

BCSFA *ZINE* 193

She may only have been an old spacer's daughter, but Bobi was talented and beautiful.



BCSFAZINE # 193
JUNE 1989



Published Monthly By The
BRITISH COLUMBIA
SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 35577, Stn. E
Vancouver, B.C.
V6M 4G9

Full Membership \$15
Family (2 votes) \$18

BCSFAZINE Also Available
For The Usual

EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT

Constantin Hiebner
(986-8538)

VICE-PRESIDENT

Kathleen Moore-Freeman
(736-1291)

TREASURER

Dan Dubrick (583-1972)

SECRETARY

Frances Higginson
(438-9545)

INFORMATION OFFICER

(Bcsfa Editor)
R. Graeme Cameron
(The Graeme) (731-7553)

BCSFA PRINTER

Steve Forty (S.40)
(936-4754)

OFFICIAL ARCHIVIST

Gerald Boyko (327-9737)

BCSFA Logo - Tim Hammell

ART CREDITS

Front Cover
- BTAMP -

Back Cover
- ALEXIS GILLILAND -

UPCOMING

JUNE 9, 16,.....F.R.E.D. EVERY FRIDAY

TIME OUT LOUNGE, Centennial Motor Hotel, 898 West Broadway, Vancouver, one block east of Oak Street, starting 8:00 PM. Birthday Fred June 16th, cakes by Stewart & Vicki. All fans and aliens welcome!

JUNE 11, WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Under the direction of Don H. DeBrandt. Shadow Gate Manor, 4336 E. Georgia st. Burnaby, call (294-9092) Fuzzy writing need shearing? Join the carnage! 2 PM.

* JUNE 16 (at Fred) BCSFAZINE DEADLINE! *

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE SUBMIT CONTRIBUTIONS BY JUNE 16TH! STEVE FORTY WILL BE PRINTING THE JULY ISSUE ONE WEEK EARLY ON SUNDAY JUNE 25. I WILL ACCEPT MATERIAL ON JUNE 23 AT FRED, BUT ONLY IF I HAVE TO.

JUNE 17, BCSFA GENERAL MEETING

Shadow Gate Manor starting at 8PM at 4336 E. Georgia Street, Burnaby. Call (294-9092) Executive meeting earlier at 7:30 PM. After meetings, an evening of weird & unusual video. Prepare to be astonished!

JUNE 18, WRITERS' WORKSHOP

Don H. DeBrandt leads another assault on writer's egos! Same location as before. 2 PM. You can take it! Develop a thick skin! Excoriate your ego!

JUNE 25, COLLATION-OF BCSFAZINE

Learn how Bcsfazine is printed and assembled. Printing begins at noon, collation at 2-2:30 PM. Watch S.40 work his magic! 1129 Spruce Avenue, Coquitlam. Phone (936-4754)

JUNE 30, - JULY 2, CONTEXT 89

At Lister Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta. GOH: William Gibson. Fan GOH: Charles De Lint. Artist GOH: Leo & Dianne Dillon. Science GOH: Dr. Brad Thompson. Pro guests include Eileen Kernaghan, Michael Coney, Judith Merrill. The theme is literature & art. Membership: \$25. For info write: Context 89, 10523 100th Ave, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5J 0A8.

JUNE 30, - JULY 4, WESTERCON 42

Marriott Hotel, Anaheim California. GOH: John Varley Membership: \$45 US to June 16. \$60 at door. For info write: Westercon 42, c/o S.C.I.P.I., box 8442, Van Nuys California, U.S.A., 91409. (RIDE INFO PAGE 24)

JULY 8, WRECK BEACH PICNIC

To celebrate our win/loss of the Westercon bid. From Place Vanier dormitories on UBC campus (bus stop in front) cross Marine road to the cliffs & descend the path with wooden steps (200 ft down), turn right at the bottom & look for our group in the logs under the trees. If you don't like steep cliffs, you can always walk in from Spanish Banks East beach, a mere two miles over boulders. WARNING! Wreck Beach is Vancouver's nude sunbathing beach. Pasty-skinned types should bring plenty of sun-block lotion to protect their cloning appurtenances.

JULY 21-23, CONVERSION 6

Westin Hotel, Calgary, Alberta. GOH: Harry Harrison. Workshop GOH: Barry Longyear. CON GOH: Guy Gavriel Kay. Membership: \$20 till Jun 30, then \$25. For info write: Conversion 6, Box 1088, Stn. M, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2K9. (403) 242-1807.

JULY 28-31, MYTHCON XX

At Gage Towers, University of B.C., Vancouver, B.C. GOH: Guy Gavriel Kay. Scholar GOH: Raymond H. Thompson. Workshop GOH: Eileen Kernaghan. Theme: Mythic elements in fantasy. Papers presented, art show, dance. Membership: \$30. Write: Mythcon XX, Box 806, Stn. A, Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5N2. (SEE PAGE 23)

MANY THANKS TO MAY COLLATORS

Ed Hutchings, Gordon McLeod, Francis Higginson, Doug Finnerty, Steve Forty & R. Graeme Cameron.

EDITORIAL

WHY I BECAME GOD-EDITOR OF BCSFAZINE

For the POWER! Yes! Inestimable amounts of POWER! And for the GROUPIES! And the MONEY! Tonnes of MONEY!

Hah! Wait till you see the new subscription rates! \$600 per issue...in gold! None of which will be spent on the magazine. I plan to run my editorship the way Marcos ran the Philippines...After all, what's the point of absolute power if it doesn't engender absolute wealth?

Meanwhile, those nasty rumours I intend to convert BCSFAzine into a perzine are quite obviously untrue...But perhaps I should make a token effort to address the matter of editorial policy.

BCSFAzine will remain a 28 page, digest-sized monthly clubzine offering both club news and information, and essays, articles and reviews written by members. MY POLICY CONCERNING CONTRIBUTIONS IS THIS: SF is explicitly conceptual. Let's treat the genre as such. The emphasis will be on adult, intelligent comment with humour. There are no sacred cows. Humour is a civilizing, even socially responsible influence and is to be encouraged. Each page must be interesting, entertaining, amusing, outrageous, or at the very least, informative. Most important of all, even if a particular subject holds no interest for a given reader, the contributor's treatment of that subject must be interesting! However, though authors, film-makers, lowly politicians and other BN types are fairgame for (reasonably) intelligent criticism of their works and views, nothing in the way of fan feuding will be permitted. I want to continue S.40's positive, upbeat approach, avoiding all partisanship.

And speaking of STEVE FORTY, your editorial policy and hard work made BCSFAzine a delight to find in the mailbox. On behalf of the club, congratulations on an excellent job! And thank you for your splendidly masochistic generous offer to continue on as printer! Just think Steve, as your just reward for three fine years as editor, you'll have more time to relax at Wreck beach where you won't have to think about BCSFAzine! Your thoughts will be free to turn to other things...

THE GRAEME

Table of contents

PAGE	
(-4)	BCSFA EXEC/GEN MEETINGS.....(Minutes).....FRANCES HIGGINSON
(-5)	WCPSCCA MEETING.....(Minutes).....FRANCES HIGGINSON
(-6)	THE LIGHT-HEARTED VITUPERATOR & JOLLY REVILER. (Films).....STAN G. HYDE
(-8)	BOOKS FROM THE GOLDEN AGE...(Books).....ED HUTCHINGS
(10)	STAR TREK PHILOSOPHY?.....(Essay).....LISA COHEN
(11)	IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD.....(Writing).....DON E. DEBRANDT
(12)	SEX LIFE OF GODZILLA.....(Science).....R.GRAEME CAMERON
(14)	ARCHAEOFOLOGY.....(Science).....DOUG GIRLING
(16)	SPACED-OUT REPORT.....(Report).....PSUEDO-TRIM
(18)	ADAPTATIONS.....(Essay).....DALE SPEIRS
(19)	BOOKENDS.....(Books).....DAN DAVIDSON
(20)	NIBBLES.....(Books).....JOHN NULLOCK
(22)	NEWS, RUMOURS, SCANDALS AND FAIRY-TALES. (News).....JO-ANNE MCBRIDE
(23)	ANNOUNCEMENTS.....(News)
(24)	DEBBIE DOES BIRTHDAYS.....(Column).....DEBBIE MIYASHITA
(25)	LOCS FROM BEYOND.....(Letters)
(27)	ZINE SCENE.....(Trades).....GARTH SPENCER

SENTRY BOX WEST HOBBIES

BOARD
GAMES

D&D
STUFF

3309 W. 4TH AVE.
VANCOUVER, B.C.



25 mm
LEAD
FIGURES

10% discount for
BCSFA members with
card

(604) 734-1933

BCSFA EXECUTIVE MEETING - MAY 20TH, 1989

Present: Sidney Trim
Kathleen Moore-Freeman
Dan Dubrick
Frances Higginson
Steve Forty

Also new executive members:
Con Hiebner
R. Graeme Cameron

Place: Steve Forty's.

The meeting begins at 8:00 PM.

SUPPLIES: Steve Forty announced that, for printing, he will need about \$850 for the next year's supplies for publication of BCSFAzine. This includes paper, stencils and ink. After breakdown of approximate costs for these items, the committee okayed this expenditure. Also Steve asked that, if necessary in the future, he could go straight to the treasurer for money to fix any machines requiring repair, and this was also approved.

SCHEDULING OF MEETINGS: Steve suggested that, from now on, mention be made of the location not only of the NEXT meeting in the BCSFAzine but also the location of the FOLLOWING MEETING as well. The committee thought this was a good idea.

NEXT MEETING: The June meeting will be held June 17th at Shadowgate. July is yet to be planned, & the request for a location will be made at the general meeting.

AUGUST PICNIC: This will be brought up at the general meeting to see if someone would like to organize this.

YEAR END FISCAL STATEMENT: Dan Dubrick announced that a year end statement will be given soon. (The official year end is April 30th)

TRANSFERRING OF SIGNING POWER: June Osborne and Sidney Trim will need to sign a letter stating that they are no longer signing officers. Kathleen and Con will be the new signing officers and will need to meet at our bank to attend to this.

MAIL BOX: Con H. asked when renewal of our mail box is due. Dan indicated this is soon and costs about \$40 to \$50. Sidney T. has been picking up the mail.

WELCOME: Steve Forty suggested we formally welcome the next committee into power and wish them good luck! Done.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

BCSFA GENERAL MEETING - MAY 20TH, 1989

Place: Steve Forty's.

The Meeting began at 8:55 P.M. with about 23 members present.

ELECTIONS: The New Executive was introduced: Con Hiebner - President, Kathleen Moore-Freeman - Vice President, R. Graeme Cameron - Information Officer (Editor), Dan Dubrick - Treasurer, and Frances Higginson as Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Dan Dubrick announced that the treasury was low mainly because many BCSFA members are due for renewal now.

SUPPLIES: Steve Forty asked if the membership would okay \$850 to buy BCSFAzine supplies. Ed Hutchings made the formal motion and Con H. seconded. Carried.

V-CON 17: Con H. made an appeal to help set up Thursday night at Totem

residence with a party in Jeanne and Spider Robinson's room after. There are now 312 members.

WESTERCON: Fran Skene and Terry Fowler will be driving down for the July 1st weekend (the Tuesday before actually). **APPEAL FOR INTERESTED PEOPLE TO ACCOMPANY THEM AND HELP WITH THE BID IN LOS ANGELES.** SEE PAGE 24) Pre-supporting newsletter will go out next week. Video is well underway and it looks good so far. Contact Barb Dryer if you want to help with the video. Westercon prices are likely to be \$45 before June 15th & \$65 after June 15th. Guests will be announced later, but there will likely be a good representation of Western Canada writers.

JUNE MEETING: Shadowgate Manor, Programming will be video highlights of V-CON 17 including ST THE PEPSI GENERATION and Westercon promotion Vid.

JULY MEETING: No location decided upon yet.

AUGUST PICNIC: No person has volunteered for this responsibility yet. Likely location is Locarno Beach as last year.

WRITER'S GROUP: Next meeting is in June but no date set yet. Location: Shadowgate. (Editor's note: Meetings set for June 11 & 18. See Upcoming)

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

WCSFCCA EXECUTIVE MEETING - MAY 20TH, 1989

Present: Al Betz
Steve Forty
Terry Fowler

Absent: Garth Spencer
(Frances H. taking minutes)
Mike Bailey

Place: Steve Forty's

The meeting convened at 8:30 P.M.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss a proposed bid for V-CON 18. A quorum was declared.

Lisa Smedman proposed organizing a fantasy con for V-CON in 1990 - the theme is "Worlds Of Fantasy". So far, she has in mind three writers whom she named, and possibly an artist GOH. The dates would be May 25th to May 27th inclusive. She will try to have the Canada Council help in financing the visits of some of the guests. Decision is yet to be made on a possible fourth writer and a fan GOH. Her breakeven calculated budget is \$2,020 and \$2,275 if a fourth writer is added. Expenses would be \$15,200 and income expected is \$18,950 leaving a small profit. (Buffer zone) The likely location would be Gage residence. The V-CON membership price will be one dollar more than this year across the board. Lisa will try to avoid cash flow problems which plague many cons. Key positions on the Con committee have been filled. Al Betz asked whether he thought there would likely be the same number of members for a fantasy con (rather than SF) and several members expressed that there would probably be even more ... Al Betz clarified that a motion was needed that Lisa Smedman be entitled to use the V-CON 18 name. Steve Forty made this motion and Terry Fowler seconded. Carried. The general meeting followed immediately after.

WCSFCCA GENERAL MEETING - MAY 20TH, 1989

This meeting followed immediately after the executive meeting. Motion was made by Steve Forty to accept Lisa Smedman's bid for V-CON 18. Con H. seconded. Carried by all members present. Meeting adjourned 8:50 P.M.

NEVILLE BOOKS



Hardcovers & Paperbacks ...
Modern Literature, Classics,
Genre Fiction, Children's Books,
Military History and a Wide
Range of Quality Non-Fiction.

10% discount for
BCSFA members with
card

5211 Neville Street
South Burnaby, B.C. V5J 2H6

(at Royal Oak, one
block south of Rumble)

Phone 435-6500

THE LIGHTHEARTED VITUPERATOR AND JOLLY REVILER

First the film news ... To begin with, a sad note, Bray Film studios, the home of Hammer films from 1950-1968 is being redeveloped into an office complex. Bray was used mostly to film commercials in recent years, but is best known as the home of such films as HORROR OF DRACULA, CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN, and the film versions of Nigel Kneale's Quatermass stories. When Hammer Films won the Queen's award for exporting in the 1960's, they were reviled as promoters of blood and sex, but in retrospect their films seem positively fairy tale-like when compared with the cinematic blood-letting of the 1980's. Appropriately, the last film shot at Bray was Nicolas Roeg's THE WITCHES, with Anjelica Huston as a witch turning all of England's children into mice.

Cannon films is lensing THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, with Robert Englund in the cast. This is the fifth version of the film. At least Cannon is crediting the film as "from Gaston Leroux's novel" unlike the current Andrew Lloyd Webber musical which is "inspired by Gaston Leroux's novel."

DICK TRACY is being shot by Disney with Warren Beatty, Madonna, Al Pacino, and George C. Scott in the cast. Clive Barker's NIGHT BREED, from 20th Century Fox, is being directed by Barker from his own script and has Canadian director David Cronenberg in the cast. THE JETSONS was produced by Universal before the death of George O'Hanlon, the voice of George Jetson in the animated series. Two animated features were completed at the same time. For years, Universal attempted to film a big-budget, live-action JETSONS.

One of the most interesting film starts is THE HANDMAID'S TALE based on the Margaret Atwood novel with a screenplay by Harold Pinter. I have reservations despite Pinter's involvement. In a recent interview star Robert Duvell admitted that his girlfriend hated the book and that he gave it up after reading two pages. (How do actors get to be so smart?) As well, director Volker Schlöndorff felt that the premise that America could get so bad was "unbelievable" so that he approached it "more as a love story."

Stuart Gordon, director of RE-ANIMATOR, FROM BEYOND, and the soon to be released ROBOT JOX, is shooting THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM for Band company. The film features Peter O'Toole, Sherilyn Fenn, and Billy Dee Williams.

There's a new spate of Vampire films on the horizon. (What is it about being bit in the neck anyway?). THE AWAKENING is about a vampire who specializes in drinking the blood of criminals (gives new meaning to the term Batman). It features Michael J. Pollard, Moon Zappa, and Tom Savini. SUNDOWN is about scientists who try to help Vampires give up the habit (shades of HOUSE OF DRACULA). It stars David Carradine, M. Emmet Walsh, and John Ireland. Apparently Mr. Ireland will also appear in another Vampire tale, TERROR NIGHT.

Other titles of genre interest are Michael Wadleigh's VILLAGE AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE, GOBLINS/BEWARE CHILDREN AT PLAY, GHOST DAD, SOMETHING IS WAITING, RE-ANIMATOR 2, LITTLE MONSTERS, CLASS OF 1999, MONSTROSITY, HEADHUNTER, THE CHILLING (with the ever-popular Linda Blair), and BEYOND THE RISING MOON.

THE MUTE DECADE: PART ONE

MILLENNIUM, the science fiction screenplay written by John Varley around 1978, has had its release date pushed back to fall, probably to avoid the "war of the gargantuas" this summer as a flood of sequels clog the screens: GHOSTBUSTERS 2, INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE, STAR TREK 5, NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 5, and FRIDAY THE 13TH 8 (It says a lot about the current movie audience that the longest running series in recent memory is a group of plotless films about teenagers having sex and being butchered).

I'm hoping that MILLENNIUM had its release date pushed back to avoid the competition (Besides the sequels already mentioned, there are other heavyweights like BATMAN due in June, and James Cameron's THE ABYSS in July, as well as a host of other genre films in the bullpen, MARTIANS GO HOME, HONEY! I'VE SHRUNK THE KIDS, and THE BORROWER). I'm a little worried that 20th Century Fox delayed MILLENNIUM because it's awful and they want a short Autumn release for advertising followed by a quick dump to video.

I have a nostalgic feeling for the film because I mentioned it at length in one of the first of these columns I ever did, back in '79 sometime. At that time, it seemed like the beginning of a new career for a writer who had blazed through the Science Fiction magazines and had started to write some pretty impressive novels.

by Stan G. Hyde

Besides that, *BLADE RUNNER* and *DUNE* were on the horizon. Harlan Ellison was scripting *I ROBOT*. Dick's *WE CAN BUILD YOU* was being turned into a screenplay.

It looked like written SF was finally going to arrive on the screen in a big way ... We all know how that turned out.

It seems to me that what happened on the movie screens to Science Fiction in the '70's also happened to written Science Fiction. The '60's had clearly identifiable movements, new waves -- British and American -- with hard SF and reactionary SF in response. Writers like Dick, Le Guin, Delany, Zelazny, built careers and voices through the '60's, writing many of their most impressive works near the decade's end. (Delany's *DHALGREN*, though published in the '70's, was a speculative fiction examination of the archetypes of the '60's.) Two original anthologies, *DANGEROUS VISIONS* and *AGAIN DANGEROUS VISIONS* summed up the decade.

In the sixties there was a storm of voices.

The seventies, it seems to me, had no voice.

Ringo Starr said in an interview back in 1970 that he believed Rock and Roll evolved in cycles that took about ten years. "We had Elvis in 1954, and the Beatles in 1964. I don't know what's coming in 1974, but I'm going to be watching." ... We all know how that turned out.

It seems to me that the voices of the '70's were mostly diverted somehow. Some, like Varley and George R. R. Martin, got sucked into Hollywood's maw; some, like Joanna Russ seemed to retreat into academic pursuits, some, like James Tiptree Jr. grew strangely silent.

The keynote anthology of that decade, *THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS*, remains unpublished.

And after *STAR WARS* was released, when Science Fiction writers began to receive decent advances for novels, what was produced seemed to be oddly alike. The genre had made the huge advance from "that Buck Roger's stuff" to "that Star War's stuff." ... We all know how that turned out.

By the '80's the big money in the field went to old time writers returning to careers they had left for more profitable fields. Frank Herbert wrote sequels to a book he produced in the '60's. Isaac Asimov wrote sequels to books he produced in the '40's.

There was less money for newer writers in the field, so it was safer for them to write sequels too. Roger Zelazny, one of the most impressive writers of the '60's, begins an interminable series (*Amber*) largely modelled after an older series by Philip Jose Farmer (*World Of Tiers*). Piers Anthony, whose ecology-centred books *OMNIVORE* and *ORN* had real teeth, begins to write *XANTH* books ... lots of them.

(It's an odd thing, sequels in SF. You start reading SF because you discover whole new worlds, but somewhere along the line a lot of people seem to stop wanting new worlds and instead just want to go back to the same old ones all the time.)

Maybe it's just that my Golden Age of Science Fiction was over in the '70's (You know what they say, the Golden Age of Science Fiction is twelve, for me that's 1968-69). Maybe some of you who were twelve in '78 should be telling me about the great stuff that was published then.

All I know is that when I walk into an SF book store, what's on the racks all looks pretty much the same. (I think I have an explanation for that, but I'll save it for next month.)

In the meantime, *MILLENIUM* is coming out at last, and it was even better to find out at V-CON 17 that John Varley is writing prose fiction again after a long hiatus, not just screenplays that never get produced. The wait has been much too long, but maybe some of those lost directions can be found again. (I'm tired of supplying remaindered copies of *TITAN* and *THE BARBIE MURDERS* to High School kids who don't know who Varley is.)

Now if George R. Martin would only write something new (Surely after *NIGHTFLYERS* he wants to), and if Zelazny would only give up *Amber* books ...

SUMMER FILM RELEASE DATES.

June: *BATMAN*, *GHOSTBUSTERS 2*, *HONEY! I'VE SHRUNK THE KIDS*, *STAR TREK 5: THE FINAL FRONTIER*.

July: *THE ABYSS*, *BABAR*, *THE BORROWER*, *ERIK THE VIKING*, *LICENSE TO KILL*, *THE PUNISHER*.

August: *FRIDAY THE 13TH PART 8*, *LITTLE MONSTERS*, *MARTIANS! GO HOME!*, *YOUNG EINSTEIN*, *NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 5*, *MARTIANS!*, *ROBOT JOX*.

WHAT TO READ FROM THE GOLDEN AGE

This idea is shamelessly stolen (the idea and title, not the material) from an article of the same name in NOVA ODYSSEUS. I'm ashamed to say that when I looked in our trade file I couldn't find it again, so I can't give the author's name. I'd certainly recommend the original in NOV.O. Apart from the fact that NOV. O. had the idea first, their author's reading in older SF had been different from mine, so there is almost no overlap of the two articles. This list is based on my own reading in SF and some 'Munsey style' adventure (avoiding most fantasy) in the period before 1935; I definitely don't claim a comprehensive knowledge of the field. I don't apologise for including some famous names. Lots of well-known authors go virtually unread.

-- JULES VERNE: Well known but not much read and somewhat misunderstood. Verne is not a crude writer and he is not a children's writer. At the risk of displeasing the maud. Ang., if you can possibly read Verne in French, do so. Verne in French is funny. His light style and optimistic mood make him a great stylist and he is read with pleasure by European adults today, but his translators plus the influence of 'supporters' like Gernsback have ruined him for English speaking audiences. (in fact I often think that translated Verne sounds as if it was written by Gernsback!) See a book called 'The Annotated FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON' for a discussion (with awful examples) of Verne's problems with translators. Verne is a 'Voyagiste', that is a writer about travel in the very old tradition in which the places were marvellous and the means amazing. Verne brought the tradition up to (19 cent) date by emphasizing popular science, but the important element through most of his career is the voyage. Thus AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHTY DAYS and 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA belong to the same genre. The idea of Verne as a 'predictor' is mostly from Gernsback. For example, although Verne's NAUTILUS involves very fancy engineering, he didn't think that he was 'predicting' the submarine. We know this because he deliberately named his sub after a submarine by Fulton called the NAUTILUS which was exhibited in France, 60-odd years before the book! Verne's optimistic novels, FROM THE EARTH TO THE MOON, AROUND THE MOON, JOURNEY TO THE CENTRE OF THE EARTH, FIVE WEEKS IN A BALLOON, 20,000 LEAGUES, MYSTERIOUS ISLAND, AROUND THE EARTH IN 80 DAYS, ROBUR THE CONQUEROR are just plain good books; however Verne's optimism didn't survive the Franco-Prussian war; his latest novels like MASTER OF THE WORLD, THE BEGUM'S FORTUNE, FACE THE FLAG, have a glum tone which I don't much like (FACE THE FLAG is the original of the movie FABULOUS WORLD OF JULES VERNE).

-- GEORGE GRIFFITHS: Historically important. His THE ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION inaugurated the 'technological Armageddon' plot line (before Wells) in SF and is a decent story. There is a passable sequel OLGA ROMANOFF (Hyperion Press has these two). Thereafter G.G. got bad very fast. I defy anyone to read the opening few lines of his HONEYMOON IN SPACE (which one sees praised occasionally) without laughing.

-- MAJOR GILBERT CHESNEY: Writer of one piece of fiction, the short story THE BATTLE OF DORKING. The name sounds funny to a North American but this small masterpiece was hailed in England in the 1880's and inaugurated the 'future war' story. (Do we have Chesney to blame for Jerry Pournelle?) It can be found in Moorcock's anthology BEFORE ARMAGEDDON. If you're interested in influences, get both this and ANGEL OF THE REVOLUTION to see their influence on H.G. Wells's WAR OF THE WORLDS.

-- H.G. WELLS: Also well-known, but some comments are in order. Everybody knows TIME MACHINE, WAR OF THE WORLDS, FIRST MEN IN THE

by Ed Hutchings

MOON, ISLAND OF DR. MOREAU, but it's easy to miss THE INVISIBLE MAN and especially THE SLEEPER WAKES, which seems to have been deliberately written in the style of 19C SF and is quite interesting for that reason. Both WW and SW originally appeared with sets of terrific illustrations. It's not well known that the University of B.C. library has all eighty of the Warwick Goble illos for WW (if I ever get around to it, I'll make a set of slides of these). I think the SLEEPER illos (some have been reprinted but there are probably dozens that hardly anyone has seen) can be managed with an interlib. loan. Wells' later SF is mixed in with his sociological novels and hard to locate. If you really want to look at Wells' later SF, DAY OF THE COMET, WAR IN THE AIR, MODERN UTOPIA, Etc., a decent-sized library will probably have the 'Atlantic Edition' of his works (up to about 1931). This should not be ordered up frivolously. Expect a small truck.

-- DEPARTMENT OF LOST RACES AND MUNSEYANA IN GENERAL: You have to be prepared to like a 'romantic' prose style if you read these guys -- plenty of oratory and arm-waving; imperialist Englishmen like you wouldn't believe; the Americans killing anything that moves; lots of smug racism and a tendency to include women among the lesser breeds; juicy battles with much reference to mighty muscles and straining thews (though why constipated thews should be notable quite escapes me). It's customary to omit Kipling and Wells from this category (perhaps out of kindness), and if we do this then the first great exponent is H. RIDER HAGGARD whose SHE is schmaltzy but still a pretty good read (and catch the 30's movie version if you can). I'd also recommend KING SOLOMON'S MINES -- don't be put off by the fact that it notoriously contains a character called Umslopogaas who sounds like the best man at a Marryin' Sam Two dollar wedding. There are sequels to both these which I haven't read. CONAN DOYLE weighs in next with a series of stories, THE LOST WORLD plus two more about his famous professor Challenger, who is a sort of berserk Indiana Jones and great fun. I'd really only recommend LOST WORLD. Watch out for Doyle: some of his late novels are propaganda for the silliest kind of spiritualism. By this time there were specialist magazines for the exotic adventure story: ARGOSY, BLUE BOOK, ADVENTURE, MUNSEY'S, TRUE STORY are the best known. We meet authors like GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND and TALBOT MUNDY. Unless you're a fan of this sort of thing, I'd recommend just Mundy, whose TROS OF SAMOTHRACE trilogy is around in paperback in dealer's rooms. His JINGRIM is also okay. For modern tastes these authors are more readable than you would expect, but tend to go on too long. The great men of this tradition are BURROUGHS (who has his own entry here) and A.A. MERRIT, whose novels include five, THE MOON POOL, DWELLERS IN THE MIRAGE, THE SHIP OF ISHTAR, THE FACE IN THE ABYSS, THE FOX WOMAN (finished by Hannes Bok) which are supposed to be the greatest thing in this genre. This may be true, but they are also very similar to each other, and readers of Merrit tend to begin as admirers and then, after reading everything, end up hating him. I'd suggest getting at most two novels; my preference would be ISHTAR and MIRAGE. Lost race stories traditionally have staunch Nordic heroes with colourful, barbarian sidekicks who often steal the show. This tradition was revolutionized by ROBERT E. HOWARD, who kicked out the white hero and brought the barbarian to front and centre. It's so easy to kid Howard that his originality goes uncredited. Eventually C.L. MOORE (collection: JIREL OF JOIRY) and FRITZ LEIBER (a long series about Fahred and the Grey Mouser) brought the "sword & sorcery" story to what I think is the top of its form.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE: With some people Ed likes: such as E.E. Smith, Edgar Rice Burroughs, Clark Ashton Smith -- and some people he doesn't: Philip Nowlan, Ralph Milne Farley, Otis Adelbert Kline and others ...

'HUMANIST' PHILOSOPHY IN STAR TREK N.G.

by Lisa R. Cohen

Feel like squeezing blood from a stone? I get the urge every now and then. One of my favourite stones is STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION. It's a satisfying stone to squeeze because it isn't very dense and so one can with very little effort produce -- if not blood (or philosophy) -- at least artificial blood substitute (questions about philosophy).

Take the basic philosophical question "WHAT IS A HUMAN BEING?" STNG is as obsessed with this question as philosophers have been since Plato. We, as human beings -- with a vested interest in considering ourselves qualitatively different from cows and vacuum cleaners -- have long insisted that there are qualities particular and universal to ourselves that define the category "human"; such as sentience itself, the ability to communicate with language and to laugh and feel. Presumably, vacuum cleaners seldom laugh, and consequently cannot be considered sentient.

Why do we insist on this distinction? Because it provides comfortable justification (or rationalization) for the power we exercise over lesser creatures, such as cattle. In a sense, this is the modern version of the old biblical belief that humanity is the pinnacle of creation.

STNG very nicely challenges this tautological assumption on a near-weekly basis. In our universe -- so far -- neither cows nor vacuum cleaners have been able to put forth a convincing argument that they are our equals. (Or if they have, the SMOF have suppressed this fact) STNG not only suggests that non-human self-aware sentients would WANT to be considered equal with humanity, but that they would very likely possess the means to FORCE the issue in the face of human reluctance. That alien equality with humanity has been formalized through the institution of "THE UNITED FEDERATION OF PLANETS" is not a triumph of progressive liberalism, but is instead -- if you know human nature -- undoubtedly the end result of a titanic galaxy-wide political struggle.

In practical terms, for humanity the implications of this compromise are enormous. It means we could no longer consider ourselves unique, could no longer consider ourselves the very embodiment -- the living definition -- of what constitutes intelligent sentience (or humanity). Indeed, lifeforms with mental powers in addition to such as we possess may very well set a new standard of sentience against which we would be found lacking. This newfound sense of inferiority -- implied in the cultural background of STNG -- would knock the underpinnings from beneath our assumed MORAL RIGHT to control the destiny of lesser beings. We would ourselves be lesser beings. And I don't think we would like that. Somewhere, somehow, we would need someone we could feel comfortably superior to.

Which brings me to what started me on this particular stone-squeezing binge, namely the annoying number of second season shows featuring DATA. Annoying, because it seemed to me there was an unnecessary emphasis on the question of whether or not he was equivalent to a human being. He wouldn't have been given the status of a Star Fleet officer unless Star Fleet viewed him as AT LEAST the equivalent of a human. Yet the sniggering reaction on the part of human crew members to his attempts to understand humour, for example, indicates that he is far from being accepted as equal, and may in fact be included in the crew in order to give them something to snigger at. This may be psychologically necessary. AFTER ALL, ONE WRONG POLITICAL MOVE AND HUMANITY MIGHT WIND UP ON THE SAME PLANE AS COWS AND VACUUM CLEANERS AS FAR AS ALIENS ARE CONCERNED, AND WE WOULD LOSE THE RIGHT TO WEAR SPANDEX UNIFORMS AND RULE THE GALAXY. And that would be a real downer.

Mind you, I have to admit the question of whether or not DATA is truly human-equivalent is kind of interesting, and in my opinion has not yet been properly resolved in STNG. There IS a philosophically sound resolution possible, but you'll just have to wait until my next essay to find out what it is. Meanwhile, pity poor humanity. We may not be human ENOUGH.

PARTY ALERT!

Don't forget! Saturday, July 22nd, is 'Lunar Landing Day!' Come as you were then, or how you'd prefer people to believe you were like back on the occasion of Armstrong's brief lunar stroll. (Editor's comment: I was a geek in a Spock haircut & turtleneck) To be held at Shadowgate manor.

PLUG FOR LOCAL AUTHOR!

Spider Robinson's latest book is now available in local bookstores. 'CALLAHAN'S LADY', Ace hardcover, \$22.95, is an amusing and entertaining novel about a whorehouse catering to all, even aliens. Great cover too.

IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD by Don H. DeBrandt

That's right. My head contains everything (except my ego -- it won't fit) and in the months to come I will be sharing this esoteric knowledge with you, the humble reader and extension of myself. Why? Because for years, when I would magnanimously explain the secret workings of the universe to various versions of my self, they would whisper in awe to each other, "It's all in his head ..."

Quite a responsibility, you must agree.

The area of expertise I have decided to discuss is of course, the Creation and Care of Assorted Universes, or as it is sometimes known -- writing. This column will examine various techniques of world building, study examples both good and bad, and look at under-appreciated forms of the art. Would-be deities should find it instructive, and those with other interests should at least find it entertaining. Future columns will include: Mutant Cliches, You Got A Good Gall Bladder There, Invasion Of The British Body Pulpers, and Wise Guys Don't Talk Like That.

Any interesting happenings at the FICTONS Writing Workshops will also be passed along. A "shared Universe" issue is tentatively planned for six months from now, with all the stories taking place within the framework of the same reality. Anthologies of this type have become quite popular lately -- William Gibson once referred to it as "the braided mega-novel". He also called it "fiction by committee" and said it was a bad idea.

Is it? Several negative points leap to mind immediately. First, any novel written by more than two (three, tops) people is bound to be unfocused; too many points-of-view competing for attention. Second, creative control is in the hands of the (gasp!) publishers; if you don't give them what they want, you can be replaced -- by another, less stubborn author. I know, this can happen with any kind of book, but this set-up makes it much easier. Also, editors can use a few well-known, high-profile names to gain publicity, and then have the bulk of the writing done by lesser known writers -- who get a fraction of the the money the pros get.

So why do a shared universe at all? Well, for one thing you get to create characters and see how other writers handle them, and vice versa. You might get a chance to work with an author you admire and respect; the association might even turn out to be profitable.

Other craftsmen like carpenters or welders have an apprenticeship system that allows knowledge and experience to be passed on by working alongside your peers, but writing is basically a solitary profession. You can go to school to learn the basics of writing, but after that you're on your own. Collaborating with an experienced author can teach you more about the craft of writing in twenty minutes than two semesters of Creative Writing 101.

Sharing a universe also means sharing ideas, insights, inspirations. It may not mean a cohesive vision of a fictional world, but it will be a varied one. Working with other authors also provides you with built-in editing; weak concepts or wrong information can be spotted and weeded out more effectively. This is the strength of a committee -- with proper direction, it's more efficient than one person working alone.

So far, this is all theory; I haven't tried this kind of writing before. I don't expect it'll be easy -- if there's one thing that's hard to share, it's omnipotence ... Please remember to read this column next month -- since you're living in my head, it's only polite.

SEX LIFE OF GODZILLA

These being the highlights of the infamous lecture delivered by Dr. Nick Adams, Director of the Canadian contingent at the Ogasawara Island Institute (Commonly known as Monster Land), and his Field Observation Chief Dr. Craven Underfoot, before a stupefied audience at V-CON 17, May 27, 1989. The lecture struck me as extremely theoretical, but did seem to be backed up by the hardest, most conclusive evidence available to date.

I also observed that Dr. Underfoot appeared skittish and highly neurotic, and he may in fact have been driven quite insane by the stress of his field work, as witness these following remarks:

"Well, most of all, you have to be able to run fast, real, real fast. It's important to anticipate where they'll step next, and watch out for those swinging tails! Sometimes I just stand very still, cover my eyes, and scream ... Seems to work."

Most shocking of all, however, was the revelation concerning the frightening truth behind Mr. Science's self-imposed exile to Canada. So momentous is this crime, so hideous, I dare do no less than quote Dr. Craven Underfoot verbatim:

"The sudden outbreak of massive urban destruction by unusually large animals in the 1950's was unleashed by the irresponsible scientific research methods so prevalent at that time, in particular the notorious experiment by the infamous Mr. Science in which he activated an extraordinarily powerful electronic sexual pheromone emitter. Even alien monsters came to kill and destroy in the heat of their bloodlust. Needless to say, Mr. Science was promptly and deservedly ostracized by the world scientific community. Before disappearing from public view, he did promulgate the following scientific laws:

- 1): EVERYTHING WE DISCOVER THAT WE HAVEN'T PREVIOUSLY FOUND IS VERY, VERY BIG.
- 2): EVERYTHING WE DISCOVER THAT WE HAVEN'T PREVIOUSLY FOUND IS NOT ONLY BIG, BUT RADIOACTIVE.
- 3): NEWTS ARE HARDLY EVER RADIOACTIVE.

"For a very long time, no-one knew what Mr. Science meant by his 3rd law, but then his sense of logic became disastrously clear. He inadvertantly (or so he claims) created, while trying to find out why small creatures like newts are not radioactive, a race of somewhat larger newts with rather nasty reasoning powers. Though the consequences were censored, the writer Carl Capek told the story in his book WAR WITH THE NEWTS, cleverly disguised as a reprint of old fiction. Mr. Science was to be brought before a War Crimes Tribunal, accused of being a traitor to his species, but fled to Vancouver before he could receive that which he deserved. He dwells among us even now." ... At which point the audience shuddered. Fortunately the lecturers went on to other topics:

Dr. Nick Adams explained how the use of stomach acid to produce hydrogen in vast quantities distributed through-out hollow bones and various body cavities enabled Godzilloids both to defeat the square cubed law and breathe fire. He went on to speculate that dinosaurs could do the same, and being smaller, were able to float about the sky like flocks of Hindenburgs until one was idiot enough to breathe fire and trigger a catastrophe of ecological proportions in which flaming dinosaurs fell into forests triggering intense fire storms in turn leading to a prolonged 'nuclear' winter. Poor Beasts.

by R. Graeme Cameron

Dr. Underfoot discoursed on the effects of Godzilloid excrement on Japan's topography and its influence on local plate tectonics, but soon turned to an even more fascinating subject, to wit:

"There was a question of which Godzilloids were male and which were female. At no time was a male organ visible. I assumed it was enclosed within the prominent genital bump on the underside ... You see, I had this theory. While Godzilla's penis was undoubtedly large compared to human beings' (compared to mine anyway), it was rather small in comparison to certain other monsters, hence his belligerent attitude by way of compensation. I felt the Godzilloids we had seen were all male. At least, that was my theory."

"Then came the day the institute ordered me to acquire a sperm sample ... As you can imagine, considerable planning went into this, it was virtually a mountain climbing expedition. So I hired fifty Sherpas from the villages below Mt. Everest in the Himalyas to carry the necessary equipment. Made sense to me."

"We watched and waited. Finally Godzilla fell asleep against Mt. Fuji. We assembled in the winter dawn, gave three rousing cries of 'GOJIRA BANSAI!' and started up. The terrain was rugged, slippery with snow, and smelled real bad. But we persevered. We were unable to drive our pitons into Godzilla's skin, so in essence we were reduced to free hand climbing. It was challenging."

"Entering the genital slit was rather exciting. More like spelunking through a high but narrow passage only to discover the Carlsbad Caverns. The space inside, the Cloaca, was so vast our lights could barely illuminate the far walls, but it was enough to observe the outlets for the Colon and the Ureter, and to determine that this Godzilla was female. I was disappointed. On the other hand I was pleased to note the presence of a large colony of bats."

"At that moment Godzilla woke up. I argued we'd be safer to stay where we were, but the Sherpas insisted on fleeing. I let them go first, one by one, to give myself time to complete my visual survey. I was the last to leave. Just as I was about to emerge into the sunlight, we discovered that Godzilloids are ticklish in the genital region. I suppose from its point of view we were skin parasites, a kind of human lice. We now discovered how Godzilloids keep their skin free of such infestations. They breathe fire on the itchy area. I regret to report my poor Sherpas were incinerated. I was protected inside, but the air turbulence after the blast sucked me out and flung me a considerable distance through the air until I hit the ground, whereupon I had ample opportunity to research the comparative mending rates of various broken bones ... "

Dr. Underfoot then explained how the Godzilloid male organ excites: "Normally the penis is retracted within the Cloaca and hidden from view, it is actually turned outside-in during this state, and turns inside-out to protrude through the ventral flaps of the Cloaca when tumescent. I will now demonstrate with the use of a rubber glove as a visual aid." The audience cringed. The process looked extremely painful. No wonder Godzilloids roar.

Dr. Underfoot stated: "THE GODZILLOID SEXUAL PROWNESS IS GREATLY EXAGGERATED. IT IS TRUE THEY EMPLOY MORE SEXUAL POSITIONS THAN HUMAN BEINGS, BUT ONLY BECAUSE MOST OF THEM DON'T WORK." He went on to describe the various Godzilloid mating habits: the use of mountains as love pillows, ocean freighters as sex toys, and power lines as turn-ons. The lecture ended with a plea for better funding.

(My thanks to Stan G. Hyde for help in 'compiling' these notes)

Archaeo-SF-ology By Doug Girling

*Whatever happened to those
giant aircraft of pulp SF?*

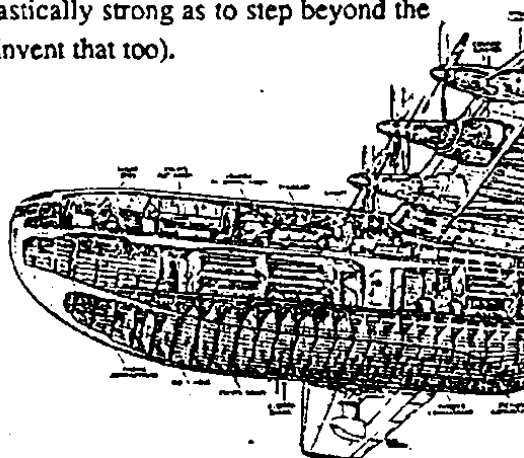
“**T**he invisible ship darted forward. They sped past the barrier of low hills, and were again high above a broad plain. With a startled gasp, Arnot cut their speed. There, floating high in the air, above a magnificent city, was a machine such as no man had ever before seen! It was a titanic airplane—monstrous, gargantuan, and every other word that denoted immensity. Fully three-quarters of a mile the huge metal wings stretched out in the dull light of the cloudy Venerian day; a machine that seemed to dwarf even the vast city beneath it. The roar of its mighty propellers was a rumbling thunder to the men in the *Solarite*.



The Black Star Passes by John W. Campbell

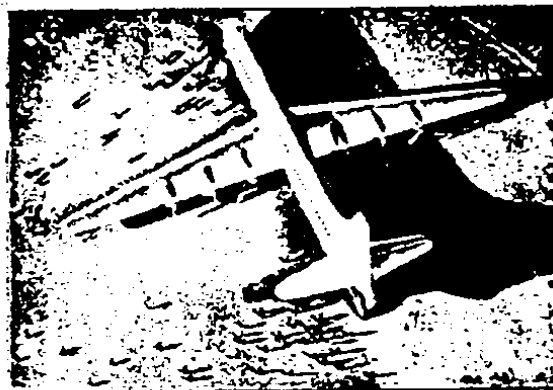
Thus was the vision of the future, circa 1930: contemporary technology—bigger and better. When this classic example of space opera was written, the state of the art in aircraft was the DC-3; an all-metal aircraft powered by two propellers. The Kaxorian ship described above was driven by no fewer than 50 electric motors powered by stored light energy. To a great extent, the fictitious ship was simply a scaled up DC-3 with some allowance made for the facts of engineering – namely that simply scaling the two propellers would require blades made from a substance so fantastically strong as to step beyond the “suspension of disbelief” (though he later went on to invent that too).

It was clearly a case of art imitating life. Several huge aircraft of the day incorporated many engines; for example, the Dornier DO-X flying boat had no fewer than 12 engines arranged in six pods. This large number of engines was due as much to the



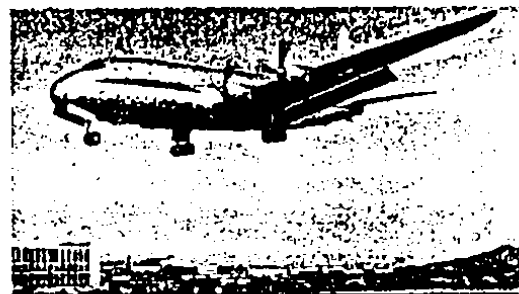
Saunders-Roe SR/45 Princess

size of the aircraft as to the unreliability of the engines themselves. As the trend (which continued up to the oil crisis of the '70's) was clearly bigger, faster, and more powerful airplanes, it didn't take a Nobel laureate to extrapolate what was into what could be. That he missed the jet engine altogether and instead stayed with (albeit bigger) propellers shouldn't be construed as a lack of vision. The jet engine was unheard of in the general literature until late in the Second World War, and was restricted information before that.



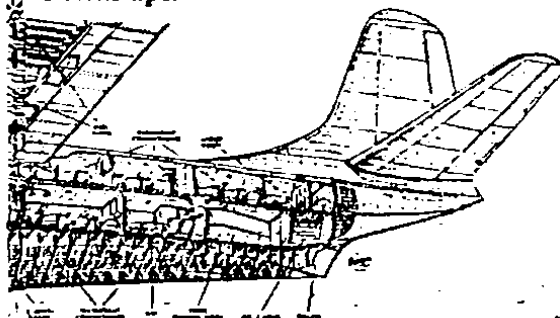
XC-99

But as it often seems, life reciprocates art's complement. If one looks at the aircraft developed shortly after World War II, they bear a striking resemblance to what was prophesied in the pulp SF of the '30's. Aircraft like the XC-99 were truly huge for their day with 6 massive propellers driven by engines buried in the wings pushing this double-decker behemoth along. It could carry 204 passengers and 7 tons of cargo.



Lockheed Constitution.

Lockheed had a similar product in the *Constitution*. The British, on whose empire the sun was about to set, spawned two government superplane projects: the Saunders-Roe *Princess* flying boat with 6 engines, and the land-based Bristol *Brabazon* which had 8 buried engines driving 4 propellers. These aircraft were every bit as large and heavy as contemporary jumbo jets, but carried only half the number of passengers because they were truly skyships, catering to the rich clientele used to travelling in opulence on luxury steamships.



Though a little dated around the edges, many of these aircraft still look "skiffy"; reminiscent of some of the old pulp covers.

Clearly, the vision of the '30's saw fruition in the 1950's...or did it? In next month's issue, we'll see.

From *FLIGHT*, January 15, 1948

SPACED-OUT REPORT

I DID NOT MEAN TO HOG THIS ISSUE! (Oh yeah, sure. Editorial, plus Godzilla review, plus Editorial comments, plus this report? Yeah, right. Says he's not turning BCSFAzine into a perzine. Uhuh)

I SWEAR! I MEAN IT! THIS TWO PAGE SPOT WAS RESERVED FOR SIDNEY TRIM'S POPULAR 'SPACE REPORT'. HE MISSED THE DEADLINE BECAUSE OF V-CON COMMITMENTS, BUT PROMISED DELIVERY AT THE FRED BEFORE PRINTING. ALAS, POOR SIDNEY HAS JUST PHONED, INFORMS ME HE HAS THE FLU. WHAT'S AN EDITOR TO DO? (How about ask someone else for a rush job? Says he doesn't want to trouble anyone or bring them grief. Says better to be a martyr and do it himself. Says he's too shy to use the phone. Right. Doesn't surprise me we're stuck with this loon because no one else had the guts to run against him. Anything in the BCSFA constitution allow us to impeach this twit? Better find out)

I KNOW WE ALL WISH SIDNEY GOOD HEALTH. (You're darn tooting! I'd rather read something intelligent by a guy who knows what he's talking about than this crud) MEANWHILE, I THOUGHT I MIGHT JUST LIST MY PERSONAL HIGHLIGHTS OF V-CON 17 FOR YOUR EDIFICATION. (Good Lord! No ego problems this guy! I think I might just turn the page. Ah great, another neat essay by Speirs. Lessee now, it's about...)

AND SO I PRESENT: CAMERON'S V-CON THRILLS!

- Sitting at the end of the couch in operations, staring down at the mannequin-dummy sprawled beside me, idly noting the knife stuck in its back and wondering what program event was involved. (Humour in SF? Interview with Donna Barr?)

- Standing in the 4th floor Dene lounge gibbering at the other drunken maniacs at the height of the DEAD DOG PARTY and suddenly noticing sunrise.

- GOHTM Bob Shaw observing we have identical birth marks on the inside of our right forearms. Hmm, where was Bob in 1951?

- Writing down the complete listing of videos being shown and not having time to attend a single one of them.

- Helping Donna Barr unload 'Stuka'.

- Running into a big guy wearing a 'CONEHEAD' mask and being so buzzed that when he introduced himself as "Ex-president Ronnie" I thought he meant he was a former BCSFA President and replied, "Oh yeah, I remember you.", in order to be polite.

- Seeing Spider Robinson looking up while being interviewed and being startled by the sight of half a dozen people wearing Spider Robinson masks -- a bizarre tribute by BCSFA member & artist Mike Jackson -- and my taking a photo afterwards of Spider surrounded by this unexpected infestation of white-faced fellow Spiders.

- Reading my "Appreciation of Robert Sheckley" in the program book and noticing the line stating "he postulates a world in which the mind..." had been printed "...he postules a world..."

- Giving myself plenty of travel time to reach V-CON well before I was due to interview GOH Robert Sheckley and experiencing a major panic-adrenalin rush when the bus broke down. (I made it tho)

- Confessing to Robert Sheckley after I'd interviewed him for an hour that I'd never actually READ any of his works, but intended to read soon. (And I will. Darn good stuff, my research tells me)

by R. Graeme Cameron

- Being told by Spider Robinson I interviewed Sheckley as if I'd been reading him for 25 years. (Egoboo! Egoboo!)

- Stan Hyde and myself being interviewed by KISS FM RADIO after we did our GODZILLA SEX LIFE skit. (More Egoboo!)

- Sitting in on a guitar-pickin' Banjo-twangin' sing-a-long in Spider and Jeanne's suite. Steve Barclay does a mean Pink Floyd. Spider has a lot of Ray Charles in his voice; some John Lee Hooker too. And Jeanne sings sweet and powerful. Me, I refrained from indulging in my wide-ranging monotone. I know to listen when others howl straight and true.

- Listening to two Americans complain about 'God-awful Canadian cooking' and having my explanation that off campus -- away from the infamous U.B.C. food services -- there lurked the biggest collection of West Coast ethnic restaurants north of Frisco, being greeted with derision. I am NOT a Canadian Munchausen!

- Having dinner at THE FROG AND PEACH restaurant with Sheckley, Shaw, Donna Barr, Spider, Jeanne & ConComm types. Linen napkins are available for doodling. If management likes the work, it gets hung up and the artist gets their meal money back. "I like this country," said Barr upon receiving cash for her depiction of THE DESERT PEACH handing a peach to a confused uniformed frog. Don H. DeBrandt sold his idea as well (drawn for him by Terry Fowler), a book cover labelled "WART AND PEACH" by Leo Toadstoy. Don, sigh, is into puns.

- Being grabbed by scavenger hunters as a sought-after artifact, ie: a genuine fanzine editor.

- Being introduced to William Gibson by S.40, but the 3 of us being so busy we immediately turned away after shaking hands. Never did get the chance to talk to him. (Be honest. Didn't have the guts to approach him. Sigh, still a bit of neofan in me) Say Bill, heard you started a letter to BCSFA to congratulate Ed Hutchings on his SHAVER articles, but resorted to praising him in person instead (which he deserved). Well, if you ever feel the urge to LOC BCSFA again, be my guest. I might just possibly find room...hee hee... LIKE THE BLOODY FRONT COVER! I WANT THAT FANZINE HUGO, DAMN IT!

- Sitting with Spider, Jeanne, & BCSFA writer's Lisa Cohen & Don H. Debrandt in the hospitality suite. Suddenly Jeanne leaps up. "The PULPHOUSE people are leaving. Come on, I'll introduce you!" I find myself in front of Editor Kristine Kathryn Rusch, publisher Dean Wesley Smith & a 3rd PULPHOUSE whose name I cannot recall (sorry). To my horror I can't remember the titles of the stories I sent. All I can do is blurt out they rejected them for being too traditional. After this brilliant start, I watch Lisa float on air, for they've selected a nifty story of hers for possible publication. (Yea Lisa! We'll keep our fingers crossed) Then Don engages the PULPHOUSES in conversation, standing before them resplendent in his Cyber-punk costume with studs, black gizmos, giant chainlink earrings, etc. I gazed down at my faded cordouroy jacket and wondered which one of us would be most likely to stick in their memory. Ah well. So much for PR. Got to improve my writing!

- Listening to that wailing Spider-cat Lord-Buckley-hipster-talk a hep tribute to Heinlein at the closing ceremonies, followed by a moving rendition of "THAT OLD MAN HEINLEIN". Then hearing Spider reveal, that according to a reliable source, certain Heinlein works may well be reissued as the master wrote them, not as they were edited. For eg: RED PLANET with an additional 10,000 words. For many, THIS was the highlight of V-CON 17. Me too.

ADAPTATIONS by Dale Speirs

Life is not only stranger than we imagine, it is stranger than we can imagine. Science Fiction authors sometimes go to great lengths in building planets and ecosystems for their stories. Earth seems rather ordinary, but there are some remarkable life forms that would do any exobiologist proud.

The South African veldt is littered with rocks and pebbles, in places so dense that bare soil cannot be seen. William Burchell, your typical Englishman wandering about the world without enough sense to get out of the desert sun, found himself in South Africa in 1811, botanizing hither and yon. In his own words, "On picking up from the stony ground what was supposed a curiously shaped pebble, it proved to be a plant ... but in colour and appearance bore the closest resemblance to the stones between which it was growing." Burchell had thus discovered the genus Lithops (stoneface). These plants are very difficult to distinguish from the pebbles they grow in except when in flower. As mimics, they are excellent. Of thick and fleshy texture, they store their water supply inside a thick and waxy skin. The skin prevents evaporation in the desert heat, and the mimicry prevents herbivores from eating such a useful water source. Even today, the most common method for botanists collecting these plants is to find a patch of pebbles, get down on hands and knees, and carefully comb a small area at a time. The real pebbles can be dislodged by a sweep of the hand, but a Lithops gives itself away because it is firmly rooted in the soil and will not budge. A visual inspection from standing height is useless in detecting these plants.

Algae, it seems, needs moisture to survive. We think of Algae as that green yucky stuff along the shoreline at Lake Dunroamin or wherever summer camping is done. Algae grows in some remarkable places though. Would you believe, for example, inside rocks? Not in crevices or cracks, but in the air spaces between the mineral grains of light-coloured rocks such as Orthoquartzite. Reports from the dry valleys of Antarctica, gravel beaches of the Baltic sea islands, and hot Middle Eastern deserts all show that blue-green algae (Cyanophytes) live a few millimetres below the surface of the rocks. They grow into the rocks as deep as they can before light drops off to the point where photosynthesis no longer works. In such dry habitats, the algae can therefore grow in protected shelter away from the dry winds and behind a vapour barrier.

WARNING TO PARENTS AND PRUDES! THE NEXT PARAGRAPH CONTAINS MATERIAL THAT MAY BE DISGUSTING TO SOME!

In the Amazon, the natives are only mildly afraid of Piranhas and freshwater stingrays when they enter the water. What really terrifies them is a small catfish called Vandellia, a parasite that feeds on blood by inserting itself into any body opening of a fish or mammal. Its favourite point of entry in humans is the urogenital orifice. This is no laughing matter to any man who got one up his pride and joy, because once in, the catfish erects its spines and can only be removed by surgery of the worst kind. Kidney stones are nothing compared to this sort of thing.

I am almost tempted to add Homo Sapiens to the list of bizarre and wonderful creatures of this planet. Take, for example, this species behaviour with respect to gold, digging it up at great expense from the ground, and then burying it in a bank vault, where its main value is in the fact that it is never used.

Ex Terra aliquid semper novi.

BOOKENDS by Dan Davidson

MONA LISA OVERDRIVE by William Gibson, Bantam Books,
\$22.95, 260 pages.

In what has become an all too familiar story, William Gibson has been discovered by the world outside Science Fiction. He has been greeted with the acclaim he quite rightly deserves, lauded as a new voice with an innovative way of dealing with the age-old human story. But the tone of the reviews is what they have all too often been in such cases.

Essentially the reviews run like this: This is good stuff. Since we know that all Science Fiction is escapist trash, it then follows that this cannot really be Science Fiction. Isn't it a shame that poor Gibson is trapped in this cultural ghetto where he will languish unnoticed by those of us who are best equipped to appreciate what he is doing?

This is the view I am reading in the uninformed columns of the newspapers and magazines that make their slow way to my northern door. It's crud, of course. Another S.F. writer (the late Theodore Sturgeon) has long since noted that 90% of everything is crud, after all, and literary criticism (my own included) is not immune from this law. But I do wonder why it is such a constant thing.

Genre fiction of all kinds is typically dismissed as ephemeral. Anyone who does well with it and manages to attract critical attention has to end up like Kurt Vonnegut, denying his roots. That very denial may leave the writer stranded, like Vonnegut seems to have been for the last decade.

Gibson is new. He has a mere three novels and one short story collection under his belt. They are enough to confirm him as a major inventive voice. His work so far has been enough to inspire a swarm of imitators who have latched onto his settings and verbal delivery without really getting into the heart of his themes. That's fair. It happens all the time. But Gibson has his sources as well, and they are writers within the Science Fiction, Mystery and Thriller genres, whose work he has synthesized in order to create his own.

I've gone a long distance without mentioning the book. MONA LISA OVERDRIVE is the third part of an extended work. The parts can be read individually, but there are links. Characters from both NEUROMANCER and COUNT ZERO are in evidence in this book, which takes place about seven years after the events in the second volume.

Like COUNT ZERO, this book is structured in the manner of a thriller, with alternating narratives moving toward a dimly glimpsed union somewhere near the end of the book. We follow the daughter of a Japanese business magnate, a hooker and her pimp, a famous entertainer and a group of non-people who live on the fringes of the world. Their interface is a plot to replace the entertainer, but an even more important development awaits some of them in a place called Cyberspace. Cyberspace is the electronic world of computer time and linkage, a world which is accessible to the humans of Gibson's fictions and which is peopled with strange artificial intelligences as well as the raving minds of hackers plugged in.

Cyberspace is a metaphor for life and its larger issues. Being there will make or break you as surely as a voyage on one of Joseph Conrad's ships. Gibson deals with love, obsession, trust, fear and interdependence, just like any other good writer. That he happens to do it on a Science Fiction stage is proof it can be done there as easily and as effectively as anywhere else. Critics take note.

NIBBLES by John Mullock

NONE BUT MAN by Gordon R. Dickson, Baen Books; 308 pages, \$4.95

"Cully" O'rouke had been a key figure in the successful rebellion of the Frontier Worlds against Earth. With peace now re-established, Cully decides to visit Earth only to be thrown into prison. It seemed that the Moldaug, an alien race who for fifty years had held a disinterested peace with mankind, were now demanding that mankind leave the Frontier worlds or face an all out war. Earth suspects the Frontier worlds of collaboration and so Cully and every other Frontiersman they could get their hands on were being locked up. Cully, a never-say-die type, manages to escape and sets off to find out what is behind the Moldaug's demands and to see if the war could be avoided.

Most of Gordon R. Dickson's stories are nice. His heroes are decent people who don't do anything to excess. His villains are nasty but transparent. His plots tend to be reasonable but bland. About the only new idea introduced in this book is a discussion between the concept Rightness vs Responsibility. Reading this story is like eating at McDonald's, it's edible but lacks the variety and adventure found in fine dining. Can books benefit from a shot of MSG? ... I rate this book as AVERAGE.

DESERTED CITIES OF THE HEART by Lewis Shiner, Bantam Books, 1989;
335 pages, \$5.50

What a cast of characters ... Eddie, the wacked out, drug-happy rock n' roll freak who wanders the jungles of Mexico looking for who knows what; Thomas, Eddie's brother, the anthropologist, a dedicated middle-of-the-road man; Lindsey, Eddie's wife, both user and used and the object of Thomas's lust; Carmichael, the reporter for Rolling Stone looking for the "big story" that would get him out of these South American pest holes and into interviews with the important people; Carla, the fiery guerilla struggling to save the revolution of her dead lover; and Chan Na'ax, an enigmatic Mayan witchdoctor whose wisdom is hidden behind a few words. What a story is weaved as their trails cross and converge on the ancient Mayan ruin of Na Chan where magic mushrooms and an old Mayan prophesy are about to change the world.

It's always nice to find a book that leaves the road of mediocrity and carves a path of it's own. This book, being set in the present time, is not what you would call traditional SF but in this case who cares? As books go it best compares with Altered States in that it explores the boundaries of man's capabilities and his acceptance of reality. This is one worthwhile read. ... I rate this book as A BEST BUY!

MIND TRANSFER by Janet Asimov, Ace Books, 1989; 296 pages;
\$5.25

It all seemed so very simple to the people at Tully Robotics. Technology was finally offering mankind it's fondest wish, immortality. Now when the biological body failed, the mind could be transferred to a robot body. But there is a price to be paid. Unsuccessful transfers brought madness and even successful transfers faced the hatred of the Biofundamentalists who saw the whole thing as an abomination that had to be stopped at any cost. But the real question that needed answering was whether or not mankind was ready for this gift.

Janet Asimov, ol' Isaac's wife, has finally put her own stamp onto the robot stories. Set within the framework of the robotic laws we see a society that must learn to accept something that is neither machine nor human.

This was a difficult book to get started on. The first fifty pages are a herky-jerky mess of plot sections and character introductions. It does however finally smooth out and the story moves forward in an orderly fashion. Characterization is not strong in this story and on occasion the characters exhibit almost unnatural reactions. Most of the thrust of the story concerns itself with whether or not a person in a machine body is still human and could biological mankind accept him? As such this follows the usual pattern previously established in Isaac's robot stories where action and character development gives way for the chance to wax philo-

sophical. Overall it's not a bad story but it could have been so much better. ... I rate this book as GOOD.

A MR. SCIENCE INFORMATION ALERT!

A new use has been found for Gor novels. At a very recent local convention Mr. Science was assigned a room in which the bed was tilted in several directions simultaneously. Not wishing to sleep with his feet higher than his head, or in peril of rolling onto the floor, Mr. Science discovered that the judicious placement of three Gor novels, specifically, two copies of "Captive of Gor" and one of "Tribesmen of Gor," successfully levelled the bed. It is believed that other Gor books will work equally well.

HARRY WARNER JR. ALERT!

EDITOR'S COMMENT: When I prepared the LOC's for publication, I made some cuts for reasons of space. I forgot it was H.W. who first asked Mr. Science "Where does the water from my automatic defrosting refrigerator go?" Of course Mr. Science would want to see H.W.'s response to the answer given in issue #192. With apologies to them both, here is the censored passage in question verbatim:

"Naturally, Mr. Science's first answer was of particular interest to me. On first reading, I thought I detected a bit of alarm in my reaction. Then I gave the matter more thought and realized how such a mishap to my refrigerator would not be without its benefits. I wouldn't need to spend any more money on fuel oil for the furnace next winter, and the saving this would create would be more than enough to pay for a new refrigerator, one which must be defrosted manually every week or ten days. There might even be enough heat left over to permit me to stop using my badly worn-out stove, only one of whose burners still functions without blowing fuses."

For the rest of this LOC, see page 26.

THE WORLD OF FANTASY COMES ALIVE AT THE
COCKTAIL SHAKER
WEST OAKS MALL
CLEARBROOK B.C.
(604) 852-4479

DRAGONS, CASTLES, UNICORNS AND WIZARDS
FLOCK TOGETHER TO MAKE
A MAGICAL COLLECTION OF FINE ART!
10% DISCOUNT TO BCSFA MEMBERS WITH CARD.

AUTHORS UPDATE - by Steve Forty

Congratulations to Surrey author DONNA FARLEY on the impending publication of an anthology containing a story of hers.

CATFANTASTIC, edited by ANDRE NORTON and MARTIN H. GREENBERG, a DAW FANTASY anthology of original stories about cats, including Donna's "IT MUST BE SOME PLACE", will be available in bookstores late in June for \$4.95 (\$3.95 U.S.).

This collection, edited by two of the biggest names in the fantasy field, is for all those who've wondered why cats gaze intently into seemingly empty space, apparently spying on things no human is equipped to see.

Find out what these furry felines are up to ... if you dare.

This has been an unabashed plug for a local author. Yeah Donna!

DEBBIE STUNS CONCOMM 18!

Reacting to complaints about noise leakage thru the partition wall at the Totem ballroom, and operating on the assumption V-Con 18 will be held in the same place, DEBBIE MIYASHITA startled the V-Con 18 planning committee by generously volunteering to handsew two noise-dampening black leather curtains approximately 12 feet high and 40 feet long to hang on either side of the partition. Concomm members were impressed. What enthusiasm Debbie!

NEWS, RUMOURS, SCANDALS & FAIRYTALES by Jo McBride

According to LOCUS, there were 12 other conventions the same weekend as V-CON this year. How's a fan to choose?

That abundance aside, the most remarkable figure gleaned from SF CHRONICLE and LOCUS this month is the rumoured \$38 MILLION that Stephen King is to receive for four books, sold to Viking/Nal. Add the foreign sales, and Mr. King earns some \$50 MILLION. Could this be one of the reasons that book prices seem to be increasing in leaps and bounds? And you can expect to see a Doubleday edition of THE STAND next year which includes the one hundred pages cut when it first hit the stands.

SF CHRONICLE had a bit of news I hadn't seen elsewhere; NASA has banned any civilians from space shuttle launches. This probably means we won't see the STARDANCE anytime soon, which is too bad. (Editor's note: At V-Con 17 Spider Robinson revealed his wife Jeanne had been on the NASA short-list for performing-artist passengers, but of course the Challenger disaster led to the new policy of crew and scientists only. However, Spider and Jeanne are currently investigating SPACE EXPEDITIONS INC., who promise to put paying passengers in orbit aboard a custom-built spacecraft sometime around the turn of the century. STARDANCE may yet be realized!)

I know that BCSFans don't slavishly follow the awards given in SF, but if you're interested, they can be a choice if you are positively stuck for a good read. The 1988 NEBULA winners are:

NOVEL: FALLING FREE.....Lois McMaster Bujold
NOVELLA: THE LAST OF THE WINNEBAGOS.....Connie Willis
NOVELETTE: SCHRODINGER'S KITTEN.....George Alec Effinger
SHORT STORY: BIBLE STORIES FOR ADULTS, NO 17: THE DELUGE
.....James Morrow
GRAND MASTER: RAY BRADBURY

The HUGO nominations are out, and in the 'Best Novel' category MONA LISA OVERDRIVE by Bill Gibson is up against the NEBULA winner FALLING FREE. I'll be interested in seeing the winner in this race.

The media listings in Newszines are terrific to read, but so many things in that industry fall through, that until I see the project actually on the screen, (silver or small) I regard it all as maybes. I've seen so many versions of STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND about to be made by X that I've given up.

Didja know that Winnipeg is bidding for the 1994 Worldcon, against Nashville, Milwaukee, and Perth Australia?

Recent Obituaries include Edward Abbey, author of THE MONKEY WRENCH GANG; Norman Saunders, artist of many pulp and SF paperback covers; and Osamu Tezuka, Japanese artist of SF comic strips and the creator of AMBASSADOR ATOM, made into ASTRO BOY.

Next FRED or BCSFA meeting you're at, try to take a look through LOCUS and SF CHRONICLE. Each lists so many books, magazines and catalogues that a reader could be in print-heaven for many years. I make notes of the books I want to look for, as opposed to seeing what jumps out at me on the newstands.

News lifted from the MAY issues of both LOCUS and SF CHRONICLE.

EDITOR'S NOTE: WE REGRET TO REPORT MR. SCIENCE WAS SO SHOCKED BY THE RECENT REVELATIONS MADE ABOUT HIM AT V-CON 17 (SEE PAGE 12) THAT HE WAS UNABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS ISSUE. HE WILL RETURN NEXT ISSUE.

MYTHCON XX UPDATE

Lovers of high fantasy will have a unique opportunity to celebrate the works of Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Lord Dunsany, Ursula LeGuin and other writers in the Mythopoeic tradition, when the Twentieth Annual Conference of the Mythopoeic Society, MYTHCON XX, comes to the University of B.C. July 28 to 31. The special focus of this year's conference -- held for the first time ever outside the U.S. -- is the Arthurian tradition. GUESTS OF HONOUR are Canadian Fantasy writer GUY GAVRIEL KAY, author of the Fionavar Trilogy, who will read from his latest (and as yet unpublished) fantasy, Tigana, and RAYMOND THOMPSON, author of The Return From Avalon. Also on hand, as SPECIAL GUESTS, will be WELWYN WILTON KATZ, winner of this year's Governor-General Award in Children's Literature for her Arthurian Fantasy, The Third Magic; our own B.C. Fantasy authors MICHAEL G. CONEY and EILEEN KERNAGHAN, and SHARON NEWMAN, from California.

As well as panels and papers on Fantasy writing, there will be a full program of entertainment, including an art show, dealer's room, masquerade and Bardic circle. There will also be a concert by widely-acclaimed folk-artist LOREENA MCKENNIT, known for her pure Soprano & haunting harp music.

Membership for the four day conference is \$30 (\$25 U.S.) until June 30; and \$5 more thereafter. A room/board package at Gage Residences is available for \$175. To register, write MYTHCON XX, PO Box 806, Stn. A, Nanaimo B.C. Canada, V9R 5N2. Info: (604) 421-7189 or 435-6500.

WRITERS' WORKSHOP: Directed by EILEEN KERNAGHAN. Will be a small, closed session, with 2 or 3 professional writers providing individual critiques of your work. You must be registered at MYTHCON to take part. Stories should have a fantasy element, but need not be Arthurian. Submit 5 copies of your typewritten, double-spaced Ms, maximum length 5,000 words. (Near-letter quality dot matrix OK) Include name, address, and telephone number, and leave plenty of margin space for comments. Enclose \$5 (\$4 U.S.). Copies of all Ms will be mailed to participants. Mail your Ms to MYTHCON XX WRITING WORKSHOPS, c/o Neville Books, 5211 Neville street, Burnaby, B.C., Canada, V5J 2H6. Make money order/cheque payable to MYTHCON XX. The deadline for manuscript submission (postmarked) is June 15th 1989. For more info, write to above, or phone EILEEN KERNAGHAN at (604)435-6500.

TESSERACTS 3

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS! DEADLINE: 31 OCTOBER 1989

PORCEPIC BOOKS will publish a 3rd volume of Canadian SF, TESSERACTS 3 in 1990. The editors are Candace Jane Dorsey and Gerry Truscott. We are looking for SF stories and poems with original ideas: preferably new, but we will consider recently published works. SF includes Science Fiction, Speculative Fantasies, Surreal Futures, etc.

We will consider poems and short stories, preferably not more than 7,000 words and with not more than one previous publication.

Send submissions to: SF Editor, Porcepip Books, 4252 Commerce Circle, Victoria, B.C., V8Z 4M2.

Authors accepted for publication in the anthology will share a 10% royalty on the retail price of each book sold by Porcepip Books. Advances will be paid. Authors will retain rights for their work.

Submissions should be typed on 8-1/2 by 11 sheets, double-spaced. Include a covering letter stating your Ms is for TESSERACTS 3. Ms should have a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE) or an indication return of Ms not required. If you wish receipt acknowledged, include a small SASE. Allow up to 3 months for a reply. No reply will be made without an SASE.

Under our TESSERACT BOOKS imprint, we are now publishing at least two volumes of high-quality, imaginative Canadian SF per year. We highly recommend that authors read TESSERACTS and TESSERACTS 2 to get an idea of the kind of stories we are seeking.

DEBBIE DOES BIRTHDAYS

Oops! I screwed up again! Hmmm...my precocious Alzheimers is showing up again. I did the May birthday column but delivered it too late for Steve to reduce and print - entirely my fault - so this column will have to be for May and June combined.

F.R.E.D. had its tenth anniversary and was well attended, minus moi (other commitments). Word has it the munchies were great as usual and conversation centred around V-CON, which will be over by the time this is read. As the new GOD-EDITOR person wants this kept to a succinct minimum - brevity will forthwith be my middle name. Hmmm...Debbie Brevity Miyashita....not bad! Ah, but I do digress. Here it is, what you've all been waiting for! The one, the only (Thank God!) Birthday column!

May birthdays celebrated and belatedly honoured are:

- 01 - Ken Wong
- 04 - Frances Higginson
- 05 - Spencer McDonnell
- 13 - Dave Wilson, Diana Balabanov
- 16 - Joa McKinney
- 18 - Doug Girling, Sidney Trim, Bandit
- 21 - Stuart Cooper
- 22 - Jeff Stone (Bellinghamster) and our own
Steve Ens (Yeah Steve!)
- 23 - Shelagh Wright
- 25 - Yet another Balabanov, Tommy
- 26 - Lorna Wright
- 28 - Michelle Godmaire
- 30 - John Robertson
- 31 - Jo-Anne McBride

June Birthdays to be celebrated and duly honoured are:

- 11 - Kathleen Moore-Freeman
- 25 - Ed Beauregard, Evelyn Beheshti
- 27 - Rose Martell
- 28 - Randy Reichardt

To save your vocal mechanisms undue stress, just hum the "Happy Birthday To You" part and chime in with the names as the list is rather overlong! Here goes.....

HMMM, HMMM, HMMM, HMMM TO YOU

HMMM, HMMM, HMMM, HMMM TO YOU

HMMM, HMMM, HMMM, HMMM DEAR Ken, Frances, Spencer,

Dave, Diana, Joa, Doug, Sidney, Bandit, Stuart, Jeff, Steve, Shelagh, Tommy, Lorna, Jo-Anne, Kathleen, Ed, Evelyn, Rose & Randy! HMMM, HMMM, HMMM, HMMM TO YOU!!! (And many m-o-r-e-....)

BIRTHDAY F.R.E.D. FRIDAY, JUNE 16TH (Cakes by Stewart & Vicki)

WESTERCON BID EXPEDITION RIDE INFO!

Coming to the LA Westercon at Anaheim July 1st weekend? Help with the Vancouver bid! We need people to man a display table, and to assist with bid parties! You can ride there in Terry's car or ride there and back in Fran's car, maybe get crash space during the trip (3 day drive each way), and get crash space for sure at the con as we'll be staying in adjoining double-doubles. You pay: \$45 US for an attending membership at the Con; \$15 US to vote for Vancouver (!) and help to pay for gas. Food, Disneyland, etc., your own expense. INTERESTED? CALL FRAN (433-8817) OR TERRY (420-3316) FOR MORE INFO!

LOCS FROM BEYOND

Dear Steve, Graeme & Don:

From: HARRY WARNER JR.

Did I forget anyone? If I did, ascribe it to the widely known inability of extreme old age to adjust to change. My intentions are good, since they consist of telling you I enjoyed both fanzines on which you lavished so much first class postage. Since BCSFAzine is the eldest and I have a natural sympathy for that condition, I'll attend to it first.

I can imagine a Canadian fan historian grumbling about Mr. Science's final response. If the Historian is conscientious, he won't accept without verification Mr. Science's announcement on how many of each category of things have been involved in Steve's long editorship. It will take a whole weekend for the historian to complete calculations and if they agree with those of Mr. Science, they will resent the waste of time involved.

Exactly as promised, Sidney Trim's article made me feel depressed. This sort of problem is showing up in so many technological ways ... If there's anything to this nuclear fusion report, I'm sure the discovery will be providing energy in other nations many years before the red tape, protests, and litigation subside sufficiently for it to go into use in the US where it was discovered.

This is the most informative review of The Tommyknockers I've seen yet. It's comprehensive without telling much about the denouement. On the other hand, I remain uncertain whether Toxic Avenger II really exists or is just an awful future movie which has been foretold in your pages.

Earlier today I was reading a privately printed history of a West Virginian farm whose owner helped establish scientific farming methods in that state almost a century ago. It seems like a definite contrast to Dale Speir's analysis of the prospects for farming in outer space. Even if Dale is right, the very fact that the topic is available for discussion is sort of dizzying, so few years after farmers first began to rotate crops and apply lime and do other basic things to create productivity on Earth.

The video project sounds like fun. But I wonder if it couldn't be simplified a little. Wouldn't a typewriter be sufficient to create the scripts for a 2-minute video? A titler used in the old days for 8mm home movie production would be just as useful as computer generated graphics and probably faster to utilize.

Which leads us to FICTONS and I am glad to report that I enjoyed all 3 of the extended stories, something that doesn't always happen when a fanzine is devoted mostly to fiction. All 3 are told skillfully enough to make me feel they could be printed professionally, none has a serious fault, and my limited experience with current SF hasn't encountered similar themes.

I confess to inability to feel comfortable on Venus nowadays because of my long experience with rain forest-like weather conditions on that planet during all the past decades of SF stories set there. But I have no proof Venusians have intercepted our probes and stuck them into blast furnaces to make us think the planet is too hot to explore. So I'll grudgingly accept the climate on which the story depends. ARTIST IN A LANDSCAPE shows good knowledge of the technical side of painting and the idiocies of the modern art world. The only possible way I think it might be improved would be to take away some of the robot's cuteness. Toulouse isn't as adorable as the companion robots that have been spoiling SF stories for many years, thank goodness, but occasionally seems to borrow a few lines from Dr. Who's K-9. I think a tougher, rougher robot would be more in keeping with the macabre nature of the story.

I like WINTERWERE for the way it suggests rather than describes so many of the events and elements. I suppose the author limited the characters to just 2 humans to concentrate everything on them, but I think the story would be improved if there had been a few bit players whom the main characters might pass on the street or see through a window. One minor quibble: I misunderstood a couple of times when Jenny looked at the thermostat. I thought she was looking at its setting and only after reading a little bit more did I understand she was looking at the thermometer on the thermostat. That point might be clarified. Still, these are minor objections to a story that is splendidly different in theme and treatment.

When I came to the 3rd long story, I was wondering if it would be based on temperature extremes like the first two. Fortunately, I found it was something completely different. I think it's a very fine working out of an intriguing idea. While reading it (QUICKSILVER SCREEN) I thought the story has potential for expansion into a conventional-sized novel.

The usual obligatory nitpicking: I think there should be a sentence or two explaining why all these alternate realities have everyone speaking standard English; surely there would be channels using other languages because of different courses of events in the early part of the colonization of North America. And the final paragraph on page 24, in which Jerry

LOCS FROM BEYOND

explains the cause of the chaos, needs to be strengthened or amplified. It isn't quite convincing in this form: why should the mediocrity and sensationalism of IR channels create problems that the same elements in present day telecasting don't cause?

All in all, I think this is one of the best fiction-type fanzines I've seen in several years for the high level of all its long stories. I hope the complaints I've made will be taken for what they are, an effort to avoid sounding too sickeningly kind and praiseful, the way I really feel.

Yours, R. Warner Jr.

Dear Steve:

From: HARRY ANDRUSCHAK.

Thanks for sending BCSPAZine 191, 192, & Fictions 2. I regret the delay in answering, but I was on a 3 week vacation at the Grand Canyon during most of April. I came back to face 3 weeks worth of mail. Daunting.

As always, I appreciate the columnists, and especially Mr. Science for his remarkable and thoughtful insights to the workings of the universe. I am also pleased that Sidney Trim presents the facts in such a clear manner. Yes, the Magellan mission to Venus has finally been launched, only 5 & 1/2 years behind schedule. Oh yes, I well remember when VOIR, the Venus Orbiting Imaging Radar, was supposed to be launched in 1984. I helped to set up and de-bug the flight computer systems for that mission. Then it was cancelled, restarted, modified, reorganized, adjusted, and adapted to its current configuration.

Now I guess we have to wait for the Galileo Mission to Jupiter to be launched later this year, only 7 & 1/2 years behind schedule. How well I remember, in 1973, when we began to plan something called the Mariner Jupiter Orbiter (with probe). Actually, we weren't too sure at first if we would be able to fit a probe on the spacecraft, but the wonderful performance of the Titan-Centaur rocket made it possible.

H. Andruschak.

Dear Steve and R. Graeme:

From: JOSEPH T. MAJOR.

Actually I would not dare come to your Lunar landing day party as I was in July 1969, because then I was about thirty pounds heavier. On the other hand my immune system had not yet decided to wage war on my intestines and knees, so perhaps back then was not a TOTAL loss. Perhaps we should have such a party in Louisville, having enough spacefen. I do think, though, that Pat McCray our movie reviewer would show up by not showing up.

The little-known irony about the Landsat is the Bush administration member who led the fight to save it -- Dan Quale. Heretofore we had believed that Dan Quale had no idea where Landsat operated, much less any concern about it. Though you may well tremble at the fact that he is SUPPOSED to co-ordinate the space efforts of our DoD, State, and so on with NASA and the Air Force Aerospace Command (which last gets almost as much [if not more] money than NASA).

Speaking of NASA -- Dick Truly is truly ready to take over. Problem is that the law establishing NASA forbade any active-duty military officer from holding the post of Administrator. No Problem, Admiral T. is quite willing to become Administrator T. However, he does want to keep his military pension rights! Big problem. For what it is worth, the NASA Administrator makes almost as much as a Cabinet Secretary, and was one of those who lost the raise when people pointed out that perhaps our Congress should actually DO something for its raise.

Grant McCormick pointed out an interesting dichotomy regarding Pons and Fleischmann's fusion experiments. Chemists can reproduce the results; physicists cannot. Care to guess which field P. and F. are in? Hint: it is not physics.

I see that I am too late to warn people, but for future reference I shall announce this: after old-time tequila was bottled, a maguey worm was added. The worm would eat various impurities in the tequila and then die happy ('Drown in a vat of whisky; Death, where is thy sting?' -- W.C. Fields). Serious drinkers used to eat the worm in order to get certain vitamins and nutrients, or maybe to show their macho.

The warning is that nowadays, to satisfy both traditionalists and health departments, there are still worms in tequila bottles, but they are plastic!

Namarie, J. T. Major.

LOCS FROM BEYOND

Dear Steve & Graeme,

From: BRIAN EARL BROWN.

A final farewell to Steve who's done an exemplary job on BCSFazine, and a hello to Graeme who will, I'm sure, carry on the high standards Steve has set.

I got a real kick out of Mr. Science's answer to Harry Warner Jr's question about defrost refrigerators. Perhaps this also explains spontaneous human combustion. It could be that some people ingest too much palladium during their lifetime, then after guzzling a few HEAVY lagers explode into a fusion meltdown.

The Mac font for Sidney Trim's column this time was much harder to read than previously. It's sad that his column can so easily divide into 3 stock types and that 'Dunderheads Ober Alles' typifies reports of the U.S. space program (?).

Graeme's review of TOXIC AVENGER II was a riot, makes me want to see it, but alas the gut squishing bits Graeme glides over would turn my stomach, putting me off the good bits. But the REVIEW has brightened my day. For good film satire, check out 'ALFTALES' Saturdays on NBC.

Best, Brian Brown, Detroit.

ZINE SCENE

by GARTH SPENCER

CASPER AWARDS NOMINATION FORM You did remember to send yours in by the end of May, didn't you? With a really comprehensive list of Canadians' SF publishing credits and fan accomplishments. Or at least a list of fans. (I mean, Philip Liesemer got nominated, for NonCon 11??? Geez...)

THE NORTH WIND #128 c/o 5370 Booth Ave. (bsmt), Burnaby, B.C. V5H 3A9. The Lionsgate SCA NEWSletter.

FANZINE FANATIQUE The occasional fanzine reviewzine from Keith Walker, 6 Vine St., Lancaster, Lancs. LA1 4UF, England. I haven't seen FF since I edited Maple Leaf Rag, and no wonder -- Walker hasn't published FF since 1987. Fanzines reviewed from every continent outside the Warsaw pact, and then some.

Con-TRACT Jan/Feb 89, is now edited by John Mansfield at P.O. Box 204, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2H6. So far Con-TRACT has been a stripped down listing of Canadian conventions; this issue includes paragraphs on the Casper Awards and the editorial changeover.

FROM SCRATCH #1 April, 1989, Nigel W. Rowe, 1/4 Mawson Ave., Torbay Aukland 10, Aotearoa/New Zealand. What a personal zine ought to be, your recent life reviewed from the fannish perspective. Featuring: SF fans taking over a New Zealand train. We otta try this.

FILE 770 #79 April(?) 1989, Mike Glyer, 5828 Woodman Ave., #2, Van Nuys, California, 91401 U.S.A. There's so much news in this issue I don't know what to say.

MYMOSA #6 April 1989, Dick & Nicki Lynch, P.O. Box 1270, German Town, MD 20874-0998, U.S.A. This is the hefty mimeo'd kind of perzine I like to see: hand-drawn fillos, handmade layout, fine mimeo reproduction, sardonic witty amateur fanarticles, funny stories, even some fan stuff (letters and fanhistory). Try it. You'll like it.

TAND #1 March, 1989, Mark Manning, 1400 East Mercer #19, Seattle, WA 98112, U.S.A. Like I said above. Fan articles, poetry, continuing adventures of Mark Manning among fringe subcultures (with wit and style), just the regular fannish trip.

MARVIN THE LEHTI #4 Jan 1989, Ari Veintie ed., Harjukatu 6 A 2 A, 00500 Helsinki, FINLAND. The Hitch Hiker's Guide to Helsinki/Women in SF English language special edition. Stream of consciousness Helsinki Restaurant reviews (with fannish connections). Fanfiction. Stream of consciousness articles. Fanhistory in the present tense. Fanzine reviews. Two comics pages. And finally, women in SF. Fanart and reproduction is very good.

OASFIS EVENT HORIZON #24 May 1989, P.O. Box 616469, Orlando FL 32861-6469, U.S.A. Your basic newsletter, plus some fanzine reviews, plus Kimiye Tipton's medioid news column, plus the Hogu ballot.

TRANSMISSIONS #279/280 May 1, 1989, from 'Nova Odysseus' P.O. Box 1534, Panama city, FL, 32402-1534, U.S.A. Your basic newsletter in half-size format, plus an article recommending what to read from the early years of SF. Rather fun amateur ST:TNG cartoons.

PULSAR #127 May 1989, PorSFis, P.O. Box 4602, Portland OR 97208 USA. With a rodent that might be either a squirrel or a beaver on the front. Your basic calender again, plus letters, plus club minutes, plus John Lorentz' column (this time: comic book superheroes), another letter, and Pat Gulley on travel information.

SOLARIS #83 Why don't we have an SF/P revue like this in English?

Books in All Fields — We Pay Cash For Books
Hardback and Paperback

15% Discount for BCSFA members with card

Michael's Books

Michael Elmer - owner
(206) 733-6272

109 Grand
Bellingham, WA 98225



Fantasy

10% DISCOUNT
BCSFA MEMBERS

Science Fiction

"A Sense of Wonder"

Bookstore

Linda & David Bray
Owners
(206) 443-1316

1923 - 3rd Ave.
Seattle, WA
98101