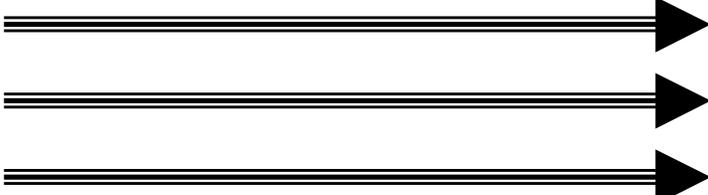


No. 3

September 2001

SPIRITS OF THINGS PAST

A fanzine of
progress for

 ditto 14

& FanHistoriCon 11

Don't Wait!

Book your hotel room now!!

Our block of rooms at the \$79 convention rate expires **Sept. 20.**

After that, you will be charged higher rack rates

— **if** there are any rooms available at all.

The hotel is sold out except for our block
and last time we checked, that was nearly full.

Spirits of Things Past is published and edited by Dick Smith <thes@enteract.com> and Leah Zeldes Smith <lazs@enteract.com>, 410 W. Willow Road, Prospect Heights, IL 60070-1250, USA, +1 (847) 394-1950.

Do good. Avoid evil. Pub your ish.

Fanzines and fanhistory? Of course.

The 14th edition of *ditto*, the friendly fanzine fans' convention, will be held in October 2001 ~~at the Tucker Hotel~~ in Bloomington, Ill. This year, *ditto* will be combined with FanHistoriCon for a weekend of festivities fêting fine fannish traditions.

We invite you to join us for discussions of fanzines, fannish history, fandom in general and the best ways to preserve them. Bring us your best zines, your tall tales, your favorite fanecdotes. Bring us your questions about fandom's past and your concerns about its future.

Who? YOUR HOSTS: *Dick Smith, Leah Zeldes Smith, Wilson "Bob" Tucker, Fern Tucker, Henry Welch, Letha Welch, Carolyn Doyle and Dave Rowe*

FANHISTORICON SPEAKER: **Jack Speer**

ATTENDING MEMBERS (so far):

<i>Forrest J Ackerman</i>	<i>George Flynn</i>	<i>Sam Long</i>	<i>Dick Spelman</i>
<i>Judy Bemis</i>	<i>Steve Francis</i>	<i>Pat Molloy</i>	<i>Keith Stokes</i>
<i>Bill Bowers</i>	<i>Sue Francis</i>	<i>Murray Moore</i>	<i>Jon Stopa</i>
<i>Linda Bushyager</i>	<i>Beverly Friend</i>	<i>Erik Olson</i>	<i>Diana Thayer</i>
<i>Bill Cavin</i>	<i>Teddy Harvia</i>	<i>Mark Olson</i>	<i>Gregg Trend</i>
<i>Cokie Cavin</i>	<i>Carolyn Hickman</i>	<i>Priscilla Olson</i>	<i>Tom Veal</i>
<i>Rob Chilson</i>	<i>Colin Hinz</i>	<i>Tony Parker</i>	<i>Pat Virzi</i>
<i>Catherine Crockett</i>	<i>Valli Hoski</i>	<i>Gary Plumlee</i>	<i>Bob Webber</i>
<i>Jane Dennis</i>	<i>Cris Kaden</i>	<i>Alan Rosenthal</i>	<i>Toni Weisskopf</i>
<i>Scott Dennis</i>	<i>Neil Kaden</i>	<i>Ron Salomon</i>	<i>John Widmer</i>
<i>Howard DeVore</i>	<i>Mary Kay Kare</i>	<i>Peggy Rae Sapienza</i>	<i>Art Widner</i>
<i>Alex Eisenstein</i>	<i>Hope Leibowitz</i>	<i>Joyce Scrivner</i>	<i>David Williams</i>
<i>Phyllis Eisenstein</i>	<i>Eric Lindsay</i>	<i>Pat Sims</i>	<i>Joel Zakem</i>
<i>Kurt Erichsen</i>	<i>Nicki Lynch</i>	<i>Roger Sims</i>	<i>... and you,</i>
<i>Naomi Fisher</i>	<i>Richard Lynch</i>	<i>David Sooby</i>	<i>we hope</i>

SUPPORTING MEMBERS: *Harry Andrushak, Karen Cooper, Moshe Feder, Deb Geisler, Ben Liberman, Bill Mallardi, Keesan/Meltzer, Catherine Mintz, Andrew I. Porter, Sarah S. Prince, Joe Siclari, Edie Stern, Bobb Waller, Michael Waite*

What? A weekend celebrating science-fiction fandom, fanzines and fanhistory.

ditto is a relaxed, friendly convention for fanzine fans, friends of fanzine fans, and people who might like to be friends of fanzine fans.

With the addition of FanHistoriCon, which focuses on the history of fandom and the preservation of its artifacts, it will become a little more formal, program-wise, but remain just as friendly.

Anybody who likes to hang out and chat about fandom will enjoy it. (However, if your idea of a good convention requires an art show, a hucksters' room, a film program, a masquerade, a video room, an Internet lounge, dances, a science track, lots of big-name pros, tai chi lessons, weaponry or bondage, this probably isn't your sort of con.)

When? Oct. 12-14, 2001.

Where? Jumer's Chateau, 1601 Jumer Drive, Bloomington, IL 61702-0902,
<www.jumers.com>, +1 (309) 662-2020.

Bloomington is located midway between Chicago and St. Louis, at the junction of Interstates 55, 74 and 39, and Routes 9 and 150. It is accessible by air on American Eagle, Transworld Express, Frontier Airlines, AirTran Airways and Northwest Airlinck, as well as by rail on Amtrak.

Rooms are \$79 **if reserved by Sept. 20, 2001**; rack rates will apply to rooms booked after that date, if they are available at all. If you aren't sure whether or not you'll be able to attend, we advise booking a room just in case.

How much? Attending memberships are **\$50 at the door**; we are no longer accepting advance registrations. A half-price rate applies to fans who can document fanac in 1951 or earlier. Supporting memberships are \$20, and include convention publications.

The Tucker Hotel

At a convention in Boston, we handed a fan a flier. She read as far as "... at the Tucker Hotel in Bloomington, Ill." "Oh," she said, sympathetically, "you lost your hotel!"

We didn't have an opportunity to explain, then, about semi-canceling — fannish cross-outs for humorous effects, the origin of which we don't know — nor about that excellent if imaginary inn, The Tucker Hotel, but now we present Bob's own recollection of that hostelry's history.

The scheme for a fannish hotel was hatched about 1952 when hotel prices began climbing after the expiration of price controls. A room that cost \$5 last year suddenly jumped to \$8 and then to \$10 the next year. Fans were outraged of course because those rooms contained the same pictures and the same wallpaper as in years past. I began a campaign to build our own hotel and move it from city to city — wherever the next convention was being held. Rooms would remain at \$5 per night and the hotel staff would have to pass inspection by the fans to obtain and keep their jobs.

The idea became popular and a group of British fans advanced to the next step: they designed a set of blueprints for the hotel. The credits list Ken Slater, James White, Vince Clarke, Chuch Harris, Bob Shaw and Walt Willis as Grinders, while Bob Shaw drew up the plans. Copies of those plans have been published in various period fanzines (including Fancyclopedia II) and were republished last year in the Neo-Fans Guide by the Kansas City fan club. The original blueprints were sold at auction at some '50s Worldcon but neither the con nor the buyer are now remembered.

Some clever joker in Minneapolis fandom began a mail campaign to send me bricks — bricks to build the hotel and be responsible for its moving and storage. I had a post-office box at the time and over a period of a year or so I received about 60 bricks in parcel post packages. I stored them behind my garage for safekeeping. And then another joker in Minneapolis fandom capped the joke by denouncing me as a brick-hoarder — he urged fans to send me straw to make my own bricks. Many envelopes stuff with straw arrived in the mail. Fans are an inventive lot.

— BOB TUCKER

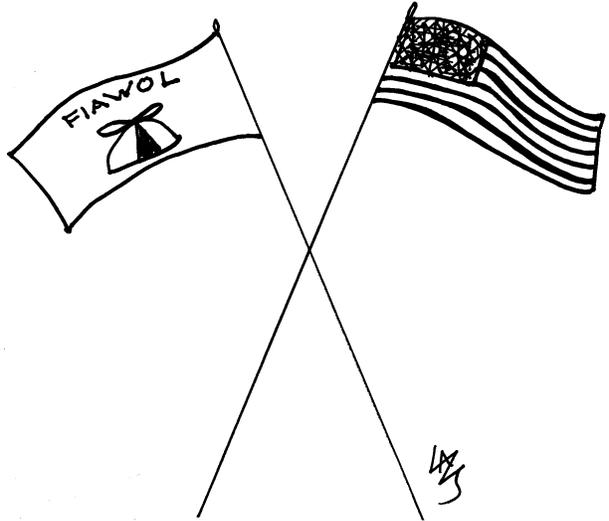
Fanac as Usual, During Alterations

The ghods of fandom must have been looking after their fen on Sept. 11. As far as we have heard, no fan was hurt during the tragic happenings of that day. No New York fan was near the World Trade Center. No Balti/Wash fen were at the Pentagon. No traveling jians were on the airplanes. *Kain ein horeh..*

We hope that by mid-October air transportation has returned some semblance of normalcy, and that everyone who was planning to come to Bloomington is still able to do so.

It has felt rather odd to be proceeding with plans for a frivolous fannish con while such dire events are unfolding in the macrocosm. And yet — frivolous fanac is what we do.

If we don't go on with our lives, if we don't pursue our pleasures, if we live each day in fear and grimness, then the terrorists truly have won.



Con Briefs

Hotel rooms

Deadline: Don't forget that the **block closes Sept. 20!** After that, if any rooms are available at all (the hotel is currently sold out except for our block), they will cost much higher rack rates. Make your hotel reservation even if you aren't sure you're coming.

Cancellations: *If you've booked a room and aren't going to be able to attend, please contact us before you cancel it*, in case we can use it for a procrastinator or someone who decides to come after the block cut-off date. You may cancel without penalty up till 6 p.m. on the first day of your reservation.

Roommates: Several people have asked about others looking for roommates. If you're interested in finding a roommate let us know (preferably by e-mail at <rhes@enteract.com>)

and we will forward the information to other people who've asked. Please include such information as whether gender, smoking and snoring matter.

Last-minute: If you decide to come at the last minute and don't have a room, call us (847/394-1950) and we'll see what we can do. What we can do may be to recommend a room at another hotel, though, so don't put off making a reservation if there's *any* possibility you may attend.

Smoking preferences and blocking: Please note that while the consuite will be smoke-free, it is on a smoking floor — so if you ask for a nonsmoking room, you will not be blocked with other con members. (The hotel says its smoking rooms aren't too stinky.) The consuite is on the third floor. There are other groups in the hotel.

Schedule

Although the con officially opens Friday evening and closes Sunday, we expect to have the consuite open Thursday night and there'll be some kind of dead dog party Sunday night. Setup and tear-down volunteers welcome.

Friday evening will commence with an ice-breaker, followed by Jack Speer's talk.

There will be a variety of programming on Saturday, with an auction on Saturday evening. (Note to **ditto** regulars — rather more programming than we're used to.)

Sunday will feature brunch and some fanhistorical interviews.

Optional brunch

Typically, ditto doesn't have an official food function, but we do sometimes like to eat together in large groups.

We'll be making a group reservation for Sunday brunch at the hotel. If you'd like to be sure of a place at the brunch, let us know ahead of time that you're interested. We will still probably have a few places available once the con starts, but not too many.

The American-style buffet brunch features about 10 entrees, including beef, fish and chicken, plus breakfast fare like waffles, egg dishes, and made-to-order omelets, as well as a variety of desserts.

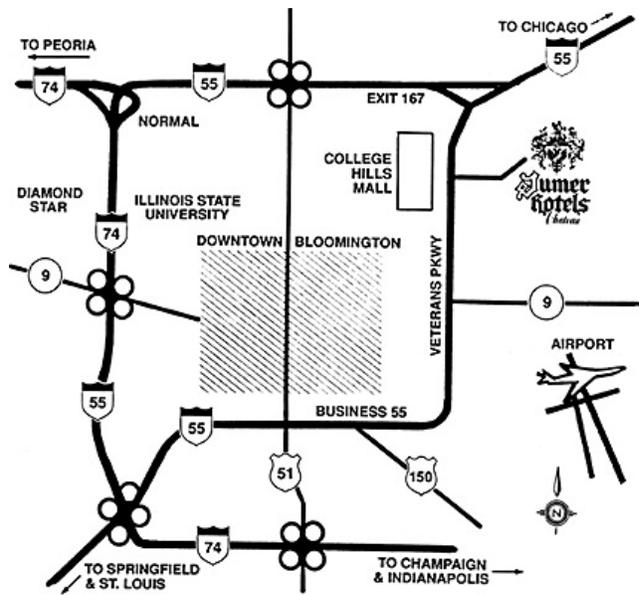
The price of the brunch is \$15 per person, including tax and tip. We will be collecting the money at the con in advance.

Free hotel shuttle

Jumer's offers free shuttle service from the airport and the train station. Call the hotel at (309) 662-2020 and speak with the bell captain. It's likely to be a busy weekend, so the hotel advises reserving your pickup in advance.

If not otherwise busy, the shuttle will also take you to various locations around Bloomington during your stay.

Don't forget to tip the driver!



Getting here

Jumer's is on the corner of Veteran's Parkway (Business 55) and Jumer Drive, across from College Hills Mall. It's the place that looks like a French chateau.

From Chicago: 140 miles — take I-55 south to Veteran's Parkway south.

From St. Louis: 156 miles — take I-55 north to Veteran's Parkway north.

From Peoria: 38 miles — take I-74 east to I-55 north to Veteran's Parkway south.

From Indianapolis: 177 miles — take I-74 west to U.S.-51 north to I-55 north to Veteran's Parkway north.

From the airport: The hotel offers a free airport shuttle; see above. If you've rented a car, the airport is on Route 9. Stay on Route 9 west to Veteran's Parkway; turn right (north).

dittowear

So, only one person expressed interest in commemorative clothing, but we think when you see the cool design of our embroidered polo shirt, you'll want one. Scott and Jane Dennis will be on hand with their robot sewing machine, and make up shirts on demand. If you wear a size bigger or smaller than the average run of fan-sized clothing, you might want to reserve a shirt in advance.

Climate

Average temperatures in Bloomington in October are a high of 69 degrees F., and a low of 47. Earthquakes are unlikely.

Volunteers needed

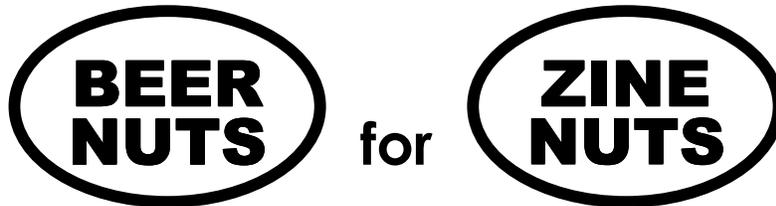
Carolyn Doyle and Dave Rowe have ~~been~~ ~~exceed~~ kindly offered to keep tabs on the consuite during the convention. However, given that the con will be somewhat larger than we expected, we need more volunteers to help do things like hauling ice, picking up

trash and setting out food and drinks. Otherwise the suite may have to be closed during programming.

Volunteers are also needed to help record the con for posterity. We will have some audio taping equipment but backups will be welcome. Photographers and videographers would also be terrific. Please bring your camera if you have one.

We'll also need people to help with the fanzine sales and the auction.

This is a participatory convention. Please be prepared to lend a hand when needed.



Among its other amenities, Bloomington, Ill., is the world headquarters of Beer Nuts Inc., manufacturers of those salty sweet redskinned confections that keep you ordering more brew.

The company's beginnings date back nearly as far as fandom's — to 1937, when Arlo Shirk and his father, Edward G. Shirk, bought the Caramel Crisp Shop, a small confectionery store in downtown Bloomington. The shop made and sold glazed nuts, popcorn, peanut brittle, caramel apples, and orange drink. Along with the store, the Shirks received the recipe for special glazed peanuts, known as "Redskins" because they were prepared with their papery red skins intact.

The Shirks prepared these by hand in the back room of the store and sold them over-the-counter by the scoop. They sometimes offered free samples of "Redskins" to promote sales of the housemade orange drink.

In 1940, when Arlo Shirk died, his 22-year-old brother Russell returned to Bloomington to help manage the Caramel Crisp Shop. By the early 1950s, the Shirks were packaging "Redskins" for the National

Liquor Stores in Bloomington and selling them as "Shirk's Glazed Peanuts." In 1953, Eldredge C. Brewster, a local potato chip and food distributor, teamed up with the Shirks to market the nuts to taverns and bars. To attract these buyers, they renamed the goobers "Beer Nuts Peanuts."

Russell Shirk made the confections in the basement of a new Caramel Crisp Shop location during off hours, and Brewster pushed them through his potato chip distribution outlets in Central Illinois. In a few months, Beer Nuts were available in Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis and Indianapolis.

The company, which now has worldwide distribution, today produces all its snack products at a single 100,000-square-foot manufacturing plant in Bloomington, with a staff of 80 under the direction of James A. Shirk and his family. Along with peanuts, the company now coats cashews and other nuts with its distinctive glaze.

Bloomington boasts two Beer Nuts outlet stores, in case you want to stock up while you're in town.

— LEAH ZELDES SMITH

Things to bring

- ★ **Your contribution to the convention fanzine.** It's not too early to start working on your contribution to the final issue of *Spirits of Things Past*. Unlike the typical convention one-shot, we hope to make this a worthwhile project, readable by people who weren't at the con.

You may e-mail this ahead of time (lazs@enteract.com), or bring it on disk (PC-based Microsoft Word or ASCII text, please) or on paper. If you prefer not to be subjected to editing, bring something pre-printed (125 copies — we said 100 before, but then we got a lot of new members.).

While you can write about anything you like, topics connected with fanhistory are particularly suitable.

Suggested topics: *Great fannish anecdotes ... My favorite fanzine ... Preserving your collection ... What fanhistory means to me ... Fan eras ... What is a trufan? ... Inspiring others to trufannishness ... How to make fans care about fanhistory ... Are fanzine fans a dying breed? ... Great fans I have known ... Life, the Universe and Everything...*

We would prefer original, rather than reprinted, work for this fanzine.

- ★ **Fannish artifacts for display.** We don't have a lot of space, so let us know ahead of time if you're bringing something large, but if you have anything interesting you'd like your fellow fans to see, do bring it along.
- ★ **Old fan photos.** Joe Siclari will be on hand with his setup for scanning photos for preservation and to be put up on the www.fanac.org Web site.

- ★ **New and old fanzines for sale or giveaway.** Need to clean out your attic? Bring old zines or your latest ish to sell or trade or give away.

- ★ **Fanzines for show-and-tell.** Got any really keen old zines? Bring them and show them off. Got some old crudzines? Bring them so we can all have a good laugh. Fanzine Show and Tell will give everyone a chance to talk about a favorite zine or a curiosity.

Fanedz: Bring a sample copy (or more than one) of a fanzine you published — no matter how long ago — and be prepared to talk about it. Of course, if anyone's actually gotten around to pubbing anything lately, bring that too.

- ★ **Donations to the ditto auction.** Fanzines, artifacts, books, whatever. Proceeds will benefit ditto (any surplus will be passed along to next year. No, we are not a 501(c)3 charity). Down Under Fan Fund Administrators Naomi Fisher and Pat Molloy will also be auctioning items for DUFF.

- ★ **Audio and video recorder and camera.** We need your help in preserving this event for posterity. Please let us know if you're willing to help record programming and interviews.

- ★ **Laptop.** Bring your own and there will be no waiting for contributing to the one-shot. If you're willing to let others use it, all the better.

- ★ **Homemade goodies for the consuite.** Anyone who wants to show off his or her culinary skills will be suitably worshipped.

- ★ **Your star-begotten mind.**

First Fandom is not dead ... it's coming to ditto!

Joining with Johnson

“**READ** America's Amateur Magazines, 8 for \$1.00. Seth A. Johnson, 339 Stiles St., Vaux Hall, N.J.” — *Amazing Stories*, Nov. 1964, classified advertising section.*

This ad or one much like it appeared in the classifieds of prozines throughout the 1960s, providing a route into fandom for many profeten of the period.

FINDING NEW FANS Seth Johnson and his Fanzine Clearing House

By LEAH ZELDES SMITH

The graying of fandom, and our difficulty in attracting new, young blood, has been a perpetual topic of fandom for more than a decade now. I'm not so concerned about it as I once was — there are far more people at any given Worldcon than I really want to meet. And I find it not a little scary that the *www.fanac.org* Cross Reference Index, which lists practically everybody who's done anything of note in fandom since its beginnings, references 12,229 people. Something called “fandom,” in one form or another, will outlive me, I'm sure.

I find, however, that I care less and less about preserving what fandom has become. Along with James Stanley Daugherty, I'm more and more inclined to think, “So let our fandom die. It'll be *our* fandom.”

Because I'm far less certain that fanzines and fanhistory will survive.

This convention has no members under age 35 and none who entered fandom less than 15 years ago. Amid all the horde who call themselves fans, there are so few of us who take pleasure in the history and lore of our microcosm, and in the craft of fanpublishing. I'm not interested in recruiting more bodies just to fill up the convention halls or to vote on the Best Dramatic Presentation Hugo. I am interested in finding more fans — either among the great unwashed con-going horde or out in unenlightened mundania — who have the potential to enjoy the parts of fandom that I do.

To that end, I'm interested in finding out what brought in other fans, and in stories like that of Seth Johnson.

Johnson, “That Johnny Appleseed of fandom who sowed those zines for so long from an address in New Jersey,” as Ned Brooks described him, ran what he called the Fanzine Clearing House. He collected surplus fanzines and distributed them in bundles to neofans, whom he contacted by running an ad in the back of prozines, offering the packets for a dollar or two.

“He was a massive letterhack and got many fanzines himself, and solicited fanzines from others,” Ed Meskys recalled. “He usually sent out far more fanzines in his bundles than the advertised number.”

Don Anderson described him as “a pleasant agreeable sort, willing to put up with a neo's questions. He used no intellectual flashiness to try to impress. He was just a down-to-earth, gentle soul.”

“Seth was a good-hearted, not awfully bright, fan who made a living of sorts in the summer by selling ice cream for Good Humor, Bungalow Bar, or one of those companies,” said Meskys. “I do not know what, if anything, he did for work in the winter.”

Johnson was a regular at Eastern Science Fiction Association meetings in the 1950s and '60s, and active in the National Fantasy Fan Federation, where he and his fanzine-bundling

* Thanks to Phyllis Eisenstein for digging up a copy.

activities were considered a semi-official bureau. He also served as a member of the N3F Welcommittee, a group that supposedly welcomed neos into fandom, but which often seemed to introduce them mainly to the insular activities of the N3F itself, much to the disdain of other fans.

“Seth had been a naive goshwowoboyoboy perpetual neofan and was held in low esteem by ‘trufen,’” Meskys said. “He was in the N3F and was what was sneered at as a ‘103-percent Neffer.’”

“He was not a good conversationalist. He was hard of hearing and, in the days before microcircuits, wore massive glasses with hearing-aid batteries and circuitry in the ear pieces.

“Gary Deindorfer took a then-new comic strip about a displaced-person immigrant kid from Italy struggling to survive in our culture, ‘Dondi,’ and redid it as a cruel satire of Seth, ‘Fandi.’”

Despite this derision, Johnson’s efforts introduced a variety of people to fandom, and fanzine fandom in particular. For example, in the early 1960s, two California teens, Jim Keith and Jim Schumacher, were drawn to pub their ish because of a Johnson bundle. Schumacher recalled:

It was Keith who finally decided to send off \$3 to a classified ad we had been wondering about. This ad was always appearing in the back of *Amazing Stories* and we could tell from our old issues that it had been running for, like, at least 10 years with the wording never changing. It was mysterious and enticing. It was from a guy named Seth Johnson who promised to send you a whole stack of something called “fanzines” as an introduction to what he called science fiction “fandom.”

It turned out that Seth ran something he called “The Fanzine Clearing House” from which he sent out large envelopes stuffed with amateur publications, most of which he acquired from various apas (amateur press associations). The piles of crudely mimeographed zines he sent us opened up another world — we realized there were a lot of other oddballs like ourselves scattered around the country and that they had found a way of communicating with each other through these amateur magazines.

We immediately cobbled together our own four-page effort, and sent it off to the addresses we found peppered throughout the zines we had received from Seth.*

Could a project like Johnson’s work today? Meskys thinks it would be too costly: “About 20 years ago I looked into advertising *Niekas* in order to get more subs and come closer to breaking even, but prozine classifieds went up far more than inflation. And now, in the last year or two, mailing them went up so drastically that such outreach could only be done if some con or the Worldcons undertook to subsidize the project as a project for the good of fandom.”

Perhaps some Worldcon or fan group should.

It wouldn’t necessarily require sending out bundles of fanzines. Perhaps the ad could ask for a SASE, and in exchange supply a list of current fanzines protofen could send for on their own, and a list of fannish web sites such as *www.fanac.org* and *efanzines.com*. Maybe some prozine could be induced to publish the ad for free, or at a discount, as a public service. Maybe we could get *Amazon.com* to run e-ads with their science-fiction listings, or SF bookstores to put up notices.

Would it, I wonder, be worthwhile trying to capture some of those who are already turned on to cons but are stuck in the Circle of Lassitude that prevents them from really finding fandom by advertising in Worldcon PRs and program books?

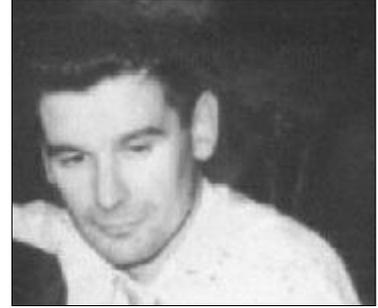
I don’t know. Maybe the 1930s through ’70s were a unique period in which people with a certain kind of mindset were able to come together, and that time is now past. Maybe there’s no need for our sort of fandom any more. But we won’t know if nobody tries.

Seth Johnson died of heart failure on March 11, 1969.

* Schumacher, Jim, 1999, <<http://free.prohosting.com/~sfc1/valhalla/earlyday.htm>>

Bert and his Beaver

As many of us return from attending the third Philadelphia Worldcon, Tucker (right, in a 1950s photograph) shares this account of a visitor to the second one, as reprinted from *Hyphen* 5, Nov. 1953.



Bert Campbell was the editor of the British prozine Authentic Science Fiction when he came across the Pond to attend his first American Worldcon in Philadelphia in 1953. He was a young man (late 20s) who wore an immaculate British beard in a year when that habit had not yet taken hold in the States — not even Rusty Hevelin wore a beard in 1953. Uncouth people called them “beavers” and sometimes made rude remarks.

We were fascinated by him and he was fascinated with many things American. He wanted to see a burlesque show and we treated him to a ticket at a nearby theater. (That attraction was not on the Worldcon program but at least a half-dozen of us added it to our programs.) The famous fannish battle cry “He’s down in the bar!” had not yet been invented but Bert was often found there — in company with many of us of course. The British toast to the queen described here happened many times in that bar, to the delight of all present — fans and paratroopers alike. The other convention in the hotel that weekend was a reunion of World War II paratroopers — those strange men who jump out of perfectly good airplanes and shoot at people on the ground as they float down. Sometimes they joined in Bert’s toasts to the queen.

— Bob Tucker

The Campbells Are Coming . . . Tra La?

By **BOB TUCKER**

He arrived!
I’m sorry that I can’t remember which day he arrived, for I was down in the bar and the Philadelphia convention had not yet started, so there was no official program to guide me. Once the giant clambake really got rolling I had no difficulty in determining the days. The barflies had worked out an ingenious system for keeping up with the Convention without once setting foot in the hall. Seventh Fandom runners would bring in almost hourly reports and our Intelligence Operatives would decode and evaluate the dispatches; by consulting the program and making due allowances for bumbling chairmen, longwinded speakers and parliamentary snarls, the Operatives were able not only to discover which day it was but often to ascertain the approximate time of day.

For example: a breathless runner would dash through the door with his face flushed in victory, to loudly shout: “Wow! A Bergy BEM for only 20 bucks! Real George!” As the bouncer ejected the lad we would huddle over the program booklet and evaluate the news. An auction was scheduled for Saturday, September 5th, from 8 until 9 in the evening. Someone would recall that about four hours ago a great mob of fans had descended on the bar to avoid a speech by Willy Ley. So we would decide that it was now Saturday evening, after 8 o’clock. The system never failed us, and we were spared the necessity of running from hall to bar to avoid the speeches. We just stayed there.

But he arrived some time prior to the official opening.

Pat Mahaffey (the equally beautiful sister of Bea) and I were sitting in the bar sipping Streptococci Chasers when it happened. Without warning she suddenly hissed in my ear, "Sssssttt!" Wiping my sodden eardrum with the end of somebody's necktie, I turned to her.

"Good stuff, isn't it?" And hoisted my glass.

But she was staring across the room, her lovely brown eyes large and round with awe. Her dainty jaw hung a trifle agape. "Jeeze," she said in a whisper that carried the length of the room, "pipe the beaver!"

I followed her glance and perceived Mr. Campbell, with beard. There was a choking sound behind me as someone else discovered him.

Pat asked, "Is he a faaaaaan?"

"No," I said stoutly, springing to the defense of a much maligned fandom. "Can't be. Probably one of those Air Force chaps." (It should be explained here that two other conventions were sharing the hotel with us, a reunion of wartime paratroopers and a Negro civic organization.) "Watch him now," I advised the girl. "As soon as he downs that drink he will leap to his feet and shout 'Geronimo!'"

But the unpredictable Mr. Campbell made a liar of me. He did rise to his feet and the group at his table slowly did likewise, uncomprehending. Mr. Campbell stiffly extended his hand, arm and drink to assume a rigid stance. "To the Queen!" he shouted. At once the noise in the bar dropped to a respectful silence as everyone turned to watch the foreigner. The group at his table, now aware of what was expected of them, stretched forth their glasses and replied, "To the Queen!" Mr. Campbell muttered in his beard, "Victoria, of course," and threw the fiery liquid down his throat.

Pat tugged at my sleeve. "Who is Victoria?"

"I'm not sure," I told her. "Some important personage in Australia, I believe. At least, they have a state or province or something by that name there." But I added reflectively, "Of course, I may be thinking of Borneo." Pat was impressed.

A person hasn't really lived until he has witnessed Bert Campbell toasting Victoria, the beard wagging waggishly. And that was my introduction to the great man. I was destined to see him perhaps half a dozen times in the course of the weekend and each meeting was one fraught with significance. Once he sold me a dirty fanzine. Well do I recall his sparkling sales technique, his promise of infinite riches as he conducted the transaction. It was in the privacy of his room and there were no more than eight or 10 others present at the time.

"Tucker!" he ejaculated, staring at me. "So you're Tucker. My boy, I have something for you." And from under the bed he pulled a stack of fanzines, slipping off the top one and coyly hiding the title with his hand. "Give me a dollar."

I was astounded. "What in the hell for?"

He winked mischievously, waggled the famous beaver, and moved his hand slightly. I looked down and saw the word SEX glaring from the cover. Whipping out a dollar I pressed it into his hand and quickly stuffed the hot fanzine under my shirt. Later I tore off the cover and openly carried the journal about the hotel premises.

Upon another occasion, during a dangerous and unprecedented moment, a small group of us deserted the bar to visit a neighboring hotel where a big wheel from New York was holding court and the liquor was free. Mr. Campbell was among the group and so I appointed myself his guardian, knowing he was unfamiliar with American traffic. As we paused beside the curb I held up an admonishing finger. "Mind the lorry!" Mr. Campbell glared at me with a pained expression, which was most disconcerting. I wondered if I had committed some breach of protocol and hastened to repair the damage. "The traffic moves on the right here," I explained, "but this is a one-way street so it moves on both the right and left." He only stared rudely at me; but he was dangerously near the curb. "It's coming from behind you," I said nervously. "Look yonder." He did not look, he continued to inspect me. I must confess I then lost my temper. "Oh to hell with the goddam lorry," I snapped at him. "Just stand in front of that truck and watch what happens!"

Actually, we were spared the bloody sight of Mr. Campbell decorating the Philadelphia street with his all. The truck saw Mr. Campbell first and turned to stare. He spat in his hand, smacked a fist into the spittle and cried "Beaver!" which is an old American custom. While I was explaining this old American custom to Mr. Campbell, the truck driver ran through a red light and hit a passing street car. We wandered into a nearby restaurant for dinner.

The droll fellow kept the diners in stitches.

First we went through the "Victoria" routine once more and damned if half the restaurant clientele didn't rise with him. I saw by the expressions on their faces that they didn't know Victoria either. The pianist, eager to welcome a foreigner to these shores, broke into the soft strains of "Mother Machree." Mr. Campbell turned to glare at him, which he interpreted as encouragement and went on with a few rousing bars of "Galway Bay." Meanwhile our waiter stood humbly by, taking our orders and striving desperately to understand Mr. Campbell without seeming to be rude. Sensing his predicament, I offered my services as translator and stated Mr. Campbell's wants in English. The waiter was obviously grateful and gave me an extra pat of butter. As it was, the meal ended with several pieces of silverware, some hard rolls, a napkin and a sprig of parsley in Mr. Campbell's voluminous pockets. There was no room left for an uneaten piece of steak so Pat Mahaffey obligingly put it in her purse for later.

There were but three more contacts with the beaver.

One doesn't count because he was out cold on the floor of his room. The rest of us trooped back and forth over his prostrate body, helping ourselves to the contents of his suitcase and bureau drawers, but remembering to close the door as we left. We didn't want him to catch cold in the draft of the corridor. We later discounted his angry charge that someone had picked his pockets.

A second occasion was his politicking just before the vote was taken to choose next year's convention site. Mr. Campbell ran up and down the long row of chairs, handing out favors, bandying wit with Seventh Fandom members, thumping strangers on the back and stepping on toes. Despite all this, he managed to garner 60 votes for London.

My last and most memorable contact with the gentleman was an excursion four of us made to see a burlesque show: Dave Kyle, Larry Shaw, Campbell and myself. How it warmed the cockles of my heart to see the simple fellow enjoy himself! He would howl with unrestrained laughter as the comedians pulled their sexy jokes, shout and stamp and whistle in high glee as the strippers "took it off," and otherwise carry on as a red-blooded American boy might do. Dave Kyle was likewise touched by his eager reaction and bought for him a little sealed envelope containing girlie pictures. Afterwards, Mr. Campbell stopped me a moment on the sidewalk in front of the theatre. "Tell me," he said earnestly, "what the devil was that all about? I couldn't seem to follow the plot."

Oh yes — there is one more bit to add. Coming home from the theater we passed a window display of a casket manufacturer. There in the window was the most beautiful, the most expensive coffin this side of a Hollywood cemetery.

"Ah yes," Mr. Campbell said, gazing at the display. "America."

One hasn't really lived until one has watched Mr. Campbell enjoy a burlesque show and an expensive coffin in the same evening.

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Smoffery surfaces

Is **ditto** a crypto-Smofcon? In case you thought it was “merely” a fanzine convention, we are crogged to report that we expect **seven** former Worldcon chairmen to attend this year. In their honor we present this hilarious piece of neglected historical faan fiction, by the late Bill “The Galactic” Fesselmeyer of Kansas City, reprinted from MidAmeriCon Progress Report 2, 1975.

How the GRINCH Stole Worldcon

By BILL “The Galactic” FESSELMAYER

REPORT OF THE SPECULATIVE FICTION RESEARCH SOCIETY TO THE 10th WORLD SPECULATIVE FICTION CONFAB ON THE SUBJECT OF ADOPTING A CONSTITUTION

The sudden demise of “fandom,” the predecessor of the thusiast state so many years ago, can be traced directly to the Constitution of the World Science Fiction Society — or rather to the multitude of mutually contradictory and ambiguous constitutions adopted. In fact, one of the few coherent stories that comes down to us from the even fewer survivors of that period immediately before “All Fandom Was Plunged Into War”¹ is the rather bizarre episode of the mail ballot that never got mailed.

¹ It is odd how they all used the exact same phrase.



In order to explain the various crises caused by the constitution it is necessary to understand that, although most of the time there were three current constitutions in effect, there was never a constitution to which a convention committee could be bound.

This sad state of affairs arose because a convention site was chosen two years before it was held. The convention committee was supposedly bound only by the rules in effect when they made their bid. However, in the same year they won the right to host a “worldcon,” a new constitution — or parts thereof — would be adopted. Also, the next year, at the intervening convention, still another would be adopted, superceding all previous constitutions. By the time the convention was held there were three different constitutions in effect.²

It was not uncommon for a provision to be voted in one year and immediately voted out the next — before it ever became operative in the third year. (Convention committees in the first and second years following would declare that the rule was adopted after they won their bids so they were, therefore, not bound to obey it as they had pledged to uphold only the constitution in effect when they won.) If, however, a committee liked something in the new constitution that was contrary to the constitution in effect when they won, they

² Plus, in some aspects, such as financial reporting after the convention, they might be affected by anything passed at their own convention, bringing the total number of operative constitutions up to four.

would merely declare that, as long as it had been approved anyway, the fans were entitled to have their legally voted wishes carried out at the earliest opportunity.

The converse was also true — if a procedure was out, the committee could still use it, claiming that it was permissible when they won the bid.³

Eventually this state of affairs became so chaotic convention committees were using parts of all three (or four) pertinent constitutions they liked, and refusing to be bound by portions they didn't. Toward the end, one committee simply declared that the three constitutions in effect had mutually conflicting provisions, so they had no other choice but to use their own best judgement. They then proceeded to do all sorts of things not provided for in any of the constitutions — and several that were prohibited by at least two of them.⁴

Keeping in mind, then, this system of constitutional anarchy, this is the story of the mail ballot that was never mailed — and how it led to the GRINCH stealing worldcon.

In 1974, at DisCon in Washington D.C., a Kansas City group won the right to host the worldcon in 1976. They, however, were bidding under the constitution adopted the year before in Toronto. At the DisCon business session a constitutional amendment was adopted to the effect that any future “perfected proposals” approved at a business meeting had to then be submitted for ratification to the membership of the next following convention. It also specified that this was to be done by mail, and that the next following committee was responsible for counting the ballots before such proposals could become effective.

It may be noted that a small group of people rammed this amendment through the poorly attended business meeting by a vote of 32-22.⁵ This amendment was apparently motivated by the fact that the next convention was to be held in Australia, thus out of the

³ This was, of course, all perfectly legal.

⁴ One committee, for example, awarded itself the Hugo for best “fanzine” in the previous year for its own Progress Reports.

⁵ This amendment ironically provided that no longer could a small group of people ram an amendment through a poorly attended business meeting.

reach (and control) of most U.S. fans who could not afford to attend in person.

The Australians, by every account nice people and well-liked by all, were not slow to see that this move was directed at them, and decided to use the new constitution adopted at DisCon. Accordingly, they sent the amendments approved at their business meeting to MAC (Kansas City apparently did not make a pleasing acronym, so it was called MidAmeriCon, or MAC) to be ratified by mail ballot.⁶ MAC promptly shipped them back, saying the rule was not in effect when it had bid, and it had no intention of conducting such a mail ballot.

Furthermore, MAC informed Aussiecon, it wouldn't consider approval by the Aussiecon business meeting enough for adoption; the constitution the Australians elected to use clearly stated that a mail ballot had to be conducted for ratification. It was also their opinion that Aussiecon was incompetent to run their own mail ballot as the constitution stated that the next committee had that responsibility. The only concrete suggestion they had was that Aussiecon pass the mail ballot on to the 1977 convention. The 1977 committee would be obligated by the DisCon rules as those were the rules in effect when that committee bid, and that no changes could be allowed until the Aussiecon ballots could be mailed for ratification.

The Aussies thought this was pretty silly, but consented to do so in order to fulfill their obligations under the constitution they had chosen.

The problem came when the business meeting at MAC⁷ repealed the mail ballot requirement.

The 1977 committee had grudgingly accepted the ballots for ratification, but delayed mailing them until the last possible moment.⁸ The 1977 Hugo ballots were not mailed until after MAC; the 1977 committee decided (following fannish

⁶ Aussiecon had printed the ballots at their own expense, even.

⁷ MAC was still operating under rules not requiring a mail ballot to amend the constitution.

⁸ (4:01) Such perfected proposals, if approved by a majority of those present, shall be submitted by mail ballot to the entire membership of the Society by the next following committee, no later than the nomination ballot for Hugo awards, for ratification or rejection by a majority of those voting.

tradition) to abandon the DisCon constitution and adopt the MAC constitution; they returned the ballot to Aussiecon.

In a desperate gamble the Aussiecon committee forwarded their amendments to the winning committee (1978) at MAC, only to have them returned with a note to the effect that, as the mail ballot had been repealed, they were not going to waste time and money on two-year-old amendments that had already been superceded by the MAC constitution — under which *they* had elected to operate.

At this point the Australians, in disgust, put all the profits from Aussiecon into a trust fund. The purpose of the fund was to send the ballots to every World Science Fiction Convention Committee in perpetuity until one of them consented to mail it. The second generation of Trust Fund Administrators is still mailing them out, year after year, to each succeeding World Speculative Fiction Confab Board of Governors, apparently believing them to be the heirs to the Worldcons.

That is why today the mere mention of how the mail ballot counting is coming will send old-time spec-fic enthusiasts into fits of laughter. BOGs of Confabs refuse to waste their time and money on such an antiquated mail ballot — besides, it has become somewhat of a enthusiast tradition: no winning BOG feels official until it gets the ballots from the Australian solicitors.⁹

This, then, was the state of affairs before “all fandom was plunged into war,” a war which achieved almost 100 percent casualties, either through “fafiaction” or “gafiaction.”¹⁰ Because of the state of confusion regarding the WSFS constitution, one committee was actually able to “steal” the Worldcon — the GRINCH (*GR*and *IN*sland, *NE*braska, *CH*onvention.)¹¹

In a situation reminiscent of the episode of the mail ballot, a bid was won by a foreign city — Vienna (AustraCon) — and, not being entirely void of learning capacity, the WSFS

⁹ Perhaps similar to the tradition the Worldcons had of passing the gavel.

¹⁰ FAFIA: Forced away from it all; GAFIA: Getting away from it all.

¹¹ CHonvention is sic; fans would often put an H in an inappropriate place, such as chonvention or “can of bheer” — in a moment of levity, the SFRS voted to consider sticking an H in a can of beer worse than sticking in a straw.

readopted the DisCon constitution during the same con at which the Vienna bid won — thus binding the committee winning after AustraCon to actually mail the AustraCon ballots. (Vienna had promised in advance to use the DisCon constitution were it adopted.)

GRINCH won the next year and, of course, having bid under the DisCon rules, could be held to them. AustraCon could not abolish the mail ballot without using the mail ballot, so everything looked rosy.

The Austrians made one mistake, however. They held the business and site selection meetings conjointly. The GRINCH, quoting articles 3:01 and 4:01 of the DisCon constitution¹² declared that, as the site selection was part of the business meeting, the winning city, Newark, had to be ratified by mail balloting of the GRINCH members.¹³

An Austrian court held that “Moved — Newark hold the Worldcon in . . .” was indeed a perfected proposal and must be submitted to the GRINCH members. The court also prohibited AustraCon from disbursing funds to Newark until after the mail ballot.

There was already considerable ill feeling between the GRINCH committee and the Newark committee, and this is the act that “plunged all fandom into war.” At that time a very large number of people were involved in a culty sub-movement centered around a television show: *Lost in Space*. Enthusiasts of straight spec-fic felt these so-called “spacies” were not interested in the rest of the spec-fic genre or in the convention as a whole, but were coming to the Worldcons in such numbers as to make the cons overcrowded and unmanageable.¹⁴

The GRINCH committee shared this feeling and had already stated there would be no spacie programming allowed at their convention. Needless to say, this announcement had

¹² (3:01) The Society shall choose the location of the Convention to be held two years hence at a meeting held at an advertised time during each World Science Fiction Convention. (4:01) The Society shall conduct business at a meeting held at an advertised time during each World Science Fiction Convention.

¹³ See footnote 8.

¹⁴ It was said that some spacies would travel half way across the country to see an episode for the 123rd time.



crystallized resentment among the species, or “spacetics,” as they preferred to call themselves, who had put together the Newark bid and had won. It is obvious that very few species had bought memberships to GRINCH which, although not excluding them, had little to attract those not interested in mainstream spec-fic. They were then faced with the fact that anti-species would have the right and power to ratify or reject the Newark bid. Species immediately began joining GRINCH (and at a substantially higher price because of an escalating schedule of rates). In fact, they mounted such a campaign to save Newark it is estimated that in one month they doubled the total membership, and quadrupled the treasury.

GRINCH infuriated the species by the simple tactic of delaying the registration of all these new members until after the mail ballot was rushed out, returned, and counted. It was a rare specie, indeed, who was allowed to vote on the Newark question.

A U.S. Federal Court declared that there was nothing in the constitution that required the GRINCH committee to register people promptly, and that sending out the mail ballot was allowed by the DisCon constitution.

More than a little annoyed at the personal harassment (not to mention the lawsuits) directed their way by the species, GRINCH refused

to refund any membership fees. Furthermore, when it found that several species had stopped payment on their checks, they prosecuted. Courts at all levels held that they had every right to do so. There are legends of convicted species publishing “fanzines” from their cells.

The Austrian court was persuaded to turn over the funds which would have gone to the winning bidder under section 3:05 of the DisCon constitution.¹⁵ An appeal by Newark was unsuccessful.

Newark next got a show cause order why GRINCH should not poll the Society by mail. GRINCH had it quashed with a two-fold defense: first, that GRINCH was then only a couple of months away and there was no time, and second, that a lot of their time was being taken up answering Newark’s other lawsuits. The court agreed that time indeed did not allow and that the GRINCH committee should (under the rules of the constitution) decide what to do about the next year’s convention.

Of course, it decided that GRINCH II was in order and immediately booked a hotel — but not as large as the one they were using for GRINCH I. Then they announced that, based on advance registration for GRINCH I (over half of which were species who had bought supporting memberships in an effort to save Newark), the facilities were not large enough to host a convention with unlimited attendance. They chose to limit it, with the exception of those who had already bought full memberships to GRINCH II, to “By Invitation Only.”

After another trip to court, it was decided that, as GRINCH I had the responsibility for throwing the disrupted convention, the committee could not be reasonably expected to choose a site outside its own area, and that they had made a binding contract with the hotel. The courts also held that a suit to prohibit GRINCH II from being “By Invitation Only” was without merit as virtually *all* conventions operated under such an arrangement.

¹⁵ **With sites being selected two years in advance, there are therefore at least two Convention Committees in existence. If one should become unable to perform its duties, the surviving Convention Committee shall determine what to do, by mail poll of the Society if there is time for one, or by decision of the Committee if there is not.**

While most of these actions were still in court, GRINCH I took place. Almost no spacie sympathizers attended and, as a result, the GRINCH business session passed a completely new constitution. The new constitution did away with the geographical rotation plan for Worldcon sites; abandoned the mail ballot for site selection; decreed that the site selection would be one year before the convention was held¹⁶ and did away with the mail ratification of the actions of business meetings.

As was to be expected — because of the extremely large spacie membership in GRINCH I — the site selected for the next convention after GRINCH II was for another spacie bid: this time in Los Angeles (LosTCon). The mail ballot ran 14 to 1 in favor of the Los Angeles site. However, GRINCH I followed the lead of AustraCon and held the site selection and business meetings jointly — which gave them the right to have LosTCon ratified by the membership of GRINCH II.

As the membership of GRINCH II was “By Invitation Only” — plus those who had bought memberships at GRINCH I (which included only a handful of spacies) — all the amendments were ratified, with the exception, to the surprise of absolutely no one, of LosTCon. This again threw the responsibility of arranging the next Worldcon onto the shoulders of the surviving committee: GRINCH II. As the mail ballot had not been sent out until the last possible moment, and had not been counted until late in the summer, the Federal Court once again ruled that time did not allow for the polling of the Society, and that the surviving committee should make the decision.

GRINCH II chose to make the constitution adopted at GRINCH I effective immediately, as per article 4:01¹⁷ of the DisCon constitution, and announced that elections would be held at GRINCH II to see where the next Worldcon site would be.

To back up for a moment, another significant event took place which was, as the old expression goes, “the last straw” in the demise of

¹⁶ Instead of two years with another convention intervening.

¹⁷ “If ratified, the amendment shall take effect at the end of the next convention, unless the Committee of that Convention (which is administering this mail ballot) chooses to make it effective when the vote is tallied.”

fandom. At the same time GRINCH I was being held in Grand Island, the spacies, to protest what they considered to be high-handed treatment by the GRINCH committee, organized a “RumpCon” in Newark. Some rather nasty things were said about GRINCH at RumpCon, both by the committee as a whole and by individual members. Some of these remarks were printed in the daily convention publication in a sort of inquiring reporter column.

As a result, the GRINCH committee sued the RumpCon committee, the authors of the remarks, and *every registered member of RumpCon* for libel and slander. The courts held that, as an unincorporated body, the members of RumpCon were *individually and collectively* liable for damages, which were assessed at a very modest \$1,000 a head. However, the membership of RumpCon was slightly more than 20,000, which brought the total value of the judgment to more than *20 million dollars!* The amazing part is that GRINCH did collect 15 million dollars.¹⁸ The other five million was used as bargaining power against the other attendees, who had to sign an agreement never to write, publish, sell, or attend anything having to do with *Lost in Space* again. This deflated almost the entire spacie movement, and did deflate every publishing spacie, leaving the remainder of the cult with no means of contact.¹⁹

At GRINCH II even those spacies who had bought full memberships at GRINCH I, and were eligible to attend, did not show up. As a result the membership consisted almost entirely of those who had received invitations. GRINCH I passed on all its surplus funds (which exceeded 15 million dollars, as the committee members magnanimously donated their shares of the damage settlement to the convention). It is said that GRINCH II was the most lavish Worldcon ever. The sole surviving member that we have been able to locate, one

¹⁸ They settled with the insurance company of the studio that produced *Lost In Space*. According to SFRS investigation of old *TV Guides*, the program had been off the air for years, although a Saturday morning cartoon version was still on. That studio was foolish enough to have purchased a membership to RumpCon.

¹⁹ Stories have come down to us that some of the spacies switched their allegiance to another defunct TV show called *Star Trek*. Thusiasts find this too incredible to take seriously.

Bob Tucker, whenever asked about the GRINCH II strategy, will only make an arcane gesture and chant, “Smooooooth!”

At the site selection meeting, a surprise bid (although apparently known of by all the invited members) was made for Venezuela by a group that did not appear and who would identify itself only as “The Masters of Secret Fandom Inc.” The Venezuela bid won rather handily, and shocked the attendees by naming 50 professional guests of honor and 200 fan guests of honor — for whom all expenses would be paid.

Of course, they had known in advance that the GRINCH II committee would pass on their surplus funds, which after convention expenses, still totaled almost 15 million dollars. The MoSF announced that MatildaCon²⁰ was to be by invitation only, as was GRINCH II. It later turned up in an examination of the incorporation papers of the Masters of Secret Fandom, Inc., that those august personages were none other than the GRINCH committee members.

The Masters of Secret Fandom, living up to their name, chose not to reveal even which city in Venezuela MatildaCon was to be held. They claimed that it was nobody’s business but the members — and they would be told when they received their invitations.

The next year, known invitees to MatildaCon were asked where the next convention would be held. Their answers should by now be predictable: “If you are invited, you will be told.”

MatildaCon was the last of the recorded Worldcons — after it, none was ever announced again. There were rumors that it had been dissolved, and there were rumors that it was still being held annually, but only invited members knew where — and they had to take a vow of secrecy or they would never be invited to another. In fact, there is a thusiast legend that the Masters of Secret Fandom still exist today,

²⁰ There never has been an adequate translation of that name into mundane, but one thusiast reports that there was a folk song popular in the 1950s and ’60s to which the chorus went: “Matilda she take de money and run Venezuela!” If this is the reference for MatildaCon the MoSF were indeed adding insult to injury.



keeping an eye on us to see how we develop, and in the meantime are still holding the World Science Fiction Convention annually.²¹

Therefore, ladies and gentlemen of the 10th World Speculative Fiction Confab, the SFRS recommends that no constitution more complex than the one submitted should be adopted, for fear that the thusiast state, like all of fandom before it, be plunged into war.

Respectfully submitted,

E. E. “Doc” Seuss

E. E. “Doc” Seuss
(Chairman of the committee to consider adopting a constitution.)

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION FOR THE WORLD SPECULATIVE FICTION SOCIETY

Article I Do good.

Article II Avoid evil.

Article III Throw a confab.

²¹ There is some slight proof that this might be true — Bob Tucker, last known survivor of GRINCH II, disappears for about a week every year around Labor Day and will say nothing about where he has been other than “Smooooooth!” Also, one thusiast who reprinted part of the libelous comments from RumpCon received a letter shortly thereafter saying that to knowingly repeat libel is libel, so desist or else. Interestingly enough, it was signed “The Masters of Secret Fandom” and was on paper that bore the “GRINCH XIX, The 75th World Science Fiction Convention” letterhead. Although it may have been a hoax, the thusiast desisted.

Fan Hugo Award Results

Best Fan Writer

Nominations for Fan Writer: 201 nominating ballots, 134 nominees

Nominees on final ballot: Bob Devney (41);

Steven H. Silver (30); Evelyn C. Leeper (25);
Mike Glycer (24); Dave Langford (23)

Other nominees: Guy Lillian III (17); Lloyd Penney (17);

Cheryl Morgan (14); John L. Flynn (13); Jo Walton (12);
Geri Sullivan (10); John Hertz (9); Joseph T. Major (9);
Amie Katz (7); Arthur Hlavaty (7); David Levine (7);
Fred Lerner (7); Leah Zeldes Smith(7)

Votes for Best Fan Writer (557 ballots)

First place

Dave Langford	128	148	162	164	217
Evelyn C. Leeper	88	102	130	131	163
Mike Glycer	106	114	125	125	
No Award	102	102	103		
Steven H. Silver	71	77			
Bob Devney	62				

No Award test

310 ballots rank Dave Langford higher than No Award
132 ballots rank No Award higher than Dave Langford

Second place

Mike Glycer	147	173	190	194
Evelyn C. Leeper	113	133	170	172
No Award	105	107	109	
Steven H Silver	81	91		
Bob Devney	73			

Third place

Evelyn C. Leeper	155	202	213
Steven H Silver	105	134	136
No Award	116	126	
Bob Devney	103		

Fourth place

Steven H Silver	162	166
Bob Devney	138	146
No Award	126	

Fifth place

Bob Devney	231
No Award	131

Best Fan Artist

Nominations for Fan Artist: 127 nominating ballots, 81 nominees

Nominees on final ballot: Teddy Harvia (42); Brad Foster (25);
Sue Mason (20); Sheryl Birkhead (16); Taral Wayne (16)

Other nominees: Joe Mayhew (15); Freddie Baer (13); Charles
Williams (11); Alexis Gilliland (10); Julia Morgan-Scott (10);
Steve Stiles (10); Bill Neville (9); D West (8);
Kurt Erichsen (8); Stu Shiffman (6)

Votes for Best Fan Artist (501 ballots)

First place

Teddy Harvia	108	117	134	134	177
Brad Foster	108	123	132	132	170
Sue Mason	87	92	111	111	
No Award	105	105	105		
Sheryl Birkhead	51	56			
Taral Wayne	42				

How Hugo Ballots Are Counted

Hugo voting uses a system often called an “Australian ballot” but which is more correctly a “preferential ballot.” This ballot allows voters to rank the candidates in order of preference: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. It’s easiest to understand the counting technique by imagining piles of paper ballots.

For each category, take the valid ballots, and deal them into piles according to their first-place votes. No Award is treated just like any other choice. If one of the choices has more half of the ballots in its pile, then it is the presumed winner.

If the presumed winner isn’t No Award, conduct a further test to make sure that most of the voters prefer the presumed winner to No Award: Re-count all the ballots, making one pile for the presumed winner and one for No Award, depending on which of these two choices has a higher preference on the ballots. If the No Award pile is bigger than the presumed winner’s

pile, No Award wins. Only if more ballots prefer the presumed winner to No Award does the presumed winner become the winner.

If no nominee has the majority, take the pile with the fewest ballots in it, toss aside any that failed to vote for anyone else, and redistribute the rest among the other piles, based on those voters’ second choice. If you still have no pile with the majority, repeat the process, once again removing the smallest pile and restacking its ballots according to the next choice that still has a pile. Eventually, there will be a presumed winner (or a very unlikely tie). Then run the No Award test.

Second place does not go to the candidate that gets the second-most first-place votes or to the last candidate in the run-off against first place. It’s more complicated than that: To determine second place, you start all over again with making piles, this time eliminating the winner and distributing its ballots to the piles

according to their second choices. Again, keep redistributing the ballots from the shortest piles until one pile has a majority.

For third place, you do it again, removing the first- and second-place winners from consideration. And so on. This process is repeated for each category.

Consider this year's Best Fanzine category as an example: First, the votes were divided, and, while *File 770* had the most votes, it didn't have a majority. So *Challenger*, with the least first-place votes, was eliminated. Its ballots were divided among the other choices, giving 10 more votes to *STET*, one more vote to No Award, eight more votes to *Mimosa*, seven more votes to *Plokta*, and nine more votes to *File 770*.

File 770 still didn't have a majority, so the ballots for the next lowest vote getter, *STET* (whose pile included the 10 ballots that ranked *Challenger* Number 1 and *STET* Number 2), were reassigned. Next, No Award was eliminated and its ballots redivided. (It's interesting to note that nearly all of the No Award voters had no further preference beyond No Award, since the other choices were barely increased by the reassignment.) Then, *Mimosa* was eliminated. Finally, *File 770* won the runoff against *Plokta*, and passed the No Award test by 294 to 116 to win.

To see how second place in Fanzine worked out, compare the leftmost columns of the first- and second-place tallies. *File 770* was the winner and therefore not part of the second-place count. You can see that the 120 ballots that ranked *File 770* as Number 1 were reassigned, based on their second-choice votes, as follows: *Mimosa*, 36 more; *Plokta*, 11 more; No Award, 3 more; *STET*, 12 more; and *Challenger*, 14 more (44 voters must have marked only *File 770*, and therefore weren't counted further).

Things to consider, given this system: If you hate most of the candidates, you may still want to express a preference after No Award, to help keep your least-favorite choice from winning if No Award is eliminated. Marking only No Award (as almost 100 people did in the Fanzine category) effectively means that you want No Award to win, and if it doesn't, you don't care what wins.

No Award test

291 ballots rank Teddy Harvia higher than No Award

116 ballots rank No Award higher than Teddy Harvia

Second place

Brad Foster	151	175	201	201
Sue Mason	99	110	136	136
No Award	108	108	108	
Sheryl Birkhead	57	66		
Tara Wayne	56			

Third place

Sue Mason	142	167	168
Sheryl Birkhead	93	122	123
No Award	112	112	
Tara Wayne	78		

Fourth place

Sheryl Birkhead	153	228
No Award	114	116
Tara Wayne	113	

Fifth place

Tara Wayne	224
No Award	120

Best Fanzine

Nominations for Best Fanzine: 194 nominating ballots, 90 nominees

Nominees on final ballot: *File 770* (54); *Mimosa* (40); *Challenger* (38); *Plokta* (36); *Stet* (30)

Other nominees: *Ansible* (28); *Idea* (23); *Emerald City* (15); *FOSFax* (15); *Bento* (11); *Trap Door* (11); *Banana Wings* (10); *The Devniad* (9); *Nova Express* (9); *Twink* (9)

Votes for Best Fanzine (514 ballots)

First place

File 770	120	129	147	148	206
<i>Plokta</i>	88	105	123	124	147
<i>Mimosa</i>	86	94	120	120	
No Award	99	100	102		
<i>Stet</i>	64	74			
<i>Challenger</i>	57				

No Award test

294 ballots rank *File 770* higher than No Award

116 ballots rank No Award higher than *File 770*

Second place

<i>Mimosa</i>	122	143	181	181
<i>Plokta</i>	97	118	146	149
No Award	102	103	107	
<i>Stet</i>	76	88		
<i>Challenger</i>	71			

Third place

<i>Plokta</i>	114	155	159
<i>Challenger</i>	120	153	155
No Award	106	111	
<i>Stet</i>	96		

Fourth place

<i>Challenger</i>	154	156
<i>Stet</i>	137	140
No Award	107	

Fifth place

<i>Stet</i>	237
No Award	114

Retro — Best Fan Writer

Nominations for Fan Writer: 38 nominating ballots, 29 nominees

Nominees on final ballot: Walt Willis (27); Bob Tucker (24);

Lee Hoffman (16); James White (11); Bob Silverberg (7)

— DICK SMITH

Other nominees: Harlan Ellison (7)*, Redd Boggs (5); Francis Towner Laney (4); Bob Bloch (3); Forrest J Ackerman (3); Bob Shaw (2); Charles Burbee (2); David H Keller (2); Harry Warner (2); Lee Jacobs (2); Sam Moskowitz (2); Terry Carr (2); Art Rapp (1); Art Widner (1); Dave Kyle (1); Donald B. Day (1); Joe Kennedy (1); Lynn Hickman (1); Manley Banister (1); Max Keasler (1); Rick Sneary (1); Shelby Vick (1); Vernon McCain (1); Vince Clarke (1)

Votes for Best Fan Writer (523 ballots)

First place

Bob Silverberg	176	181	202	202	228
Bob Tucker	99	103	123	124	174
Walt Willis	78	83	93	94	
No Award	85	86	86		
James White	64	67			
Lee Hoffman	21				

No Award test

349 ballots rank Bob Silverberg higher than No Award.
88 ballots rank No Award higher than Bob Silverberg.

Second place

Bob Tucker	129	141	142	176
James White	100	108	109	152
Walt Willis	92	100	100	
No Award	89	90		
Lee Hoffman	37			

Third place

James White	147	172	173
Walt Willis	127	144	145
No Award	90	92	
Lee Hoffman	57		

Fourth place

Walt Willis	172	173
Lee Hoffman	101	101
No Award	90	

Fifth place

Lee Hoffman	220
No Award	94

Retro — Best Fan Artist

Nominations for Fan Artist: 30 nominating ballots, 20 nominees

Nominees on final ballot: Bill Rotsler (19); James White (11);

Ray Nelson (7); Dave Kyle (6); Jack Gaughan (6);
Lee Hoffman (4)

Other nominees: Bjo Trimble (8)*; Lynn Hickman (4)*, Hannes Bok (3); Alva Rogers (2); Bill Kroll (2); Ken Brown (2); ATom (2); Edd Cartier (1); George Richard (1); Jerry Bullock (1); Jim Bradley (1); Margaret Dominick (1); Ralph Rayburn Philips (1)

Votes for Best Fan Artist (477 ballots)

First place

Jack Gaughan	133	140	155	183	187
Bill Rotsler	96	99	112	129	129
No Award	100	101	101	103	
James White	70	76	83		
Lee Hoffman	40	48			
Ray Nelson	38				

No Award test

268 ballots rank Jack Gaughan higher than No Award.
105 ballots rank No Award higher than Jack Gaughan.

Second place

Bill Rotsler	143	154	187	188
James White	93	100	121	123

* Nominees so marked received enough nominations to make the final ballot but were found to be ineligible because they produced no eligible work that year.

No Award	105	105	106
Ray Nelson	54	75	
Lee Hoffman	53		

Third place

James White	135	152	154
Lee Hoffman	89	123	125
No Award	105	108	
Ray Nelson	73		

Fourth place

Lee Hoffman	142	214
No Award	108	112
Ray Nelson	101	

Fifth place

Ray Nelson	195
No Award	110

Retro — Best Fanzine

Nominations for Best Fanzine: 36 nominating ballots, 26 nominees

Nominees on final ballot: Slant (19); Quandry (17); Science Fiction News Letter (8); Skyhook (8); The Fanscient (7); Spacewarp (7)

Other nominees: The Nekromantik (5); Cry of the Nameless (2); Fantasy Advertiser (2); Le Zombie (2); Operation Fantast (2); Peon (2); Phantasmagoria (2); Shangri-La (2); Spaceways (2); Dreamquest (1); Fan Variety (1); Fantasy Commentary (1); Fantasy Times (1); Gem Tones (1); Mezrab (1); Peace on Sol III (1); Shangri L'Affaires (1); Spaceship (1); TWS (1); Wild Hour (1)

Votes for Best Fanzine (415 ballots)

First place

SF News Letter	111	114	125	149	150
Slant 80	86	93	119	122	
No Award	101	101	103	103	
Quandry	44	49	65		
Skyhook	32	32			
Spacewarp	31	32			
The Fanscient	16				

No Award test

224 ballots rank SF News Letter higher than No Award.
104 ballots rank No Award higher than SF News Letter.

Second place

Slant	101	112	118	126	129
Quandry	69	76	86	106	107
No Award	102	102	102	104	
Spacewarp	41	46	53		
Skyhook	37	38			
The Fanscient	26				

Third place

Quandry	109	123	154	189
No Award	104	104	104	106
Spacewarp	48	58	67	
Skyhook	53	57		
The Fanscient	35			

Fourth place

Skyhook	100	121	172
No Award	104	104	105
Spacewarp	64	78	
The Fanscient	45		

Fifth place

Spacewarp	118	163
No Award	104	104
The Fanscient	57	

Sixth place

The Fanscient	130
No Award	106

Who's Voting No Award? And how do we stop them?

By LEAH ZELDES SMITH

OK, so I wasn't *too* disappointed that we didn't win the Hugo Award. It seemed unlikely we would, given that we only produced one issue and it wasn't clear to many people what year it actually was eligible in. It was a good field of candidates and one that I'm proud to be part of, even if we came in fourth (in first-place votes) or last (in fully distributed votes).

What felt like a slap in the face, though, was seeing in the voting details that 99 people had voted for No Award in first place before *STET*. I took that very personally. Nearly 100 people (more, once all the votes were distributed) would rather see no rocket be awarded than see it go to our fanzine!

"That's not people who actually read the fanzines, I'll guarantee you that!" commiserated Guy Lillian, whose *Challenger* also ranked below No Award in first-place votes.

Sheila Lightsey speculated that voters were mistaking No Award for No Preference, an error she said she had made. That seems unlikely when you look at the voting patterns for the other awards. The three fan categories and the Campbell Award are the only ones in which No Award received more first-place votes than the lowest real nominee; in the fan categories No Award scored nearly as many votes as the winners. It's also clear, when you look at how the votes are distributed, that the vast majority of those who rank No Award first in the fan categories do not list a second choice. The numbers of No Award votes in Best Fan Artist and Best Fan Writer are similar to those for Best Fanzine.

First Place Hugo Votes for No Award

CATEGORY	NO AWARD	% OF TOTAL	MOST	LEAST	TOTAL
Fan Artist	105	21.0	108	42	501
Fan Writer	102	18.3	128	62	557
Fanzine	99	19.3	120	57	514
Campbell	67	11.9	181	59	561
Semiprozine	48	6.6	256	78	731
Short Story	47	5.9	205	108	796
Pro Editor	45	5.9	170	107	766
Novelette	40	5.3	184	107	761
Dramatic Pres.	33	3.4	368	105	972
Related Book	32	4.6	187	75	700
Novella	27	3.5	218	57	782
Novel	25	2.8	326	94	885
Pro Artist	17	2.2	232	101	783

This chart shows the number of first-place votes that No Award received in each category, the percentage those votes were of total votes in the category, the most and least first-place votes other nominees in the category received, and the total number of votes cast in each category.

If Sheila's right, we need to spell out on the ballots just what No Award means: "No Award means you don't think *any* of the nominees deserves the Hugo. Voting that way when you don't know the nominees is a hostile act."

Mark Olson believes it *is* a hostile act. He thinks that the roughly five score voters who mark No Award first in each fan category are protesters who don't believe Hugos should be awarded for fanac, or perhaps an anti-fanzine-fan bloc. This view is personally somewhat comforting (meaning they don't hate *STET* in particular), but overall, disturbing — a sign that fandom is moving ever farther away from its roots.

The No Award vote means that about 20 percent of the people who cared enough to vote felt that no one on the ballot deserved to get a Hugo Award for Best Fanzine, Best Fan Writer or Best Fan Artist. The question is — are these voters people who read fanzines?

I can imagine that some fanzine connoisseurs might find the zines that make it to the Hugo ballot less than the *crème de la crème* of fanpublishing. It takes a fairly large mailing list to be noticed by enough nominators to reach the ballot. Many small and select zines and their contributors never get the recognition their quality deserves. I can imagine someone feeling that the Hugo-nominated zines represent the lowest common denominator and hence, are unworthy.

On the other hand, the most attenuated of fanzine ~~snebs~~ aesthetes tend not to be Worldcon joiners, and I doubt there are close to 100 of them altogether. So Guy is probably right and these are nonreaders. I'm inclined more toward Mark's theory than Sheila's. These uninformed individuals who are voting No Award are doing so because they don't know fanzines and they don't like what they don't know.

It's to be expected that fewer voters will be knowledgeable about the fan nominees (as opposed to Best Dramatic Presentation — always the top vote getter, another disturbing phenomenon ... but that's a different diatribe.) Still, assuming that about 5,000 people were eligible to vote (that number's probably rather high, but MilPhil hasn't released its membership totals and it makes the math easier), more than 10 percent voted in the fan categories vs., for example, about 15 percent who voted on Best Novelette.

A total of 1,050 ballots were counted, so about half of those voting at all voted on the fan awards. (The percentages are a bit less for nominations — out of 495 nominating ballots, about 200 made Fan Writer and Fanzine nominations; only 127 named Fan Artists. MilPhil's numbers are fairly consistent with previous years', based on the various writings of George Flynn, who has been tracking vote totals for years.)

I don't have previous years' statistics at hand, so I don't know if this is an annual pattern. I suspect it is. (Though I hope George or somebody else who has the real numbers will prove me wrong.) This is disturbing for a number of reasons, but most of all because if the trend continues, one of these days No Award will win — not because no one's publishing good fanzines, but because Hugo voters aren't reading them.

The day that happens, fanzine fandom — and fandom in general — loses.

The Hugo Award Committee in most years makes at least a token effort to include language on the ballot to convince WSFS members not to vote in categories whose nominees they're unfamiliar with. I can't recall if it was there this year. Obviously, it's not enough.

Something Ought to Be Done.

I propose that, instead of trying to convince people who don't know about fanzines to avoid voting on them, we try to convince more people to appreciate them.

What I have in mind is a dedicated, concerted effort on the part of fanzine fans to introduce Worldcon goers to fanzines and to educate them on their value, history and worth. Such a plan would require the full cooperation of Worldcon runners — so first we have to convince *them*. (Are they us? I'd like to think so. The fact that seven ex-Worldcon chairs are coming to *ditto* seems like an argument for that point of view — but it's a fact that the chairman is often the least influential member of the concom. And the extent that the Worldcon fan lounge is relegated to ghetto space and fanzine-related programming to off hours argues against.)

After a dozen years as a journalist, much of it covering such areas as entertainment and restaurants, I'm a firm believer that Hype Works. Tell people that something is cool, fun, beautiful and tasty enough times and they'll start to believe it. It works even better when it's true — so it should be easy.

I could go on as long as I have here on the intrinsic differences between dyed-in-the-wool fanzine fans and inveterate conventioners (and the comparison would not flatter fanzine fans), but really, most fans have the potential to be both. Many of us *are* both. Not every con fan is going to like every fanzine, any more than every fanzine fan does, or any more than every con goer enjoys every convention — but if we let them in on the secret, enough of them may like some of them.

So I urge faneds not to turn their backs on Worldcons. Open up your mailing lists: You can't, obviously, send a copy to everyone who attends Worldcons, but you can send them to a good percentage of people who nominate and vote on the Hugos. Look at the long lists of people who work on Worldcons and send some of them your zines. Bombard them with lively letters full of ideas for fun fanzine-related activities. Buy at least a supporting membership and nominate and vote on the Hugos. (And if you should happen to believe that con fans aren't really trufen, try — try really hard — not to let them know it.)

And I urge Worldconcoms not to treat fanzine fans as if we were just another special-interest group, like furrries or comics fans. We are, like it or not, the roots of fandom, and the chroniclers of its history. The fact that we aren't as numerous as "Buffy" fans is irrelevant. (And if you should happen to have a chip on your shoulder because you think some fanzine snob once sneered at you, get over it.)

And those of us with feet in both camps need to do our best, continually, to explain each side to the other.

I'd like to see Worldcon progress reports full of fanzine reprints, fanzine reviews and fanhistory. I'd like to see PRs with the liveliness, interest and production values of the finest fanzines (anyone who needs a model should take a look at MidAmeriCon's). I'd like to see fan programming promoted as if it were for everyone, not just a few freaks.

Most of all, I'd like to see fandom — with its fanzines and history and warts — be promoted as the heart and soul of Worldcon and the Hugos, and not just the annoying slow bits one has to sit through at the Hugo ceremony on the way to the film clips.

Locs

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I really cannot believe Jack is that skinny character you illustrate. I thought he was a heavyset man with a bristling brow, anxious to ferret out all spelling and grammatical misconstructions in each and every apazine he got.

JOHN B. SPEER

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I don't remember seeing that profile photo of me before. Who took it and when?

{It was cropped from a larger photo we swiped from www.fanac.org, where it was credited to Bob Madle. No date is given, but since it identifies A.E. van Vogt as "GoH," our guess is that it was taken at Pacificon in 1946.}



From left: Jack Speer (a k a John A. Bristol), Elmer Perdue, Rusty Hevelin (a k a Rusty Barron, in uniform), two unknowns (center front), Donald Day, A.E. van Vogt, Walt Leibscher.

“Savoring Sneary”: It might be noted that *traveling giants* applies particularly to the years when fen were not yet flying but had acquired income sufficient to finance some long-distance auto travel.

Tucker doesn't mention that Sneary moved to Henderson, a suburb of Las Vegas, before he died.

Is artist Larry Tucker related to Bob?

{Only in the fannish sense.}

I don't agree with Bratman's suggestion that the idea of a third edition of Fancyclopedia may be needless. Cy is more than a lexicon.

I'm glad you've offered roommate matching. Maybe this will spread to other cons.

GREGORY RIHN

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Receiving the second progress report for ~~ditto~~/FanHistoriCon reminded me that I had intended to write regarding the genesis of the term *Holy Book of Floor Plans* (also *Sacred Book of Floor Plans*). This term was coined by the late Ross Pavlac in respect to the Chicon IV Worldcon bid, and referred specifically to the large and impressive loose-leaf book of floor plans of the Chicago Hyatt Regency Downtown, which was loaned to the Bid Committee by the Hyatt Sales Department.

The sacredness of the Book was due not only to the largeness and impressiveness of the Book, but also to the fearsome indemnity the Hyatt intended to claim should it be lost or destroyed. All these things I know because Ross himself imparted them to me, at I believe, a bid party we held at Minicon in 1980.

It should also be noted that the Book of Floor Plans was secondary in importance to the Great Floor Plan Icon, a 6-foot-by-3-foot lighted display of such Holiness (not to mention weight and expense) that it never left the Hyatt premises. Nevertheless, we were able to reveal it to the awed masses at the Windycons held prior to the Worldcon, which were at the same Hyatt.

GEORGE FLYNN

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Reading David Bratman's loc in *Spirits of Things Past* No. 2 reminded me that I had also wanted to make some comments on the original lexicon:

consuite — Another data point: At the first con I attended (1969 Boskone) and perhaps some later ones, what would later have been called a *consuite* was the *TANSTAAFL room*. I suspect that this was just a local usage, though.

semiprozine — Well, it didn't spring into being at the 1982 Business Meeting, since at least two of the motions introduced there included the term. The handout I produced there referred to previous discussions of the issue in fanzines (I think *Mainstream* and *Holier Than Thou*, but my copy is inaccessible at the moment). So the term may have originated in one of those, or it may just have been in the air.

Wimpy Zone — Actually, Ben Yalow doesn't deny using the term, but says his usage was generic. That seems closer to the way I recall it, but I can't prove it. (As Secretary, I was also there taking notes — and have actually managed to unearth them! — but this phrase didn't make it into them, since it wasn't part of a motion.)

FLASH! Nydahl's Disease curable ... Joel Nydahl recovers after 48 years! Seen at MilPhil.

SPIRITS OF THINGS PAST

ditto 14 &

FanHistoriCon 11

October 12-14, 2001
Bloomington, Illinois

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ditto 14

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