

Degler! #3

The World of Last Month, Today!*

Degler! [New Series #3] is published 10 December 2004 for PhilCon 2004 by Andy Porter, 55 Pineapple St. #3J, Brooklyn NY 11201, <aporter55@gmail.com>. First published in 1964 for apa-F, *D!* became the newszine *S.F. Weekly* and then appeared every so often over the passing decades, about 300 issues, all together. One more issue and *D!* is eligible for a Fanzine Hugo. Ack. *Finally, without any apologies to the ghost of Jimmy Taurasi. **Suzle for TAFF!!!**

I Remember PhilCon

This year has been a 40th anniversary memory fest for me. Although I got into fandom in late 1960/early 1961, and started going to local conventions including Lunacon and the Open ESFA (the annual March conference held by Newark, NJ's Eastern SF Association) then, I didn't begin to go to New York Fanoclast meetings, which met at Ted White's house, until late Spring, 1964. It was my exposure to the Fanoclasts that literally widened my fannish world, through apa-F, the weekly amateur press association started later in 1964, and attending conventions outside the New York area.

So 1964 was the very first time I went to Disclave, Midwestcon, and PhilCon. Fans who've been around a long time will remember that those conventions, plus the West Coast's Westercon, were just about the only conventions then held annually anywhere in the USA.

My first PhilCon was held at the Philadelphia Sheraton, on Kennedy Memorial Boulevard, which had just recently been renamed. Five of us drove down in Ted White's Chevrolet Greenbriar, a van with windows that today would be called an early S.U.V. There was Ted, Dave Van Arnam, Mike McInerney, Rich Brown, and myself. Being the basically poor student/adult types so common in fandom, we did the whole trip on the cheap. So we ended up staying a block from the actual convention hotel, at the Robert Morris Hotel. The room cost an enormous \$10 a night, which was split between the five of us. As I recall, we took the mattress off the king-size bed and put it on the floor, so two each could sleep on the box spring and mattress. Mike McInerney slept in the bathtub; I think he complained that the faucet dripped...

I'm amazed now that the Robert Morris would rent one room to five men, but thinking back, it's not that weird; I believe it was run as a charitable institution by a Christian group. Incredibly, several years later I remember going past the building and seeing that it had become the "Robert Morris Institute for Bible Studies," with a large fluorescent cross on the front of the 5-story building.

The Robert Morris wasn't the only weird hotel in Philadelphia. The Sheraton's function rooms were along a public corridor leading to the Pennsylvania Railroad's Suburban Station. I also remember that the con, then held the second weekend in November, almost always coincided with the annual Army-Navy football Game. It was always full of West Point cadets, all intent on having a heavy sexual weekend with their dates, who inevitably seemed to be incredibly gorgeous college cheerleaders. A couple of years the convention was at the Sylvania; I remember going back a couple of years later to find that the Sylvania had been replaced by a parking lot. Then there was the year that Flo Newrock was menaced by a police dog in the lobby of the Rittenhouse.

Incidentally, while PhilCon has moved to mid-December, the annual SFWA editor/author gathering in NYC, traditionally held the Monday night after PhilCon, has kept the same dates. Thus this year's gathering—long ago named the "Swill and

Sway" by Gardner Dozois—on November 8th.

There are other memories of PhilCon. Every year on Friday night, the entire convention—all 200 attendees—would go off to Harriet Kolchak's house in North Philadelphia for a party in the old barn behind her house, whose walls were covered with Playboy centerfolds. I can still taste the hot-dogs on a bun and the watery sauerkraut. Four years later, there's an image in my mind of Sam Moskowitz and me striding down the streets of Philadelphia—we'd just spent a long day reading proofs on the November 1967 convention issue of *Quick Frozen Foods* at North Philadelphia's Periodical Press—and we were headed for PhilCon. To SaM this must have seemed indescribably old hat—he'd been going to PhilCons since before they *were* PhilCons, starting in the mid-1930's—but yet he was just as excited to be going to another convention as I was.

Sam is gone now, as are so many of the people from those PhilCons of 40 years ago. Ozzie Train, handicapped by a terrible stutter but an extraordinary fan and small press publisher and a great guy; John Baltadonis; Lloyd Arthur Eshbach, another early fan turned book publisher; and lots of others. And I'm sure Tom Purdom will be happy to share his memories of that era with you.

Up In Smoke

I mentioned last time that I saw the Yankee Air Museum in Ypsilanti, Mich., when I visited my brother there in June. Alas, on October 9th the entire place burned to the ground; they managed to save several still-flying planes, including a B-17 and B-25, but everything else in the enormous 60-year-old hangar that housed most of collection—including numerous planes, some on loan from other places, the exhibits of memorabilia, etc.—was destroyed. The complete story is probably still available on line, archived at the website of The Ann Arbor News. The museum's website was <www.yankeeairmuseum.org>; it might still be there. All those gorgeous irreplaceable artifacts gone, sigh...

Current Plans

I don't think I'm going to England in the Spring, after all. For one thing, that would be a mere two months before I go over for the Glasgow worldcon, and for another, the dollar has been sinking steadily against the Pound (and most other major currencies, too). Last time I checked, it cost \$1.94 to buy a Pound. That's the worst exchange rate in 15 years—since the 1987 worldcon, also in the UK.

Less Stuff, Continued

The continuing saga of Pigs in Space, uh, of my apartment, well, it continues. I found more stuff I could throw out, more files from *SF Chronicle* that I didn't need in my computer (why did I keep subscription names and addresses from 6 years ago?). For the bedroom I bought new sheets and a quilt, which is enormously heavy, but the bed really looks great when the sun comes in the window.

In the living room I've been moving books around and I think I can get rid of another bookcase—one of those 6-foot-high

particle board with veneer things that I've come to hate—from its position at the entrance to my living room (shock! horror! book collector gets rid of bookcases!) which will open up the entrance. Although there are still piles of stuff, especially around my desk, I keep a wide-angle photos of the room in the bad old days, when it was the glorious editorial/production/circulation/etc. office for SFC, with piles of books and papers *everywhere*. So it's far from perfect—but it's better. It's getting there.

Random Factors: Letters

JoyceWorley

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Delighted to see *Degler!* —I remember its previous incarnation with fondness. And, it is great to see you active in publishing fanzines again.

I liked the three *Lord of the Rings* movies, despite their inconsistencies with the book. I wish they'd stuck to the script more literally, particularly since the encounter with the barrow wight was so significant, since it provided the Hobbits with the magic swords that were so important in the ultimate battles. Yet despite their fallacies, I think the three movies are the best fantasy movies I've ever seen.

Milt Stevens

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In *Degler!* #2, I think you are disremembering Noreascon I. I don't remember there being any pool (outdoor or otherwise) at Noreascon I. There definitely was a pool with cabanas around it at LACon I the following year. If you think about it, a pool with rooms around it is a far more reasonable configuration in Southern California than it is in New England.

Like Robert Lichtman, I watched all those SF TV shows back in the fifties and enjoyed them tremendously. I doubt any of them were really all that good, but they were among the fond memories of childhood. A few years ago, Barbara Hambly mentioned she had really liked *Rocky Jones Space Ranger* when she was a girl. She had made the mistake of watching it again as an adult. She vowed not to repeat that mistake.

Your birthday list is....comprehensive. Some of those listed are deceased and others disappeared from fandom decades ago. I haven't seen Bruce Henstell in over forty years. Somehow, I suspect he isn't a hyperactive teenager anymore.

[I think you've been living in Southern Cal for too long. Lots of hotels in northerly climates have outdoor pools. The Sheraton Boston pool was open to the sky when there was one tower. Ironically, the whole thing, while now enclosed, has a newly built open to the sun roof deck, so you can get a good burn. -AP]

Ben Indick

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Andy! By golly, you are still alive and even more miraculously, so am I! I am most grateful for these welcome Deglers (named as I recall for a less than reputable fan named Claude, no? So goes my memory and my knowledge of infrastructure of fandom.) because there are memories attached. I well recall your jovial presence at a number of Cons (back when I attended the few I attended), always with a newszine in your hand.

I appreciated those birthday lists you included (irresponsibly and regrettably omitting the most important, August, and my own natal day, the 11th) because it fills in some individuals I needed. However, there is Hugh Cave, subsequently gone, gone gone. Well, I am 81 since 8/11 and lucky to be here (if being alive is "lucky" in this worst of all possible worlds, overstuffed like an overripe pastrami sandwich with Republicans and

Muslims, sometimes indistinguishable—heck, it is lucky, because we know no other!).

[This ran on a website, somewhere. You've gotta snatch each scrap of egoboo where you can... -AP]

Keith Stokes

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"One of the pleasant surprises at [Torcon] is a new fanzine by Andrew I. Porter, *Monadnock*. The name comes from one of the monitor class US navy vessels, built in 1883. Andrew has a long history of fan publication, starting with columns in the 1960s and (until now) culminating in the semi-prozine, *Science Fiction Chronicle*, which he sold to a new publisher a few years ago. Andy's writing has been a part of my fan experience from the beginning and he treated me with friendship and respect when he had no idea who I was. He even published a brief notice of Charlie's (my dog) death.

"One of the long time features of SFC was a monthly list of Pro/Fan Birthdays. He is continuing the list in *Monadnock*, which I hope means it will come out monthly."

[Yeah, monthly: so far, June, September and December, 2004. Three out of 12 ain't bad... -AP]

December Pro/Fan Birthdays

Charles Finney, 12/1/05; Jerry Sohl, 12/2/13; Brian Lumley, 12/2/37; Doug Beason, Leigh Strother-Vein, 12/3/53; Tony Cvetko, 12/3/54; Ian Wallace, 12/4/12; Bill & Dick Glass, 12/4/45; Richard Lynch, 12/4/49; Walt Richmond, 12/5/22; Betsy Wollheim, Susan Palermo, 12/5/51; Susan Rothman, 12/5/54; William McGivern, 12/6/21; Ted Pauls, 12/6/42; Leigh Brackett, 12/7/15; Buzz Dixon, 12/7/53; Tom Galloway, 12/7/60; John Morrissey, 12/8/30; Lise Eisenberg, 12/8/56; Steve Fahnstalk, 12/9/47; Curt Stubbs, 12/9/48; Nicki Lynch, 12/9/52; George McDonald, 12/10/1824; Fred Patten, 12/11/40; Ralph Roberts, 12/11/45; Ken Fletcher, 12/11/46; Ken Ozanne, 12/12/41; Paul Novitski, 12/12/50; Timothy Lane, 12/12/51; Joan Verba, 12/12/53; Toni Weisskopf, 12/12/65; Shirley Jackson, 12/14/19; J.G. Newkom, 12/14/35; John Baxter, 12/14/39; Edward Llewelyn, 12/15/17; John Sladek, 12/15/37; John Guidry, 12/15/44; Leslie Smith, 12/15/58; Arthur C. Clarke, 12/16/17; Philip K. Dick, 12/16/28; Norm Metcalf, 12/16/37; Steve Forty, 12/16/48; Lex Nakashima, 12/16/60; Jack Chalker, 12/17/44; J.R. Madden, 12/17/50; H.H. Munro, 12/18/1870; Alfred Bester, 12/18/13; Walter Daugherty, 12/18/16; Sterling Lanier, 12/18/27; Dave Hulan, 12/18/36; Fran Skene, 12/18/37; Michael Moorcock, 12/18/39; Stephen Spielberg, 12/18/47; Harry Warner, Jr., 12/19/22; Lee Pelton, 12/19/49; Tom Boardman, 12/20/30; James Sallis, 12/21/44; Lenny Bailes, 12/21/46; Mandy Slater, 12/21/63; Norma Auer Adams, 12/22/39; Bea Barrio, 12/22/42; David H. Keller, 12/23/1880; Chuch Harris, 12/23/27; George Heap, 12/23/28; Fritz Leiber, 12/24/10; Dan Morgan, 12/24/25; Ray Beam, 12/24/32; Joseph Major, 12/24/54; Rod Serling, 12/25/24; Bill Fesselmeyer, 12/26/47; Ken Slater, 12/27/17; Perdita Boardman, 12/27/31; Fred Lerner, 12/27/45; James LaBarre, 12/27/59; George Zebrowski, 12/28/45; Sheryl Birkhead, 12/28/46; Charles Harness, 12/29/15; Sam Long, 12/29/45; David Travis, 12/30/35; Avedon Carol, 12/30/51; Bob Shaw, 12/31/31. Unless stated otherwise, all birthdays are in the 20th century.

SUZLE for TAFF!!!