not that I'm any more inclined to get personally involved, face-to-face, with community service or political action or like that;, but I'm getting more and more inclined to throw caution to the winds, and start doing a non-SF-fandom opinion zine, ranting about local politics and economy and the Evil Sinister World Trade Organization Multilateral Investment So-Called Free Trade It Is to Laugh Conspiracy. Also I want to start a Home Guard for anti-terrorism defence, under the aegis of the **Royal Swiss Navy** (which is me); because there are certainly terrorists, but the war on terrorism is not certainly directed against terrorists.

“Is this a non-starter? What do you think?”

Steve replied:

“I like the idea of the RSN Home Guard. I think that it has the opportunity to become rather popular among the politically annoyed.”

Stephen Samuel <samuel@bcgreen.com>, 3 Feb. 2001

THE CONTINUING ADVENTURES OF CANVENTION 2002

Paul “Ogre” Bushell wrote to me in early February:

“Con-Version membership prices have dropped so hopefully you will be able to attend this year. Memberships are \$40 until July 31 (no incremental increases!), \$50 at the door. Hotel prices are \$99 per night at the Westin, but since we are downtown, if you stay anywhere else, it is easy to get downtown. The hotel has given us one free night for an early bird raffle. For all those that book rooms at the Westin prior to the end of May (date to be confirmed) they will be a draw for one night free. We will be getting our booking codes up on the website very soon.”

*Paul “Ogre” Bushell
President, Calgary SFF Society
(this is official now!)
Chair, Con-Version 19/ Can-Vention 22
2 Feb 2002*

Concerning Convention procedures, he also wrote: “If you have any questions, or any suggestions, or comments you can send me, it would be appreciated.” I referred him to Graeme and to Murray Moore right away.

Later in February, I had email correspondence with Danita *, Con-Version's Aurora Awards coordinator, and referred her again to Graeme and also to Paul Valcour. (Unfortunately I have no name or contact information for the Aurora Awards coordinator for Convention 20, Toronto Trek in 2000.)

Canzine Issues

John Mansfield is ceasing to publish *Con-TRACT*, the bimonthly newsletter listing conventions across Canada.

Con-TRACT has been running since 1988 on a bimonthly basis, first via regular post and then through the Internet. John's major concerns were to list SF, gaming and other conventions across Canada, and to examine critically how they were run. He was in a position to do this, not only because he played a leading role in the Winnipeg SF Society and the annual convention,

Keycon, and not only by chairing the Winnipeg Worldcon; in my research materials on Canadian fanhistory I found his name appearing at the founding meeting of various Canadian SF clubs, ranging as far apart as Fredericton and Calgary, starting in 1966.

There have been a number of national fan periodicals, either published or attempted or at least talked about, since at least the 1970s. *CONTRACT* assumed some of the functions of a national newszine after the demise of *MLR*, *Xeno-File* and (apparently) *Under the Ozone Hole* in the

early 1990s, which themselves persevered after *The Maple Leaf Rag* and *New Canadian Fandom* folded in the late 1980s. (John's wife Linda Ross-Mansfield herself published such a periodical, *Northern Lights*, up to the early 1980s.) But *CONTRACT*'s function as a con listing, and apparent space constraints, militated against assuming all the functions a national newszine might perform. We have now to see who can, or will, step into the gap.

Paul Valcour, The Ottawa SF Statement,
Jan. 2002

GREAT BARGAINS AT STEVE FORTY'S!

COME SEE THE VCON 27 BENEFIT AUCTION!!

HERE'S A WHOLE BUNCH OF STUFF SOME GREAT SILLY FOOLS DONATED!!!

GET'EM WHILE THEY LAST!!!!

at Steve Forty's, 1129 Spruce Ave., Coquitlam,
March 16, 7:00 p.m.

A CASE OF HOME-BREWED BEER - donated by
Doug Finnerty

ASSORTED PAPERBACK FICTION AND NON-FICTION

Hogue, *1000 for 2000* (outdated predictions to laugh at)

Fry, *Improve Your Memory*

Frank, *Speed Reading Secrets*

Paul Williams, *The Dome in the Forest & The Breaking of Northwall* (slightly dog-eared)

Huxley, *Brave New World*

Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters*

Smith & Rusch, *The Tenth Planet*

Rollins, *Subterranean*

DeBrandt, *Timberjak*

COLLECTIBLE T-SHIRTS (UNOBTAINABLE ELSEWHERE!!)

"I Gave My Body to Science Fiction at Westercon 44" (Oddsson's design, in blue on white)

"Mars Wins! VCon 21" (white & red on black)

"ConText 89" (white on blue)

"Star Trek: Next Generation" with Deanna Troy (two shirts!!)

"I Am Programmed in Multiple Techniques ..." scene with Data

"I'm Easy" (white on red)

"Tortured Young Geniuses Make Better Lovers" (multicolour)

"Murphy's Law ..." (multicolour)

"I Survived Hurricane Hugo" (1989)

"Deep Blue Sea" (white on blue)

"ConFrancisco '93" (multicolour; slightly discoloured in wash)

"I'm O+ Are You My Type?" (slightly worn)

ASSORTED INDEPENDENT COMICS

Albedo (Gallacci)

Big Black Thing (Upton)

Buddha on the Road (Upton)

Cap'n Quick & A Foozle

Cerebus (Sim)

Command Review (Gallacci)

Flaming Carrot

Fusion (Gallacci)

Girl Genius (Foglio)

Heartbreak Comix (Boswell)
Journey
Mechanics (Hernandez)
Mister X
Neil the Horse (Saba)
Nightlife
Northguard
Reid Fleming (Boswell)
Savage Henry (Howarth)
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It Goes on the Shelf
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Knarley Knews, The
Maple Leaf Rag back issues (nos. 1 through 15, 1983 through 1985)
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Neutral Zone Journal
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Nonstop Fun Is Hard on the Heart
NSFFS
Opuntia
Ottawa SF Statement
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Plokta
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Space Cadet Gazette
Steam Engine Time
The Bulletin
Thyme
Tortoise
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- anything not donated by Doug Finnerty has been donated by Garth Spencer.